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Aims & Scope

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

Aims & Scope

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

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

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NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the ninth edition of *Tourism Today*, the journal of the College of Tourism and Hotel Management. As has been the case for the last few years, the journal is available to everyone free of charge from the College of Tourism and Hotel Management website.

This edition continues to highlight authors from around the world and involves research about tourism issues from many different countries in the world. For example, Petros Lois writes about Cypriot cruise passengers and their perceptions of cruises. Jiří Vaníček writes about open air museums in the Czech Republic. We are fortunate enough to have two different articles about tourism issues in India, one by Saurabh Kumar Dixit and G.K. Sreenivasan and the other by S. J. Manjunath and Sheri Kurian. However, if you read through the articles in this edition, you will note that there is a great deal of variety and there should be something for everyone.

We continue to improve *Tourism Today* and we encourage the readers to be part of the process of improvement by submitting quality submissions to us. As has always been the case, constructive comments that could help us improve the journal are appreciated.

We wish you a good reading.

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

An evaluation of the significant elements of customer relationship management within the hotel industry

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The topic of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) has been widely studied, especially in terms of its conceptual alignment with opportunities to retain customers and stimulate long-term business success. However, there still appears to be a paucity of coverage about these practices in the hotel industry. By discussing the implications of Database Management, this paper deliberates on the quintessential processes associated with successful CRM structures and practices. The paper additionally attempts to illustrate how Customer Relationship Management is particularly pertinent to the hotel industry; a significant sector within the tourism industry. It emphasises the close alignment between the dynamics of the hotel industry and the fundamental principles of CRM. Critical attention finally focuses on identifying specific strategies and tactics which the hotel industry has adopted with the help of technology.

Key Words: CRM, Customer Relationship Management, Hotels

INTRODUCTION

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) has become a popularised ‘buzzword’ in business and management studies over the past two decades. The concept has been defined in such varied fields as sales, marketing and services automation. The general consensus is that ‘traditional marketing’ tends to be essentially associated with the development, sale and delivery of products and services by means of short-term transactions (Ballantyne, 1996; Healy et al., 2001). However, since the 1980s academic research has increasingly advocated for longer term exchanges. ‘Relationship Marketing’ has emerged as an alternative to ‘Traditional Marketing’ (Berry, 1983). Reasons concerning the significant shift of marketing thought and business development from an emphasis on single transactions and customer acquisition to relationships and customer retention have been rather varied. One of the most succinct contentions has been that this shift has been caused by the intensification of competition and uncertainty in the marketplace (Zineldin, 2000a). The significance of this transition to the achievement of optimum growth by companies is emphasised by such academics as Berry (1983), Grönroos (1994a, 1994b) and Gummesson (1997a, 1997b), when they argue that organisations should restructure their efforts in line with the new paradigm that ‘Relation-

ship Marketing' represents; especially if they are to survive and grow within the increasingly competitive market environment.

According to Grönroos (1994b), the lack of separation between the offering and the consumption of the products or services results in service firms having the elements which are necessary for the forging of relationships with their customers. Within the hotel industry there is arguably little, if any, separation between the product and the service elements. As such, the hotel industry may be perceived as inherently possessing elements ideal for creating and nurturing relationships with customers. While Hu et al. (2010) succinctly summarise how hotel brands have sought numerous ways to build the relationship with their customers, Zineldin (2000a, 2000b) effectively highlights why CRM may be particularly relevant to the hotel industry, when he discusses how that within environments where most companies offer almost the same core products and services, differentiation becomes more interesting to those companies with the strongest potential and resources to develop long-term relationships with customers. In spite of being differentiated by their star rating, most hotels tend to offer more or less the same core products and services: accommodation surrounded by a range of food and beverage services. Thus, despite astute attempts for strategic or tactical differentiation, the development of relationships with customers could arguably be considered emphatic to the hotel industry. According to Nasution and Mavondo (2008), this is particularly significant because the hotel sector is highly competitive. Consequently, the hotel industry is considered to be an ideal environment for CRM.

The topics of Customer Relationship Marketing and Customer Relationship Management have been widely covered by academics in terms of how they are aligned to specific business objectives. However, as uncovered by several secondary researches to strengthen the ontological and epistemological assumptions of this article study within the context of the hotel industry, there still appears to be a paucity of coverage with regards to the actual application of Customer Relationship Management within the hotel environment. Accordingly, discussions about the general business environment have also been included. Still, even though the conceptual underpinnings of CRM are widely discussed, albeit from varied perspectives, there are very limited reviews of the actual implementation and integration of the concept within operations. In order to offer a theoretical grounding of CRM, this paper discusses some of its conceptual underpinnings. However, light is additionally shed on how hotel companies have been strategically and operationally striving to reap specific opportunities within the market environment. Tailored strategies and tactics currently being deployed by a range of hotel chains based in the UK have been identified in order to illustrate the relevance of theoretically contended opportunities to actual practice.

Ultimately this paper aims to address three distinct though arguably also inter-linked objectives. Firstly, it intends to outline how the specialist fields of Customer Relationship Marketing and Customer Relationship Management have emerged from the shift in marketing management enabled by Relationship Marketing. Secondly, the role and usage of database marketing are discussed in order to emphasise the significance of a knowledge management

process to contemporary marketing management. This undoubtedly clearly illustrates how technology and Data Management facilitates CRM innovation, design, implementation and maintenance. Thirdly, although the main stages encompassed by Data Management are comprehensively discussed in order to explicate their crucial roles within holistic and contemporary CRM, issues, concerns and controversies are also identified and reviewed due to the fact that CRM is as yet not optimally and flawlessly used within the hotel industry. In brief, this paper aims to examine the contemporary state of CRM in the hotel industry as well as identify areas for improvement and strategic refinement. However, it must be noted that although it is acknowledged that organisational culture and operations undoubtedly influence engagement in CRM, these dimensions were not focused upon within this paper. Moreover, talent management as hailed by studies in the field of Human Resources Management and in-depth discussions about knowledge management although undoubtedly connected with the theme of CRM, were not considered to be within the scope of this paper.

Conceptual Developments of Customer Relationship Management

In order to deconstruct the conceptual and fundamental underpinnings of CRM, there have been varied attempts to define the broader conceptual application of 'Relationship Marketing' (RM). Accordingly, RM has been described as a specific type of marketing, such as database marketing or services marketing, or even as a series of collaborative actions. The concept has also been described as a single entity, which embraces almost every other marketing function (Berry, 1983; Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Gummesson, 1997a). As such, the precise meaning of RM is not always clear in the literature.

Considering the lack of consensus concerning the core conceptual features of RM, a derivation of CRM, it is not surprising that the conceptual pertinence of CRM has also attracted varied perceptions and opinions concerning its rudimentary components. The concept has been associated with a number of differing elements and applications, examples being: 'database marketing' (Hendler and Latour, 2008; Luck, 2008; Cross et al., 2009; McCall and Voorhees, 2010), 'services marketing' (Grönroos, 1994a, b; Schmidt et al., 2008) and 'customer partnering' (Kandampully and Duddy, 1999; Nasution and Mavondo, 2008). Furthermore, CRM is normatively associated with such specific strategic objectives as 'customer retention' (Walters and Lancaster, 1999a; Geddie et al., 2002; Kuo, 2009), 'customer share' (Rich, 2000) and 'customer loyalty' (Reichheld and Scheffer, 2000; Hu et al., 2010).

In addition to being defined as relating to sales, marketing and services automation, CRM is increasingly being aligned to such processes as 'enterprise-resource planning applications', which are intended to 'deliver cost savings and more streamlined services within organisations' (Keynote, 2002a:1). Accordingly, CRM is considered to not only involve technology, but processes and people too (Luck, 2008, 2009). Several academics have consolidated the broad remit of CRM within the hotel industry. Cross et al. (2009) discuss the implications of fully integrating revenue management into all aspects of hotel management marketing and operations strategies. Following a different perspective, Kwortnik and Vosburgh (2007) discuss

how by focusing specifically on identifying guests' needs and desires to develop new product bundles and marketing communications, CRM can even help small hospitality companies that face big seasonal fluctuations devise strategies for driving off-season demand. Meanwhile, Hsieh and Lin (2010) reflect upon how by evaluating different production processes within a hotel unit, ways and means can be identified to enhance the overall performance of not only that hotel unit and company but ultimately of the hotel industry. Strengthening the link of processes and people to holistic and internal contemporary CRM, Nadiri and Tanova (2010) uncovered that fairness of personal outcomes that employees receive may have more impact on turnover intentions, job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behaviour than the perceived fairness of a firm's procedures. The tracking of the relationships which organisations have with their customers and their suppliers is unquestionably also considered integral to the implementation of CRM (Gummesson, 1999; Keynote, 2002a). According to Yang (2010), the transformation of collective individual knowledge to organizational knowledge, resulting in the advancement of organizational learning, and thus, greater organizational effectiveness is also part of this equation.

The significance of CRM with regards to business development is poignantly emphasised by Joplin (2001:81) when he contends that:

'far from being a fad, it can be argued that CRM is the most important strategy that any organisation intending to stay in business must develop'.

Indeed the wide scope of properties identified in the academic studies discussed above support this contention. In spite of the wide scope of objectives associated with CRM, its application within the market environment is increasingly linked with customer retention.

Customer Relationship Marketing and Customer Relationship Management (CRM) may be regarded as specialised fields of study but they are certainly interrelated. Thus, the forthcoming discussions firmly infer that the scope of CRM spans from the development and marketing of relationships between organisations and their customers to the day-to-day management of these relationships. This wide scope of CRM is illustrated by examples from the hotel industry.

Database Marketing: A Refined Knowledge Management Process

According to Bentley (2005), the ongoing challenge for companies is to determine which specific customers are the most profitable within their customer portfolio. In an attempt to identify their profitable customers and benefit from the opportunities enabled by tailored nurturing of customers, hotel companies are increasingly investing in database infrastructure (Luck and Lancaster, 2003; Luck, 2008). This trend appears to mirror the fundamental underpinnings of database marketing and of knowledge management as it clearly supports segmentation, precise targeting and reward mechanisms.

As a concept, database marketing revolves around organizations acquiring and maintaining extensive files of information on past and current customers as well as on potential customers. Although the objective of databases is to enable a better portrait of customers and their buying habits, ultimately they are intended to not only enable companies to market their products, services and even special offers more effectively but to provide an improved personalised service to customers (Bentley, 2005). O'Connor (2008) discusses how by having access to their customers' personal data, hotels have the potential to use this resource of information for marketing and promotional purposes. Building upon O'Connor's standpoint, Cross et al. (2009) contend that arguably the most beneficial aspect of a database is that by enabling the tracking of customers' purchases, it can help, companies target promotions based on an understanding of customers' responses to prior offers.

Such contentions illustrate how the database has become a pivotal instrument within the CRM arena not only as far as interaction and the exchange of information between an organisation and its customers are concerned, but also in the facilitation of processes such as the profiling, segmentation and targeting of customers. These specific processes of Database Management and database marketing are not only closely aligned to business strategy but just as significantly, they appear to centre upon knowledge management. Indeed, these processes enable a clear and explicit examination of specific segments and even individuals. As such, they are vital to effective and efficient decision-making and future tailored actions. However as succinctly emphasised by Hendler and Latour (2008), the different meanings of the different customer groups as well as the emotional connections of the individuals must also be considered. This viewpoint is closely aligned to Botschen et al.'s (1999) discussion about how companies need to consider the differential value that customers associate with the benefits being proposed.

Consequently, in line with Kwornik and Vosburgh's (2007) recommendation, companies must focus on identifying their guests' needs and desires as well as ensure that offerings are aligned to these (Nasution and Mavondo, 2008).

The Database: The Pivotal Tool for Knowledge Management within CRM

According to Bradbury (2005), a database is a structured collection of information, which is not only set as indexes but also searchable. In general, databases are data warehouses, which store customers' data. Accordingly, previous transactions and even communication exchanges may be held in a company's database. Data mining enables the stored data to be analysed while data dissemination leads to information being made accessible to any selected part of the organisation. As such, a continuous learning loop can be facilitated and maintained (McDonald, 1998). However as illustrated by Tapp (2001), Database Management is an extensive and multi-levelled process.

Within the CRM arena it could be argued that databases are used not only to promote and facilitate interaction between an organisation and its customers from the time of an initial

response, but also to help with the measurement and analysis of such interactions. The ongoing relationship between an organisation and a customer can be systematically recorded in a database. A sophisticated database can in fact store data on active, dormant or lapsed customers and can even identify prospective customers (McDonald, 1998; Tapp, 2001).

Several academics including O'Connor (2007) and McCall and Voorhees (2010) have discussed how although it may pose a threat to personal privacy, detailed information about customers can be collected, then used to customize subsequent interactions. Hence, the increasingly integral role which databases have come to play in CRM campaigns and in knowledge management seems well founded. Indeed, it appears that even though databases were traditionally associated with the field of direct marketing, they can be productively used for customer relationship management to not only monitor and track customers and campaigns but just as significantly to engender focused and proactive knowledge management. This combination of processes is encompassed by Cross et al.'s (2009) contention that such a customer-focused approach not only tracks customers' purchases but also helps target promotions based on an understanding of customers' responses to prior offers. As such the database is seen as not only helping understand customers better but just as importantly, it is considered to be a quintessential tool in helping companies devise strategies and tactics (Stockdale, 2007).

The Role of Data Management within CRM

Developments in information technology have dramatically enhanced the scope for the collection, analysis and exploitation of information on customers (Long et al., 1999). Data warehouses have been increasingly created by businesses. Data collation essentially integrates the raw information from various systems within a hotel such as central reservations and room service, and converts the data collected from all the sources into one easily accessible and user-friendly dataset (Davies, 2000). However according to Hendler and Latour (2008), there has been a need to make CRM programmes more technologically sophisticated.

When used effectively, data warehouses can not only gather data on a continuous basis but they can also enable precise segmentation of information about customers. Subsequently, profitable interactions with customers can be increased and operations such as targeting and even the personalisation of customer service can actually be improved. These processes appear intricately linked with knowledge management and business development. Supporting this viewpoint, Gonzalez (2006) advocates that information technology is the suitable tool in the fields of customer relationship management, suppliers management, marketing, quality and even economic resources planning.

According to Geddie et al. (2002), with businesses now recognizing the cost advantages of customer retention, one-to-one personal attention and relationship building is now widely perceived as a desirable method for increasing customer loyalty.

In view of Database Management helping customer retention (Davies, 2000), large hotel chains have been acquiring and storing customer data in a combined attempt to achieve competitive edge and improve the experience of customers. In June 2002, for instance, Travelodge began to develop a new database of online customers as part of its strategy to double the 5000 bookings the company takes weekly. A new members section was developed and installed in order to build a fresh database of online users only (Key Note, 2002). Thistle Hotels Ltd engaged in a strong online strategy in Summer 2003 in an attempt to increase the size of its database from 50,000 to 500,000 by the end of 2003 (Key Note, 2003).

At present, CRM is intricately linked with Database Management. However, according to Cindy Green, the senior vice-president of Pegasus Business Intelligence, this will not only lead to a change in the sales and marketing arena but even more importantly this will imply that companies will need to become as advanced in the management of their customer relationships as technology will enable them to be (cited in Davies, 2001a). This change of perspective arguably engenders a transition from the management of data concerning the customers to the management of interactive relationships between the organisation and individual customers. However as Schmidt et al. (2008) uncovered, this dialogue is not yet routine. Data that hotel companies have compiled over the years about their customers need to be used intelligently in order to be able predictions about consumer behaviour as well as the anticipation of needs or even problems. The knowledge derived from the data can unquestionably be used to precisely target marketing campaigns and be integrated in the strategy and even tactics of the hotel company. Accordingly, it would be pertinent to say that CRM is in actual fact simply about a company being willing and flexible enough to change its behaviour in line with what it is finding out from its systems. Indeed, information systems can not only give clear details about who the customers are but just as importantly they can reveal what customers are doing and what they may be seeking from the company. As such, the database represents a vital knowledge management interface for an organisation for analysing past campaigns, current activities as well as for informing future decision-making processes and actions. Consequently, business development and success appear to be closely linked to the knowledge management opportunities afforded by databases and CRM.

Within the context of research about the hotel industry, knowledge management and CRM have been discussed from different angles. While such authors as Hendler and Latour (2008), Cross et al. (2009) and McCall and Voorhees (2010) focus on understanding external customers, others such as O'Connor (2008), Law et al (2009) and Yang (2010) focus on organisational processes. Still others such as Chi and Gursoy (2009) and Nadiri and Tanova (2010) focus on internal customers/ employees. As such it can be concluded that knowledge in terms of CRM is not derived unilaterally.

The Process of Converting Raw Data into Focused Knowledge

The general consensus is that an integrated and centralised database will enable a complete view of the customers. In the context of a hotel chain, for instance, such a database is expect-

ed to collect ongoing information from all such relevant sources and outlets as reservations and other point of sale systems located within the various hotels. Information from customer satisfaction questionnaires, surveys or even emails can also be fed into the database. The data would ideally be compiled so as to produce an integrated set of information in order to produce a unified profile about each customer (Bentley, 2005). According to Jane Waterworth, the marketing director at Shire Hotels, the standardisation of data is a process which hotel companies should take seriously, particularly as it is vital to ascertain that they are inputting the right data in their CRM system (Bentley, 2005). Steve Clarke, Account Director for the marketing database company CDMS, stresses that companies serious about CRM must consolidate their data otherwise customers may end up receiving the same information from various sources thereby diluting marketing initiatives. He also asserts that for the company no full view of a customer's behaviour would be achievable without a clear consolidation process in place (Bentley, 2005). Indeed, as emphasised by Bentley (2005), without all the relevant information about a customer any attempt to use data in a meaningful and precise way to enhance loyalty schemes or even marketing campaigns will be essentially flawed. Consequently, for a database to be a reliable component of knowledge management systems, it should be consistently updated and meticulously integrated with other sources of relevant knowledge.

The analysis of the information about the hotel guests must be processed in order for the hotel company to be able to precisely target the most attractive prospective customers and discard those who do not meet the profiling criteria sought by the company. Such streamlined processes are considered to ultimately benefit both the companies and the end users. Although a central data warehouse can by all means combine information from many sources and help consolidate a comprehensive and reliable picture of a company's clients, Velibor Korolija, Operations Director of a software specialist company, the Bromley Group, argues that from the perspective of business and marketing analyst data warehouses are by no means sufficient in themselves. In fact, it is data mining, a process which involves the analysis of the data in an attempt to seek meaningful relationships not previously known, which Korolija advocates to be of utmost importance with regards to knowledge management and business development (cited in Davies, 2000).

The results of the targeting of specific hotel guests must be tracked in order to determine which guests responded to the campaigns (Cross et al., 2009). This step will not only identify the customers, who are profitable to the company but it will also clearly reveal the rate as well as degree of success of specific promotions or campaigns. Subsequently, the adequacy of campaigns as well as the value of the individual customers can be evaluated. This function of monitoring and control is essential as it will not only enable the tracking of customers' responses and uptake but the overall success of specific campaigns and offerings. Consequently, this can help to provide feedback about specific dimensions of CRM and about past activities as well as facilitate informed future planning. As identified by Bradbury (2005), CRM is meant to not only help companies collect information about guests but to productively enable companies to more effectively utilise customer-based information. Thus, one

of the ultimate steps within the data mining process is undeniably to cluster customers into segments, which are not only meaningful but also reachable by CRM campaigns.

Customer segmentation has been portrayed as a means of predicting behaviour (Clemons and Row, 2000) as well as a method of detecting, evaluating and selecting homogeneous groups (Reichheld and Scheffer, 2000). Moreover, it has been perceived as a way of identifying a target market for which a competitive strategy can then be formulated and implemented (Gulati and Garino, 2000). In more general terms, customer segmentation is accredited with enabling the identification of key consumer groups so that CRM programmes can be targeted effectively. According to Korolija, it is by all means possible to cluster a hotel's guests into very specific demographic groups (cited in Davies, 2000).

Some hotel chains have acknowledged the opportunities enabled by customer segmentation. In an attempt to precisely and cost effectively target its guests, for instance, De Vere Group Plc restructured its customer database in 2003 into a range of customer categories such as 'debutantes' and 'devoted stayers' (Key Note, 2003). This strategy was also intended to enhance cross-selling across the various brands to existing customers. In the same year following a similar strategy, Corus & Regal Hotels Plc divided its database, which consisted of 68,000 profiles, into categories spanning from 'cold prospects' to 'loyal customers' (Key Note, 2003). These hotel chains arguably conducted these categorisations in order to enable more precise targeting of offerings as supported by the underpinnings of direct marketing.

The varied outcomes and benefits of the segmentation of customers have been well documented in academic circles academia as well as by hoteliers. Benefits such as added protection against substitution, differentiation and pricing stability have been crucially identified (Walters and Lancaster, 1999b; Sinha, 2000). Within the hotel industry, Ivor Tyndall, Head of Customer Intelligence at Le Meridien, advocates that as the company segments their consumer base they can precisely target different sectors or segments with different offers (Bentley, 2005). Consequently, the tracking of customers also needs to uncover the relevance and degree of appropriateness of specific campaigns as well as include information about the offerings being made to customers. These offerings would include communication systems, products as well as services being proposed to customers. However, as identified by Hu et al. (2010), the perception of customers about the value being offered, the type of reward as well as when the reward is being offered are all important criteria. According to Han et al. (2009), switching predisposition and switching costs must also be considered.

Database Processes in the hotel industry: Issues, Concerns and Controversies

The capability of databases to help track actual purchases of customers and enable inferences to predict future behaviour patterns may undoubtedly encourage the assumption that database marketing is routine within the embracing of CRM. Moncrief and Cravens' (1999: 330) contention that 'customer service levels increase when customer information becomes so easy to obtain and disperse' and O'Connor's (2008) reference to the access that hotels have to

their customers' personal data, imply that databases are being efficiently and effectively used to acquire and maintain adequate information on existing and prospective customers. Indeed, Abbott (2001:182) even advocates that refinements in technology has provided companies with increasing opportunities and well-structured channels to not only collect an abundant amount of data but also to manipulate this data in various ways so as to unravel otherwise unforeseen areas of knowledge and business development. However, several academics and practitioners have contended that databases are continuously not being optimally used (Rich, 2000; Bentley, 2005; Luck 2009).

Although many databases may by all means be deemed to be appropriate data warehouses and adequate for data storage, it has been argued that the data mining processes associated with many of these has been consistently flawed. In actual fact, in spite of several academics acknowledging the technological trend in relying on Database Management to acquire and maintain extensive information on existing and potential customers (Krol, 1999; Long et al., 1999; Moncrief and Cravens, 1999, Cross et al., 2009), some academic researchers provide evidence to confirm that companies are not adequately using the information at their disposal to build, strengthen and indeed manage their relationships with customers (Dyer, 1998; Rich, 2000; Joplin, 2001; Overell, 2004; Schmidt et al., 2008). Although the market intelligence report on Customer Relationship Management compiled by Key Note in 2008 confirmed this ongoing lack of optimal analysis, market intelligence reports on Hotels compiled by Key Note between 2001 and 2008 however show an increasing focus on information systems and knowledge management strategies.

According to Dyer (1998), one of the main reasons why many practitioners could be failing to make optimum use of their client databases relates to the fact that information about customers is not being updated. Furthermore, the data about customers already available to companies is arguably not even being analysed adequately. Subsequently, pertinent knowledge is not being achieved from the information, which the analysis of the data can engender. Thus, these are not even being adequately considered when future strategies and tactics are being devised.

With regards to the collection and collation of data, Murphy (2001) advocates that not only does personalized data have to exist and be correct but that this data should be updated and made available to the rest of the organisation. Accordingly, a knowledge loop will be created and maintained (Yang, 2010). Indeed, the general consensus is that this process should be rigidly adhered to regardless of what channel of communication the customer uses to interact with an organization (Keynote, 2002). Accordingly, the same standard of processes would be adhered to whether the customer is communicating with the organisation or making a hotel reservation online or by telephone.

Although this step may not yet be routinely adhered to within the hotel industry, there are indications that a few hotel chains have already been integrating this process in their systems. For instance, from 2003 all bookings made for any of the hotels within the Corus & Regal

hotel chain have been redirected via the central reservations office or to their new marketing database so that the information on the database can be continuously updated. Accordingly, the records about existing customers are consistently updated while the profiles of new customers are automatically created (Key Note, 2003). The market intelligence report on Hotels compiled by Key Note in 2008 reveal that many hotel chains are increasingly continuing to engage in CRM strategies.

Although the integrated process of capturing, sifting and interrogating data about customers is seemingly flawed, companies have been so eager to capturing data about their customers that according to Overell (2004:1): 'Many organisations are sitting on mushrooming stockpiles of data'. This rather over zealous attitude towards the collection of data seems to have gripped the hotel companies too. Indeed, as is advocated by Geoffrey Breeze, the vice-president of marketing and alliance development at Hilton International: 'Hotels have far more information about their guests than they can actually use' (Caterer and Hotelkeeper, 2000:14). Alarmingly, Overell (2004) even advocates that the general consensus among database experts is that companies do not have much more understanding of customers than they did prior to their embracing of CRM. Notwithstanding the recent increasing engagement of hotel companies in CRM, tactics and strategies (Key Note 2008a) arguably imply that the significance of data management, knowledge management, Customer Relationship Marketing and indeed Customer Relationship Management is now much more appreciated and in fact becoming integral to focused customer retention and even customer acquisition strategies.

It is notable that within the hotel industry, technical systems tend not to be developed in-house but commissioned through such expert agencies as Arnold Interactive, (Luck and Lancaster, 2003). While CRM systems are developed by experts in line with specifications requested by a hotel company, once unfolded within an organization such systems tend to be monitored in-house. Luck and Lancaster (2003) thus suggest that internal employees may not have the adequate level of expertise that some of the filtering processes may call for. Furthermore, they also indicate that the high financial, human and technological resources needed to keep a data mining system up-to-date may also place too high demands on some companies. In a constructive endeavour to curtail limitations created by inconsistent data updating and inadequate data mining and perhaps to also enhance their CRM opportunities, hotel companies have increasingly entered in partnerships with specialist agencies. While De Vere Group Plc enlisted the GB group to help create more targeted and cost effective database campaign, Thistle Hotels Ltd worked closely with Arnold Interactive to design, develop and handle its online strategy to increase its database from 50,000 to 500,000 profiles by the end of 2003 and its series of e-marketing campaigns (Key Note, 2003).

Although academics and practitioners tend to agree that technical innovation is essential to ensure the future growth and success of businesses including hotel companies with regards to knowledge management and CRM, the embracing of technologies within operations appears to have been slower. In a survey of the use of information technology in the independent sector of the hotel industry in South Wales, Main (1995) found out that 65% of her sample felt

that they did not maximise the potential of their existing system. Rather that deploy the lack of expertise of the hoteliers, Main (1995) argued that it is the suppliers of IT who seem to be unable to target their market. Although this study may appear to be quite outdated in terms of technological advancements, the conclusion is considered to have contemporary relevance. In fact, in their study on small and medium size hotels in the Balearic Islands in Spain, a developed tourist destination, and in the South of Brazil, a developing destination, Schmidt et al. (2008) found that these hotels are using their websites as mass media tools while ignoring the potential for interactivity and one-to-one communication: both essential tools for CRM development.

Recently, this issue surrounding the expertise in data analysis appears to have been curtailed through partnerships between hotel chains and specialist IT agencies. For instance, in 2003 when De Vere Group Plc sought to restore its customer database to create more targeted and cost effective marketing campaigns, the GB group was enlisted. Later in the same year when Thistle Hotels Ltd engaged in a focused online strategy to increase its database, Arnold Interactive was appointed to handle that project (Key Note, 2003). In April 2008, Accor appointed MBA to handle the UK advertising launch for its premium Mercure brand, with the aim of emphasising the fact that it offers a combination the benefits of a chain with the exclusivity of a boutique hotel. Activity will target honeymooners, event organisers and those planning weddings (Key Note, 2008b) .

In contemporary terms, the impetus surrounding Customer Relationship Management undoubtedly centres on technology and its respective tools. Technology has been hailed as having the potential to revive and enhance more personalised services with customers (Gilbert et al., 1999), as well as optimise knowledge management capacities. Hotel companies are being faced with a multitude of complex choices in their structuring of relationships, while the pace at which technology is being developed is arguably creating a significant problem of expensive investments potentially becoming obsolete shortly after being deployed (Davies, 2001a). The hotel industry has widely adopted information technology to reduce costs, enhance operational efficiency, and most importantly to improve service quality and customer experience (Law et al, 2009). Given the increased use of the Internet, companies should be eager to provide reliable and high quality service when communicating online (Dickinger and Bauernfeind, 2009). Technology increasingly enables Web site hosts to collect detailed information about customers who visit their sites and to use that information to customize subsequent interactions (O'Connor, 2007). However, according to Stockdale (2007), there is an apparent contradiction between increasing the opportunities for customer autonomy while encouraging firms to develop close and lasting relationships to gain competitive advantage in an intensely competitive electronic market. Meanwhile Morosana and Jeong's (2008) study uncovered that while perceived usefulness was a key predictor of users' attitudes toward using hotel-owned websites, perceived ease of use was a key predictor of users' attitudes toward using third-party websites. However, overall, users had more favourable attitudes and higher intentions to revisit third-party websites than hotel-owned websites. Consequently, it appears that hotel companies are in direct competition with their own suppliers online. Thus,

as recommended by Bai et al. (2008), research is needed to understand the use of websites by consumers.

As discussed by Schmidt et al. (2008) hotels are increasingly taking advantage of the Internet as a marketing tool able to provide direct contact with customers. However, hoteliers should also adopt a more strategic approach to the Internet and increase interactivity and direct contact with customers (Schmidt et al., 2008). Indeed website quality is no longer enough (Bai et al., 2008).

Meanwhile, according to Felix Laboy, the chief executive officer of E-Site Marketing, when hotels are able to access more information about a guest and then be able to offer the latter the individual service he or she needs and indeed the benefits that is sought and valued, loyalty will be encouraged (Goymour, 2001; Edlington, 2003). Indeed when data is correctly structured, hotel companies would be able target and manage their customers more effectively (Davies, 2001a; Bentley, 2005). However it is imperative that customers' profiles, needs and motives be understood (Hendler and Latour, 2008; Hu et al., 2010).

In turn, Customer Relationship Management systems and Customer Relationship Marketing programmes are expected to become more effective while the needs and wants of customers are expected to be more optimally met by organisations. Subsequently, as identified by Chi and Gursoy's research study (2009), the resulting customer satisfaction is expected to have a positive and significant impact on financial performance; thereby consolidating the dynamic link between customer retention and optimal CRM.

Conclusion and Research Implications

This article has illustrated how contemporary Customer Relationship Management has grown and is still growing out of companies' attempts to develop their business propositions and to offer a better service to their customers than their competitors are offering. In the light of the current recession affecting many economies, customer retention has become even more significant. Although customer acquisition is not excluded by CRM, customer retention is certainly the focus of Customer Relationship Management strategy.

The assertions inherent in this paper illustrate that in attempts to enhance a clear and firm engagement in CRM, many hotel chains have invested in customised information systems. Although the secondary research has uncovered that data updating and data mining have not been optimal, recent endeavours at company level and co-operation with specialist external agencies are slowly redressing this initial limited data management.

Database Management has driven CRM into a new era not only in terms of providing information and making sales, but also to access customers, gather data and even target campaigns. In contemporary terms, databases may in fact be considered to represent the central tool of CRM within many hotel chains. Indeed, hotel companies of all sizes appear to increasingly be developing and implementing database technologies.

Although many data mining processes have been somehow flawed, this paper has duly illustrated how hotel chains are increasingly monitoring and refining their data management processes. While the popularity of databases persists, focused partnerships are increasingly being created between hotel companies and external agencies specialising in CRM. Ultimately, the right combination of technological tools and strategies can enable hotel companies to sustain their CRM operations. Partnerships with specialist agencies are also helping the hoteliers achieve their set objectives by providing them with expertise, which is vital for optimal data management but which is simply unavailable within the hotel companies. Yet for CRM to be a powerful tool in the quest for building, strengthening and managing relationships with customers, a range of processes including data collection, collation, storage, updating and mining must be continuously and consistently conducted as well as monitored. Only then would hotel companies be able to benefit from the opportunities which are conceptually associated with Customer Relationship Management.

In the meantime, although technology has been crucial in the facilitation of CRM and attracting much investment, it should however be emphatically noted that technology is neither equivalent to CRM, nor is it the panacea for CRM engagement and implementation. The optimisation of CRM requires the organisation of business processes as well as a thorough and comprehensive understanding of the customer base. Genuine adoption of CRM thus means that companies need to address their own cultures and subcultures. In fact, companies are expected to not only continuously view their organisations from the customers' perspective but to actively involve customer feedback and changes. When these processes are adhered to at an optimal and continuous level, holistic CRM would be enabled and just as importantly sustainable. However, as uncovered by Nasution and Mavondo (2008), the need for the alignment of management, employees' and customers' perspectives must be achieved in order to optimize customer value in terms of CRM and hotel offerings. As such companies, regardless of size, operations, organisational culture, structure and environment should ensure that regular communications and feedback are obtained from their targeted customers. Ultimately, not only would the delivery of value for customers remain the central theme in business but just as significantly the customer value from the perspective of the customer would be sought, delivered and sustained.

The research implications of this paper centre on the fact that not only can hotel companies engage in CRM at distinct levels but that the degree of engagement appear to be increasingly aligned with individual company's main objectives and strategies. The link of CRM with the various sections of the hotel organisation is evident. Notwithstanding in view of the current world recession and predominantly intense competition for forecasted occupancy levels, customer acquisition and customer retention appear to be at the forefront of CRM initiatives. The ultimate conclusion of this paper is that for CRM to be effective in the short-term as well as in the long-term, it must be integral to an organisation's operational level as well as to its functional and corporate levels; only then would the opportunities conceptually associated with CRM be reaped in reality. Meanwhile, the dynamism of CRM is highly likely going to remain unabated as the efficiency of companies to manage relationships with their customers becomes more refined and productive.

The implications for future research as well as the implications for hoteliers is to consistently acquire and update information not only about the profile of existing and potential customers but just as significantly to systematically and consistently research consumer attitude and behaviour in order to ensure that the value being delivered by hotel companies through CRM are aligned with what customers' seek as value.

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Residents' attitudes toward urban tourism development: a case study of Indianapolis, U.S.A.

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ABSTRACT

A survey of Indianapolis residents was conducted in 2009 and the variables included demographics, quality of life (QOL) variables and attitudes toward the urban tourism development. Data was collected over a 2 week period, via convenience sampling, in downtown Indianapolis. A total of 587 surveys were used for SPSS analysis. Factor analysis, T-test and one-way ANOVA were used to identify relationships between residents' attitudes toward tourism and their demographic profiles and their QOL status. The results showed that there was a significant difference in perceived benefits to city, satisfaction with tourism, and awareness of tourism development across some socio-demographic characteristics and QOL variables.

Key Words: urban tourism development, resident attitudes, demographics, quality of life

INTRODUCTION

Many cities increasingly view tourism as a driver of future economic growth. Local officials and policy makers often rely on urban tourism for economic regeneration and strategic development (Ioannides & Peterson, 2003; Law, 2002; Rogerson, 2004). Consequently, urban tourism can be regarded as a growing trend in the United States of America. A current tourism and travel trend is that tourists are taking shorter vacations, and staying in more in urban destinations. A more sophisticated and educated tourist is emerging. In an ageing society, more tourists in the older age groups can be expected. Tourists are increasingly interested in cultural activities and experiences, and have more opportunities and resources to visit cultural urban areas.

According to UNEP (2004), tourism can add to the vitality of communities in many ways. Residents are the primary participants and beneficiaries of local events and festivals. In some cases, expanding the scale of local events may bring in new interest and tourist dollars. Tour-

ism also can also stimulate feelings of pride in communities with local heritage and generate interest in heritage conservation. More broadly, the involvement of local communities in tourism development appears to be an important condition for conservation and sustainable tourism. Residents' support for sustainable tourism development and the likelihood of recommending their region and supporting tourism funding is based on perceived image (Schroeder, 1996). Improvement of civic image relies on the tourism authority and local government marketing campaigns. Internal and external marketing messages are equally important. Internal marketing is an ongoing process that empowers employees at all management levels to consistently deliver a satisfying customer experience. Within the urban tourism development concept, internal marketing is thus a process by which the tourism authority influences local residents to realize the significance of tourism and encourage favorable attitudes towards tourism development. Jurowski, Uysal, and Williams (1997) noted that internal marketing campaigns are imperative in explaining the social benefits of tourism to residents looking to reduce opposition and form a favorable destination image. Obviously, the local community should get involved in the decision making process for sustainable tourism. Understanding residents' attitudes toward tourism is critical in ensuring sustainable tourism development. Cater (1993) identifies three key objectives for sustainable tourism: meeting the needs of the host population in terms of improved living standards (benefits) both in the short and long term; satisfying the demands of a growing number of tourists; and safeguarding the natural environment in order to achieve both of the preceding aims. Indianapolis has dedicated considerable public investment and focused public policy efforts on the development of urban tourism. A city-wide cultural tourism initiative in 2002 was launched to position Indianapolis as a premier urban tourism destination. The objectives of the initiative were to improve the quality of life for Indianapolis residents and enhance visitor experience by capitalizing on cultural amenities and attributes. Given the present economic climate, cities have had to make budget cuts in all areas of government, including culture and tourism. With more federal and state budget cuts expected, it is now more critical to have strong support and continuous engagement between residents and various business sectors. City officials, the tourism industry, and residents need to cooperate and carefully plan ahead. To gain public support and minimize opposition to tourism projects and initiatives, many urban tourism authorities now strive to understand how the public perceives the tourism industry (Harrill, 2004). Therefore, having broad community involvement and embracing different perspectives during the planning phase helps identify and resolve potential stakeholder issues. In this context, residents' perceptions and attitudes towards urban tourism development must be considered. Hence the goal of this study was to examine residents' attitudes toward tourism in relation to socioeconomic factors, spatial factors and quality of life factors.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Researchers have found that resident demographic characteristics may predict residents' attitudes toward tourism development (Jurowski, Uysal & Williams, 1997; Schroeder, 1996; Smith & Krannich, 1998; Chen, 2000, 2001, Chen & Hsu, 2002; Dieke, 1989). Previous studies indicate that residents' attitudes may be a function of demographic characteristics;

and resident perceptions are likely to vary as a function of a variety of different individual and community-level quality of life variables. This empirical study explored the relationship between residents' demographic characteristics, their life satisfaction and attitudes toward urban cultural tourism development. Many studies have examined the relationship between residents' socio-demographic characteristics and their attitudes toward tourism. Cave, Ryan, and Panakera (2007) investigated how residents perceived the attractiveness of cultural tourism in Auckland, New Zealand. They found that activities that were free and family-oriented were perceived as equally attractive by migrants and host communities. However, they found that the migrant group focused more on preserving their traditional culture and value (Cave et al., 2007). Tomljenovic and Faulkner's (1999) study of Australia's Gold Coast showed that older residents more readily accepted international tourists and were less concerned about the environmental impacts caused by tourism. Mason and Cheyne (2000), in a study of rural New Zealand, found that women were more opposed to tourism development than men, due to perceived negative impacts. Sheldon and Var (1984) suggested that residents' attitudes toward tourism development were culturally bound, and that both natives and Welsh speakers were more sensitive to tourism impacts than the non-Welsh speakers. Girard and Gartner (1993) studied long and short-term residents in Wisconsin and reported that long-term residents did not want to see increased tourism development. In another study, Williams, McDonald, Riden, and Uysal. (1995) also found that long-term residents had a less favorable perception of tourism than did short-term residents.

Harrill (2004) did an extensive review of literature on resident attitudes toward tourism development and classified them into 5 areas: socioeconomic factors, spatial factors, economic dependency, and resident and community typologies. In terms of socioeconomic factors, variables such as age, gender, race, length of residence, and income have been widely used in the literature about resident attitudes. With regards to spatial factors, researchers assumed that the closer a resident lives to concentrations of tourism activity, the more negative the perception will be of tourism development (Harrill, 2004). Residents' attitude toward tourism and destination image is believed to be dependent on the resident's location. Pizam (1978) confirmed that heavy concentrations of tourism facilities and services in a destination led to negative attitudes toward tourism development. Gursoy and Jorowski (2002) found that local, heavy users of the area had negative perceptions of tourism's benefits and were not likely to support tourism development. Another study identified a difference in attitudes between rural and urban residents. For instance, rural residents, regardless of demographic status, tended to have similar attitudes towards tourism development (Johnson, Snepenger, & Akis 1994; Perdue, Long, & Allen, 1990; Chen 2000). These citizens require a "clean" industry, local fishing, hunting and other recreational areas of local interest (Martin & McCool, 1994; Marchak, 1990). A study by Smith and Krannich (1998) on the "tourism dependence" hypothesis for rural residents noted that increased dependence on tourism leads to increased negative attitudes of rural residents. The community was concerned about higher levels of crime, lower levels of local satisfaction, and lack of support for continued tourism development. In contrast, Lepp (2007) reported that rural Bigodi village residents in Uganda had positive attitudes towards cultural tourism due to perceived economic and community development benefits.

According to Chen (2000) and Soutar and McLeod (1993), only a few studies exist on urban communities. Nunkoo and Ramkissoon (2010) did a study on urban tourism but it was conducted in the port city of Mauritius Island; it could be argued that location is fairly rural in nature. In that study, residents were supportive of cultural tourism development but gender and age were discriminators in residents' perception of tourism impact. Chen's (2000) work focused on an urban tourism impact scale based on a four-factor model. Economic, social, cultural and environmental factors were extracted from twenty-four items. The study was conducted in a highly developed urban area and yielded interesting results. Urban residents were demographically heterogeneous, causing significant differences in attitudes. Opinions of residents in urban areas are likely to differ based on demographic characteristics. Income and ethnicity were identified as two significant dimensions in urban resident's attitude toward tourism (Johnson, Snepenger and Akis, 1994; Perdue, Long and Allen 1990; and Chen 2000). Residents' attitudes toward tourism may also be directly related to how residents feel about their community and surrounding region (Jurowski and Brown, 2001). In a number of studies, researchers found that the experience of personal and property crime victimization influenced residents' perceptions of neighborhood safety (Baba and Austin, 1989; Baba, Holyer, and Austin, 1991; Kalinich and Karr, 1981). Satisfaction with the physical appearance of a neighborhood was found to be related to crime fears, and neighborhood quality of life perceptions (Perkins, Meeks, and Taylor, 1992; Perkins and Taylor, 1996). Other studies found that the amount of green spaces in a neighborhood influenced perceptions of neighborhood safety, environmental satisfaction, and sense of community (Kuo, Bacaicoa, and Sullivan, 1998; Kuo, Sullivan, Coley, and Brunson, 1998).

While few studies have examined the direct relationships between cultural tourism development and well-being of residents, it could be inferred from research that investigated tourism industry contribution on the quality of life of residents (Lindberg and Johnson, 1997; Mattson, 1990). Quality of life has often been used as an umbrella concept that encompasses life satisfaction and well-being (Gjerald, 2005), and it was suggested that developing tourism products such as cultural attractions, festivals, and restaurants improve the quality of life of residents (Andereck, Valentine, Vogt, and Knopf, 2007). Development of tourism infrastructure benefits residents in many ways, and studies have identified the various factors that residents have benefited from. For example, Wang and Pfister (2008) found that arts and cultural features, special events and programs, downtown revitalization, shopping, and dining choices were specific personal benefits perceived by residents.

It is evident that a more complex design of empirical studies investigating the relationship of these factors is necessary to make these studies meaningful and applicable to internal marketing campaigns. Hence the goal of this study fill in some of the research linkage gaps by examining residents' attitudes toward tourism in relation to socioeconomic factors, spatial factors and quality of life factors.

RESEARCH METHOD

The purpose of the study was to: (a) design a survey to be administered to Indianapolis residents, (b) utilize a number of statistical techniques, including descriptive to investigate the relationship between Indianapolis residents' demographic profiles, their perceptions about life satisfaction and cultural tourism, (c) perform a factor analysis to reduce a series of tourism development items into a grouped dimensions; and (d) run independent samples t-test and one-way ANOVA to study how demographic characteristics and people's life satisfaction impact their perceptions of urban cultural tourism.

Instrument

The study questionnaire was designed to examine the perceived value and awareness of cultural tourism development in Indianapolis. After reviewing previous research, a total of 16 urban cultural tourism development attributes were adapted from the Wang, Fu, Cecil, & Hji-Avgoustis (2008) study. The 16 items were measured on a five-point scale ranging from "strongly agree (1)" to "strongly disagree (5)." Questions regarding respondents' demographic characteristics, such as age, gender, ethnicity, household income, and length of residency were included to provide a demographic profile of the respondents. Quality of life variables used in the study included residents' happiness, overall health, sense of community and life satisfaction.

Data was collected via convenience sampling in downtown Indianapolis. Survey participants were Indianapolis residents who were 18 years and older. Data was collected over a two week period in October 2009. A total of 587 usable surveys were used for SPSS analysis.

Data Treatment and Analysis

Demographic and QOL variables were used as grouping variables in data analyses. Some variables were re-coded, to facilitate data analysis, by collapsing some of the multiple-level demographic variables into bi-level categorical variables, i.e. marital (married vs. others), place of residence (local vs. others), and ethnicity (Caucasian and others). The quality of life variables were also recoded and converted which included happiness (happy vs. unhappy), sense of community (community sense vs. no community sense), life satisfaction (satisfied vs. not satisfied) and health (healthy vs. not healthy). Frequency and descriptive analyses were employed to examine the distribution of the values of all the demographic and QOL variables as well as the mean ratings of the 16 urban tourism development items. Factor analysis was used to reduce the 16 cultural tourism items into 3 factors. Comparing-mean techniques (t-test and one-way ANOVA) were employed to determine the impact of demographic characteristics and residents' life satisfaction on their perceptions of urban cultural tourism development.

RESULTS

Demographic Profile

As shown in Table 1, the gender ratio of respondents was slightly skewed towards males (55.6%). The modal age group was relatively young (18-30 years old). The other two major age groups were 31-43 years old (26.1%) and 44-56 years old (28.2%). Less than 15% of respondents were over 56 years old. With regards to ethnicity, most respondents were Caucasian (71.0%). Other major ethnic groups were African Americans (6.4%), Hispanic (3.3%), Asians (1.7%). Among the respondents, 53% were married. Most of the respondents had lived in Indianapolis for at least 2 years (89.6%). Among them, about 63.3% had lived in Indianapolis for 10 years or more. Approximately half of respondents' household income was equal to or below \$60,000 while the other half were higher than \$60,000.

Table 1: Respondents' Demographic Profile (2009)

Characteristics	n	%
Age		
18-30	178	31.0
31-43	150	26.1
44-56	162	28.2
57-	84	14.6
Gender		
Male	320	54.5
Female	255	43.4
Ethnicity		
Hispanics	19	3.3
African American	94	16.4
Caucasian	407	71.0
Asian/Pacific Islanders	10	1.7
Native American	6	1.0
Others	13	2.3
Household income		
\$0-\$30,000	111	19.9
\$30,001-\$60,000	154	27.6
\$60,001-\$90,000	114	20.5
\$90,001-\$120,000	83	14.9
\$120,001-	88	15.8
Residency		
< 1 year	40	7.0
< 2 years	17	3.0
< 4 years	52	9.1
< 10 years	97	17.0
> 10 years	361	63.3

Mean Ratings of the Urban Cultural Tourism Development Items

As indicated on Table 2, the means of the tourism development related items ranged from 1.8571 to 2.7234. All the means were less than 3 hence all the items were positively perceived by the residents. The most favorable items were 'cultural tourism is good for the Indianapolis economy' (1.86) and 'special events and festivals help create a community spirit across the city'(1.97). The items with highest means (perceived positively but to a lesser degree) included 'I'm aware of the city's culture because of cultural tourism promotion' (2.73), 'I am aware of the city's recent accomplishments in cultural tourism'(2.65), 'funding of cultural tourism is the responsibility of local government' (2.65), and 'I'm aware of the city's plans for developing the cultural trail' (2.56).

Table 2. Mean Ratings of the Urban Cultural Tourism Development Items

Items	Mean	Std. Dev.	N
Cultural tourism is good for the Indianapolis economy.	1.8571	.77443	546
Special events and festivals help create a community spirit across the city.	1.9670	.73872	546
Cultural tourism results in more attractions and events for the benefit of residents.	2.0073	.78046	546
Promoting cultural tourism can raise the profile of Indianapolis in other parts of the world.	2.0183	.79887	546
Cultural tourism helps create a positive image of Indianapolis.	2.0238	.79296	546
Investing in cultural events and attractions for tourists is good for residents.	2.0366	.76538	546
Meeting tourists from around the world is life enriching.	2.0586	.78766	546
I enjoy the city wide events and festivals.	2.1044	.82289	546
More should be done to promote cultural tourism in Indianapolis.	2.1245	.86048	546
I enjoy the cultural attractions the city offers.	2.2363	.79508	546
Meeting and talking to tourists is a positive experience.	2.2949	.78463	546
Indianapolis has the potential to succeed as a cultural tourism destination.	2.4267	.87741	546
I am aware of the city's plans for developing the Cultural Trail.	2.5623	1.08905	546
I am aware of the city's recent accomplishments in cultural tourism.	2.6538	1.00419	546
Funding of cultural tourism is the responsibility of local government.	2.6538	1.00419	546
I'm more aware of the city's culture because of cultural tourism promotion.	2.7234	.91796	546

Scale: 1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=disagree, 5=strongly disagree

Factor Analysis of the Cultural Tourism Attributes

Factor analysis indicated that the item 'Funding of cultural tourism is the responsibility of local government' had a low communality (.339) so the item was excluded from the analysis. The other 15 items were used and Cronbach's Alpha was .917. The result of the factor analysis is presented in Table 3. The test statistic for sphericity was large (4808.409) which is statistically significant at 0.001. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy of the variables was 0.918. The communality ranged from .501 to .780. Three factors were extracted from the factor analysis, explaining a total variance of 66.453%. Based on the items grouped under each factor, the three factors were labeled as "Perceived Benefits to the City" (F1); "Satisfaction with Tourism" (F2); and "Awareness of Tourism Development" (F3).

The mean score for "Perceived Benefits to the City" (F1) was the lowest at 2.01, which means the factor was perceived most favorably by Indianapolis residents. The second lowest rated factor was "Satisfaction with Tourism" (F2) at 2.12, followed by "Awareness of Tourism Development" (F3) at 2.38.

Table 3. Result of Factor Analysis

Variables	Factor Loadings			Communality
	F1	F2	F3	
Factor 1 – Perceived Benefits to City				
Cultural tourism helps create a positive image of Indianapolis	.789			.755
Promoting cultural tourism can raise the profile of Indianapolis in other parts of the world	.817			.772
Cultural tourism results in more attractions and events for the benefit of residents	.809			.780
Cultural tourism is good for the Indianapolis economy	.798			.739
More should be done to promote cultural tourism in Indianapolis	.570	.521		.597
Factor 2 – Satisfaction with Tourism				
I enjoy the cultural attractions the city offers		.509	.490	.581
I enjoy the city wide events and festivals		.692		.585
Meeting and talking to tourists is a positive experience		.708		.610
Meeting tourists from around the world is life enriching		.751		.666
Special events and festivals help create a community spirit across the city	.424	.671		.639
Investing in cultural events and attractions for tourists is good for residents	.558	.623		.707

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Variables	Factor Loadings			Communi- nality
	F1	F2	F3	
Factor 3 – Awareness of Tourism Development				
I am aware of the city's recent accomplishments in cultural tourism			.837	.735
I am aware of the city's plans for developing the Cultural Trail			.785	.656
Indianapolis has the potential to succeed as a cultural tourism destination	.503		.581	.604
I'm more aware of the city's culture because of cultural tourism promotion			.622	.543
Eigenvalue	7.26	1.58	1.13	
Variance (%)	48.4	10.5	7.5	
Cumulative variance (%)	48.4	58.9	66.4	
Summated Mean	2.01	2.12	2.58	
Number of items (total=15)	5	6	4	

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis; Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization; Factor loadings lower than .40 were excluded from the table.

T-test

T-test results are included in Table 4 and tests with significant results are indicated. As shown in Table 4, significant difference in residents' attitudes was detected in both the demographic groups and QOL groups. Specifically, in terms of demographic variables, residents' attitudes toward all the three factors were found to be significantly different between the married and not-married groups; male and female residents perceived Factor 2 and Factor 3 of urban cultural tourism development differently; there is a difference of attitudes on Factor 1 between Caucasian residents and other ethnic groups; and, no difference was detected for any of the three factors between residents who live in the city and those who live outside of the city. With regards to QOL variables, there was a difference in attitude for all the factors between residents who have a strong sense of community versus those who did not. Residents' attitudes toward tourism were also different for Factor 2 and Factor 3 between those who feel happy and those not very happy. Interestingly, no difference was found for the variables of 'overall health' and 'life satisfaction'.

Table 4. Independent Samples t-test

	F1			F2			F3		
	M	SD	t	M	SD	t	M	SD	t
Male	2.01	.67	-.02	2.17	.59	2.10*	2.65	.76	2.24*
Female	2.01	.66		2.06	.61		2.50	.73	
Married	1.95	.67	-2.25*	2.07	.61	-2.14*	2.52	.73	-2.18*
Single/others	2.08	.65		2.18	.58		2.66	.76	
Local	1.99	.70	-.42	2.10	.60	-1.02	2.57	.75	-1.30
Outsider	2.02	.57		2.16	.61		2.67	.73	
Caucasians	1.96	.64	-2.01*	2.09	.59	-.88	2.54	.72	-1.75
Others	2.09	.67		2.14	.60		2.67	.80	
Happy	1.99	.65	-1.16	2.08	.58	-2.59*	2.55	.74	-2.19*
Unhappy	2.07	.66		2.26	.57		2.73	.71	
High Comm. Sense	1.88	.64	-2.60*	1.93	.56	-4.56**	2.41	.70	-4.82**
Low Comm. Sense	2.11	.83		2.28	.67		2.88	.91	
High Life Satisfaction	1.98	.70	-.99	2.09	.62	-1.39	2.58	.80	-.25
Low Life Satisfaction	2.05	.66		2.17	.59		2.59	.73	
High Health Perception	1.92	.63	-1.83	2.05	.60	-1.84	2.54	.79	-.43
Low Health Perception	2.05	.65		2.16	.59		2.58	.76*	

*p < .05, ** p < .01

One-way ANOVA

One-way ANOVA was conducted to examine any perceptual differences on the three dimensions based on age and income. Different attitudes were found in the age groups on Factor 3; and there was no difference found in the income groups (see Table 5). Multiple comparison analyses further showed that distinct perceptual difference existed between the age group of 18-30 and 57 or over.

Table 5. One-way ANOVA Analysis

Grouping Variable: Age		Sum of Squares	d.f.	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Factor1	Between Groups	.570	4	.142	.312	.870
	Within Groups	251.007	550	.456		
	Total	251.577	554			
Factor2	Between Groups	1.487	4	.372	1.018	.398
	Within Groups	201.639	552	.365		
	Total	203.126	556			
Factor3	Between Groups	7.381	4	1.845	3.306	.011*
	Within Groups	309.758	555	.558		
	Total	317.139	559			
Grouping Variable: Income		Sum of Squares	d.f.	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Factor1	Between Groups	1.829	5	.366	.797	.552
	Within Groups	242.703	529	.459		
	Total	244.532	534			
Factor2	Between Groups	.837	5	.167	.468	.800
	Within Groups	188.485	527	.358		
	Total	189.321	532			
Factor3	Between Groups	2.515	5	.503	.893	.485
	Within Groups	298.492	530	.563		
	Total	301.007	535			

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

With regards to spatial factors, previous researchers assumed that the closer a resident lives to concentrations of tourism activity, the more negative the perceptions will be of tourism development (Harrill, 2004). Jorowski (2002) found that local, heavy users of tourist areas had negative perceptions of tourism's benefits and were not likely to support tourism development. Negative sentiments of nearby residents may be due to spillover effects caused by tourism externalities, such as increased congestion, theft, etc. Residents who live further from tourist specific areas may adopt less negative sentiments. In this study, the spatial variable did not yield significant differences in resident attitudes. Within city dwellers were just as likely to have similar attitudes as residents who lived in the outskirts of the city. Perhaps urban tourism is spaced out in Indianapolis or currently occurs at sustainable levels. Another possible reason for the dissenting results is that Indianapolis tourism may be better integrated into the urban fabric where externalities are minimized, and so residents in general, irrespective of the proximity to downtown tourist areas, have similar attitudes. Further investigation is needed.

The findings in the present study demonstrated that some socio-demographic characteristics played a significant role in residents' attitudes towards tourism development. Females were more likely to report benefits and enjoyments than males. This result provides preliminary support to Wang and Pfister's (2008) study which also reported that males perceived less benefit from downtown revitalization and arts/cultural activities.

Older adults in this study were more likely to report satisfaction with tourism development than younger respondents (Table 5). In general, as people reach a mature stage in their lives, it is likely that they desire self-fulfilling activities. Numerous researches indicated that age is an important factor in predicting customers' behavior. Anderson and Langmeyer (1982) for example, reported that visiting historical sites is one of the preferred activities among people over 50 whereas people under 50 prefer outdoor recreation or man-made amusement facilities. Given that older respondents showed favorable attitude towards tourism development in this study, local tourism authorities should consider the special needs of older residents and better understand the factors that enhance participation in tourism activities.

There were differences between married and single residents. This study revealed that married respondents scored higher on all aspects of tourism development (i.e., awareness, enjoyment, and satisfaction). Family life cycle often plays an important role in tourist behavior. For example, as Hong, Fan, Palmer, and Bhargava (2005) reported, those who are married without children are the most actively involved in tourism. Their study utilized a non-traditional family life cycle, and discovered differences among various life cycle stages (e.g., married without children and empty nest). The present study was based on a simple life cycle classification, and did not reveal as much detail as Hong et al.'s investigation. However, the findings are still insightful. Administrators and service providers should tailor specifically to the married and singles in urban tourism setting.

The differences between Caucasians and other ethnic groups were observed in this study. As described earlier, Caucasian respondents were more likely to be aware of the city's accomplishments and efforts to develop tourism. This finding is in accordance with previous research which suggested that ethnicity was an important factor explaining variations in attitudes towards tourism development (Um & Crompton, 1987). Williams and Chacko (2008) also suggest that African Americans and Caucasians perceive city attributes differently in the urban tourism context. Earlier studies of ethnic difference on leisure behavior show that African Americans are more likely to be involved in team sports, fitness activities, and voluntary organizations than Caucasians (e.g., Floyd, Shinew, McGuire, & Noe, 1994). It would be noteworthy to examine tourist activities, expenditures, or preferences across different ethnic groups in future studies.

An important contribution of this study is the revelation that those who were happier have greater perception of role of tourism as well as awareness of the city's accomplishments in tourism. Such results may support the argument that development of tourism is related to quality of life of residents (Lindberg & Johnson, 1997). To date, research indicates a positive relationship between happiness and participating in leisure activities (e.g., Tkach & Lyubomirsky, 2006). Given that tourism activities could be considered as part of an individuals' leisure pursuit, it is suggested that further investigations should be conducted to reveal the links between tourism and happiness. In fact, Pearce (2009) called for application of positive psychology – the term happiness is central to positive psychology – in the tourism field; and this study, to a limited degree, expands the research into happiness and tourism.

In general, the support for tourism by the residents is influenced by several factors such as the level of community involvement, extent to which residents utilize the resources, and perceived costs and benefits of the tourism development (Gursoy, Jurowski & Uysal, 2002). In the context of the present study, those who felt higher sense of community perceived more benefits of tourism, were aware of the city's endeavors to develop tourism, and enjoyed tourism opportunities in the city. This investigation lends support to Payne and Dimanche's (1996) note that encouraging community participation during the process of tourism development makes the industry more relevant to residents.

The present research demonstrated that attitudes towards urban tourism development differ across socio demographic variables (i.e., age, gender, marital status, and ethnicity) and some quality of life variables. The findings suggest that the residents who are happier tend to be satisfied with tourism and are aware of tourism development. This study also shows that those who have higher sense of community possess positive attitude towards overall tourism development. Further investigation of those issues is important so that practitioners working in tourism sectors are aware of the needs of residents and therefore create opportunities to assist residents in enhancing their quality of life. Whilst further empirical research will add to the growing body of knowledge, use of more theoretical frameworks is recommended so that Research is more robust. In addition, further analysis by means of causal models (e.g. Dyer, Gursoy, Sharma and Carter, 2007) may more clearly identify relationships.

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Cultural development and the determinants of the satisfaction of the vision of a city/place: Some empirical evidence from European cases

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to present the way that the cultural sector contributes effectively to the economic development of a place and the way that the future of this sector is shaped. In addition, the paper presents empirical evidence from the case studies related to the identification of each place's vision and the determinants that are crucial in order that this vision is realized. The data for this paper are provided by the INTERREG IIIC *CultMark* project (Cultural Heritage, Local Identity and Place Marketing for Sustainable Development), which has been in operation in five European places from 2004 till 2006: Nea Ionia/Magnesia/Greece (lead partner), Pafos/Cyprus, Chester/UK, Rostock-TLM /Germany and Kainuu/Finland. The main aim of the project was to create a final successful image for each place.

Key words: Cultural development, vision, determinants of vision satisfaction, cultural image, *CultMark* project

1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this paper is to present the way that the cultural sector seems to contribute effectively to the economic development of five selected places in Europe (Nea Ionia/Magnesia/Greece, Chester/UK, Kainuu/Finland, Rostock-Technisches Landesmuseum (TLM)/Germany and Pafos/Cyprus), as well as the way that the future of this sector is shaped. In addition, the paper presents empirical evidence from these places related to the identification of each place's vision and the determinants that are crucial in order that this vision is realized. All the evidence is based on the primary research that was conducted. Questionnaires with open and closed questions were used and the respondents were local authorities, institutions, cultural organisations and decision makers.

The data for this paper are provided by the INTERREG IIIC *CultMark* (Cultural Heritage, Local Identity and Place Marketing for Sustainable Development) project, which has been in operation since the beginning of 2004. This paper uses material from the following reports that have already been delivered: a) 'The Cultural Sector Data Report' (which presents evi-

dence from the cultural sector of each city/place), and b) 'The Final Provided Good Report' (which presents the final provided good for each area, based on the available research data and the local distinctive characteristics). We would like to express our thanks to the JTS East and to the partners for using the delivered material.

2. CULTURE AS A FACTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Cities have always played a privileged role as centres of cultural and economic activity and have exhibited a conspicuous capacity both to generate culture in the form of art, ideas, styles and attitudes, as well as to induce high levels of economic innovation and growth, though not always, or necessarily, simultaneously (Scott, 1997). Also, modern culture is increasingly produced in the commodity form by decentralised profit-making institutions operating under conditions of market competition (Scott, 2000).

The identification of culture as an important factor in urban economic development constitutes a scientific research area with particular interest, especially in the last two to three decades, in the US and Europe (Kong, 2000; Barnett, 2001). In the 1980s, Europe was characterised by cultural development policies as the main strategies for urban regeneration. Furthermore, the development and the implementation of particular cultural policies and activities, connected with the necessity of the cities/places to face the socio-economic changes, affected their internal and external environment at both a micro- and macro-economic level. These socio-economic changes – e.g. the crises of the Fordist accumulation regime, the rapid development of the service sector, the specialisation in a limited number of production sectors (Metaxas and Kallioras 2003), the specialisation and mobility of human resources – as well as the political dimension of European integration (Barnett, 2001), have significantly influenced the competitive profile of the cities/places, creating a powerful level of attractiveness.

The contribution of culture must be related to the conformance and the implementation of urban policy actions, the focus on the satisfaction of the needs and demands of the potential target markets, the enforcement and promotion of the cultural identity and image of the cities/places, the contribution of citizenship to achieving a better quality of life, and to the construction of a city/place's competitive advantage.

The sustainability and effectiveness of culture policies is based on the development and implementation of particular and distinctive strategic actions, culture is acknowledged as a 'production field' of urban economic development (Bloomfield, 1993), and cultural industries as 'production systems' (Pratt, 1997). Cultural industries include a variety of activities, such as fashion and design, architecture and townscape, heritage, local history, eating and entertainment, and generally the identity and external image of a city (Pratt, 1997; Deffner, 2000; Kong, 2000; Evans, 2003:). For these reasons, attention must be given to the ability and 'know-how' of urban cultural development experts to 'use culture as a tool' through the cultural management process, by auditing the weaknesses and strengths of each city/place's

cultural environment, focusing on the analysis of each sector, in order to construct the appropriate development climate, mainly through the evaluation of the anticipated profits of urban economic and cultural development.

3. THE IDENTIFICATION OF A CITY/PLACE'S VISION

Shaping the vision concerns the identification of sustainable development objectives that each place sets up as part of their long-term vision (Ritchie, 1993). Kemp (1992) and Fretter (1993:165) argued that the vision of the place should provide 'a clear understanding of what is desirable, of what you want to achieve', while Ritchie (1993) supported that the most significant thing is the relation between vision development and its particular mission. In a more recent approach, Ache (2000) argued that the vision is a model of the future for a region and its inhabitants, it is a strategy for the development of the spatial and settlement structures, it is a test routine for everyday decisions and actions. In this framework, for example, recent studies award the 'visions of nature' (Gobster, 2001; van den Born et al., 2001; de Groot and van den Born, 2003), 'visions of culture and arts' (Kong, 2000; Selwood, 2007), 'smart, technology and informational cities vision' (Castells, 1989; Newstead, 1989; Avraham, 2000, 2004), or 'eco-city' vision (Roseland, 1997). Furthermore, the vision is the first step in strategic planning implementation that a place has to follow in order to construct its identity and to produce its image as a 'final provided good'. The most important issue is that the vision of each place, as well as the development objectives and strategies, depend on its local distinctive characteristics and particularities (Eben Saleh, 2002; Metaxas, 2003; Deffner and Metaxas, 2006; Wu, 2007).

In addition to the core elements of a place, its positive characteristics need to be promoted simultaneously, since consumers make decisions based not only on functional quality but also on the representational and emotional quality of a place (Kotler et al., 1999: 107, 276; Nuttavuthisit, 2007). In each case there are several factors that contribute to the accomplishment of the vision. For instance, the existence of a particular city development plan, the development of partnerships (Bennett and Krebs, 1991, p.22; Fuller et al., 2003), the capacity for planning and implementing development policies (van den Berg et al., 1997, 2003; Polidano 2000;), the representation of common interests among a city's internal forces (authorities, enterprises, citizens).

The international, and mainly the European, experience presents several cases where cities have related their vision to cultural development. Brown et al. (2000) emphasised the development of music quarters in Manchester and Sheffield through local music, policies, while Booth and Boyle (1993) acknowledge the importance of culture in the case of Glasgow. 'See Glasgow, see culture' was the slogan that was used in 1990, when Glasgow was designated as the 'European Capital of Culture'. Glasgow's main goal wasn't to be acknowledged as a European cultural city, something that was already apparent, but to remain a competitive cultural city and to certify its competitiveness, thus creating a comparative advantage in the cultural development sector. Crewe and Beaverstock (1998) used empirical research to examine

the viability of a simultaneous economic and cultural fashion strategy for urban regeneration in the case of Nottingham Lace Market.

In addition, Kotler et al. (1999) present two different cultural visions for Budapest. As a city, it consists of two different parts – Buda and Pest – and there are today two distinct images linked to Budapest. Separated by the Danube, Buda is a hilly, medieval and historic place; in contrast, Pest is industrial, with wide boulevards and a bustling urban aura. In order to design a new image, the city planners are building metal bridges to Budapest's romantic and colourful pre-communist heritage. The vision of a 'creative city' as tool for promoting cultural images is also of major interest in the case of Turin (Vanolo, 2008). Finally, Lexington, Kentucky, focuses on the identification of the relationship between culture and local economic development in order to develop its urban policy actions (McCann, 2002). There has been an effort to examine the environment of the cultural sector in order to define the conditions under which culture could become a development axis for city competitiveness.

4. THE CULTMARK PROJECT AND THE AREAS OF STUDY

The lead partner of *CultMark* was DEMKA (Municipal Enterprise for Planning, Construction and Development of Nea Ionia Magnesia, Greece) and the other partners were local authorities and/or organisations from Chester (Britain), Kainuu (Finland), Rostock/ TLM (Germany), and Pafos (Cyprus). The scientific support of the *CultMark* project was provided by the Laboratory of Tourism Planning, Research and Policy (L.A.RE.TOUR), Department of Planning and Regional Development, University of Thessaly¹. The *CultMark* project applied a place marketing strategy with a cultural approach. This means that it emphasised the cultural dimension of marketing, as well as the promotion of the cultural resources of each place in connection with the planning of demonstration actions.

4.1. Nea Ionia, Magnesia, Greece

The Prefecture of Magnesia, having a central geographical position in Greece and being almost equidistant from the two major urban centres of Athens and Thessaloniki, constitutes a very important junction. In addition, having one of the most significance harbours of Greece, the Volos harbour, it has a developed system of sea transport and a high level of communication infrastructures in the sectors of transport and energy.

One of most significant advantages of Nea Ionia is that, being a dynamic municipality belonging to the Greater Volos area, it has easy accessibility to other national markets because

¹ The director of L.A.RE.TOUR. is Alex Deffner, Associate Professor of Urban and Leisure Planning, and the members who participated in the research were Nick Bogiazides (Adjunct Assistant Professor), Pashalis Arvanitidis (Lecturer), Theodore Metaxas (Lecturer), Christos Liouris, Penelope Melidou, and Christina Vlahopoulou (all three PhD Candidates). The 'Cultural Sector Report' was written by Pashalis Arvanitidis based on a draft by Christos Liouris and Penelope Melidou.

of its central position. Nea Ionia is also characterised by the availability of support to business services, and low local taxes. These criteria, in combination with the low cost of labour and land, create a favourable and attractive environment for the establishment of new enterprises. Finally, two of the most significant advantages of the city are the high level of both the provision of the cultural and sports facilities, since Nea Ionia has tried to invest in these two particular sectors in order to become a dynamic and competitive destination.

4.2 Chester, United Kingdom

Chester is the county town of Cheshire, and is centrally located within the UK in the north-west region. Its concentration of motorways, roads and railways means that most areas of the UK are within good travelling distance. Chester is also served by Liverpool and Manchester Airports, and private aircraft can be accommodated at Hawarden Airport, four miles from the city.

The city of Chester has a variety of advantages that have enabled it to become, and remain, an attractive prospect for business investments as well as new residents and tourists. With regard to the business factor, Chester has an appropriate size of local market, with good accessibility to other national markets and to the markets of Western and Northern Europe. The major advantages of the city are the availability of natural resources and the availability of support business services (engineering, maintenance, R & D, etc). Furthermore, the city has a good profile vis-à-vis the existence of universities and technological institutes, which ensures the availability of qualified and specialised human resources. Chester can also compete well in terms of the urban aesthetic, the availability of cultural, tourism and sports facilities, and also the quality of social services; all of which shows that there has been an investment in soft attraction factors in order for the city to become a competitive destination for the potential target markets.

4.3 Kainuu, Finland

The region of Kainuu is located in east-central Finland. According to the Development and Regional Plans of Kainuu, and by focusing on the tourist and cultural sector, of the region, Kainuu has primarily developed a cooperative marketing strategy, something that is very important from the moment that the main development objective of the region seemed to be the development of each municipality and the region as a whole.

In order to support this steady growth, cooperation is required between the tourist companies. Kainuu's strength lies in its diversity. The elements which make up its tourist product include an unspoilt nature, a rich culture and a diverse provision of both outdoor and indoor sports and pastimes, and a spacious and tranquil environment. Leading the development of the region's tourism are the tourist centres of Vuokatti and Paljakka-Ukkohalla with their wide range of winter and summer events packages, and the City of Kajaani, acting as a provider of general services. Service is the keyword for success in tourism. Professionally skilled and

linguistically capable staff ensure visitors an enjoyable holiday or business meeting. Tourism also provides additional income for rural areas. New tourism opportunities opening up in rural districts include the provision of nature, adventure and family holidays.

4.4 Rostock, Germany

The Hanseatic City of Rostock is the largest city in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, situated on the Berlin-Copenhagen and Hamburg-Stettin routes. The autobahns A 19 (to Berlin) and A 20 (to Hamburg/Stettin), the airport Rostock-Laage and direct rail links to Berlin, Hamburg and Kiel, all provide rapid access to commercial centres across Europe. There are regular ferry lines from Rostock to Gedser/Denmark, to Trelleborg/Sweden and, seasonally, to Finland and Estonia. Rostock is linked to all ports around the Baltic Sea by commercial shipping lines. 500,000 inhabitants live within a 50 kilometre range of the Greater Rostock area. The Hanseatic City is a supra-regional commercial, administrative, cultural and educational centre.

Shipping and related industries continue to form an important part of the local economy, but are no longer the dominant industries. The shipbuilding and the port industries act as a magnet and attract numerous small- to medium-sized service organisations. New opportunities have been created, for instance in mechanical and marine engineering, food processing, electrical engineering, electronics and advanced technologies (e.g. biotechnologies, biomaterials).

4.5. Pafos, Cyprus

Pafos is located to the west of Cyprus. The whole city of Pafos is included in the official UNESCO list of World Heritage cultural and natural treasures. For the last 15 years, tourism has been the major source of income in Pafos. Tourist development has been increasing but is well controlled. The environmental protection measures, the special morphology and the many ancient sites all provided Pafos with the opportunity to become one of the most popular tourist destinations in Cyprus. The Pafos area has beautiful mountain villages, where life has remained unchanged over the years, and where the customs and traditions of the country have been kept alive.

Pafos has recently experienced a rapid growth in commercial and business activity, with the development of a number of well-designed shopping centres in the tourist area, Kato Pafos (lower part), and in the city centre. Pafos is well provided for in the fields of banking, financial and consulting services. All the important enterprises have a branch in the city and the area of Pafos, which gives an indication of the importance of the area, especially after the recent boom in tourism.

5. CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE CULTMARK AREAS: METHODOLOGY

This section explores respondents' views with regard to which specific economic areas the cultural sector has, or could have, a positive influence on, and the expectations they have in terms of the direction for development of the sector in the future. In an attempt to specify expert perspectives with regard to urban identity, image and vision and the qualities of their cultural sectors, a primary research has been conducted, and distributed to 100 selected 'experts' (e.g. local and regional authorities, NGOs, cultural organisations, business and tourism associations and travel agents). Responses were coded and subsequently analysed to generate a number of descriptive statistics that are used to illustrate the strength of agreement or disagreement regarding specific issues raised in the questionnaires. The primary research took place between January and March, 2005. In the case of closed questions the Likert scale (1 to 7) was applied (Likert, 1932; Stathakopoulos, 2005:134).. The method of programming, rather than random interviewing, was preferred, in order to sustain the chance of clarifying ambiguous questions, to avoid 'quick' and 'non-skeptical' answers and to provide ample time for the correct and comprehensive completion of the questionnaires. The areas of economic influence examined included the reduction of unemployment, the creation of higher GDP per capita, the attraction of foreign investment or a highly qualified workforce, the support of an entrepreneurial climate, the creation of competitive advantage, the participation in European programmes, and the spread of economic effects to the wider area. The collected data are presented in Tables 1 and 2. More particularly:

Experts in Nea Ionia deem that the cultural sector has generally a moderate to low influence in the economy of the place. Medium economic impact is perceived through the use of the cultural sector as a vehicle for participation in European programmes. Other areas where the cultural sector is reckoned to have an influence, though a weak one, are towards GDP growth, unemployment reduction and enhancement of competitive advantage, whereas the least effect is recognised in the creation of an entrepreneurial climate and the attraction of foreign investment in the city. As regards development expectations of the cultural sector, half of the respondents believe that it will focus on planning and implementation of major cultural events promoting the city as a cultural pole, whereas 33.3% of the respondents view cultural development in terms of the planning and implementation of major projects (museums, theatres, cultural theme parks, etc.).

In Chester, experts think more highly of the cultural sector's contribution to economic development (compared to those of Nea Ionia). It is believed that the sector has a strong impact on the reduction of unemployment, and a medium impact in terms of production of positive economic externalities to the wider community, creation of higher GDP per capita, attraction of foreign investments and a qualified workforce, creation of competitive advantage, and development of an entrepreneurial climate (though there is quite a divergence of opinion concerning the last five areas). As regards the future development of the cultural sector, about 66.7% of the respondents believe that it will mainly be expressed through the strategic planning promotion of local characteristics, and 33.3% believe that culture will constitute

the main economic development axis of the city, raising partnerships between the public and private sectors.

Experts in Kainuu have the least positive view about the impact of the cultural sector on the economic development of the area. They deem that the sector has a very weak contribution to GDP and employment growth and the attraction of foreign investments. All other areas of influence are seen as weak. Unsurprisingly, the majority of respondents maintain that in the near future the development of the cultural sector in Kainuu will face a variety of problems. In Rostock, experts are less optimistic about the contribution of culture to urban economic development. The cultural sector is deemed to have a medium impact in attracting a qualified workforce, in supporting an entrepreneurial climate, in creating a cultural competitive advantage, and in enhancing the economy of the wider area (though some divergence of opinion over these areas is evident). A weak impact is seen in all other areas, i.e. the improvement of GDP and employment, the attraction of foreign investment and the participation in European programmes for culture. As regards the future development of the cultural sector, opinions vary. However, 66.6% of the respondents argue that it will face a variety of problems.

A more positive attitude is evident in Pafos, where experts believe that the cultural sector has a strong impact in the creation of competitive advantage. Areas of medium effects are: participation in European programmes for culture, production of positive economic externalities to the wider community, and the retention of a qualified workforce (though there is quite a divergence of opinion). A weak economic impact is seen in terms of GDP and employment improvements and also the attraction of foreign investments. Pafos' cultural sector development, according to 60% of the respondents, will be mainly expressed through the strategic planning promotion of local cultural distinctive characteristics.

Overall, it must be acknowledged that, according to the respondents, the cultural sector can have a low impact in terms of economic development (average score 2.3) The specific economic area that is influenced most (in comparison to the others) is the creation of a competitive advantage (though its average score is just below medium). The one that is least affected by the cultural sector is the attraction of foreign investment.

Of the five case studies, Chester is the least sceptical in terms of the positive impact the cultural sector can have on the economy of a place, followed by Rostock. Next are Pafos and Nea Ionia, and last is Kainuu, which is the most sceptical. As regards future developments, Chester and Pafos envisage a strategic role for the cultural sector supporting promotion and place marketing, and Nea Ionia narrowly sees the sector as a medium for the planning and implementation of cultural events and projects, while Rostock and Kainuu pessimistically highlight the fact that problems are faced in the development of the sector.

Table 1: Contribution of the cultural sector to economic development (1: lowest, 5: highest)	NEA IONIA	CHESTER	KAINUU	ROSTOCK	PAFOS	average
Reduction or minimisation of unemployment	2.3	3.7	1.4	2.3	1.6	2.3
Creation of higher GDP per capita	2.0	3.0	1.3	2.1	1.4	2.0
Growth of the foreign investments in the area	1.4	3.0	1.1	2.1	1.8	1.9
Support of the creation of a powerful entrepreneurial climate in the area	1.3	2.5	1.9	2.8	2.4	2.2
Constitution of the main axis of city participation in European programmes for culture	2.7	1.0	1.6	2.4	2.8	2.2
Production of positive economic effects not only to the city but to the wider community	2.0	3.3	1.9	2.6	2.8	2.6
Keeping the high qualified workforce in the area	1.8	2.7	1.9	3.0	2.6	2.4
Support of the economic dynamism of the city through the creation of competitive advantage on the field of culture	2.2	3.0	1.7	2.9	3.6	2.8
average	2.0	2.8	1.6	2.5	2.4	2.3

Table 2: Future development of the cultural sector	NEA IONIA	CHESTER	KAINUU	ROSTOCK	PAFOS
Culture will be the main economic development axis of the city, raising partnerships between the public and private sectors	0%	33.3%	0%	0%	0%
Cultural sector development will be mainly expressed through the strategic planning promotion of local cultural distinctive characteristics	16.7%	66.7%	0%	11.1%	60%
Cultural sector development will focus on the planning of major cultural events, thus promoting the city as a cultural pole	50%	0%	28.6%	0%	20%
Cultural development will be expressed through the planning of major cultural projects (museums, theatres, cultural theme parks, etc.)	33.3%	0%	0%	11.1%	0%
Cultural development policies will not change drastically, because they are already successful	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Cultural sector development will face a variety of problems in the immediate future	0%	0%	71.4%	66.6%	20%
Other "It is necessary to overcome circumstances to promote culture."	0%	0%	0%	11.1%	0%

6. DETERMINANTS OF THE SATISFACTION OF CITY/PLACE VISION

6.1 The vision in each area

This section looks at the vision cities/places have in terms of their position and development prospects for the near future. It starts by identifying how respondents envisage their city/place, then it moves on to discuss what they think are the chances of this coming true in the near future, and it concludes by exploring the contribution of a number of factors to the accomplishment of this vision. These factors include the existence/provision of a development plan, the existence of development goals, the analysis of the internal and external environment (e.g. SWOT analysis), the identification of the city/place's distinctive characteristics, the development of partnerships between local authorities, the business community, research centres and the citizens, the participation in European development programmes in cooperation with other cities/places, the systematic collection of data and information required for comprehensive decision making, the utilisation of innovative promotional policies, the participation of the community in the development of the city/place's vision, the level of capacity and knowledge of local authorities to plan and implement development policies, and the acceptance of the vision by the local community. The realization of the vision for each area is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Realization of vision	NEA IONIA	CHESTER	KAINUU	ROSTOCK	PAFOS
Very possible	33.3%	100%	75%	0%	60%
Quite possible	50%	0%	25%	42.9%	40%
Possible	16.7%	0%	0%	57.1%	0%

According to the evidence of the 'Cultural Sector Report' (2005), respondents in Nea Ionia envisage a city that is economically robust, socially balanced and pays due respect to both the natural and the cultural environment. On these grounds, they regard that a well planned development, which takes care of the environmental problems (including traffic) and provides the necessary cultural infrastructure (museums, theatres, galleries or other cultural spaces to house culture), will support the further development of the city as a tourist destination and attraction pole. The local cultural characteristics of the people (mainly refugees from Asia Minor), the beauty of the natural environment of the wider area, and the available sports infrastructure (developed for the 2004 Olympics), constitute some of the main assets of the place. The vast majority of the respondents (about 84%) argue that such a vision is quite likely to become a reality in the future.

More specifically:

- The city of Nea Ionia can be a place of tourist destination and pole of attraction for visitors based only on its distinctive local characteristics and its cultural heritage (since the first residents of the region were refugees who were uprooted from Smyrna and the rest of Asia Minor in 1922 during the destruction of Asia Minor), the beauty of the natural landscape and the pre-existence of sport infrastructure
- It can be a city with balanced development, hospitality, and with respect for the environment (natural, cultural, etc.) that will take into consideration the particularities and needs of all social classes. A city that will go to the future with planned steps for its development.
- the erratic and concrete development of the city based on concrete can be stopped and it can keep its traditional character with its emphasis on culture and tradition
- basic problems, like heavy traffic and pollution, can be solved, and buildings that will house museums and services can be constructed - these will exhibit and preserve the city's history, whilst at the same time showing respect for the environment.
- It can accommodate work, tourism, theatre, cinema and conference requirements, with tourist attractions, as well as the University, the Asia Minor museum and it can take advantage of the 2004 Olympics.
- It can have a vision of a city that is socially and economically improved, based on culture and history.

The wider vision of Chester is to become a 24-hour city with a healthy and robust economy. More specifically, respondents envisage Chester as a must-see historic European city with a growing cultural sector that offers an outstanding quality of experience to both residents and visitors. Interestingly, all respondents unanimously agree that the above vision will very probably be realized. All the factors identified at the beginning of this section are seen to contribute in a high degree to the realization of the city's vision, apart from the participation of the community in the development of the vision, which scores very high, and the analysis of the internal and external environment, which is regarded as of medium significance (although there is quite a divergence of opinion among the respondents on this issue).

The vision of Kainuu includes sustainable economic development and high quality of life for its citizens. This can be accomplished through the development of Kainuu as a tourist destination. The focus is on business, cultural and leisure tourism all year round, requiring systematic development of the historical and cultural heritage and a more clear definition and promotion of the city/place's cultural image. Kainuu offers a high-quality natural environment, efficient business services and good infrastructure at competitive prices. About 75% of the experts questioned feel confident that such a vision is very likely to be realized.

More specifically:

- Kajaani will develop, in a more systematic way, its historical and cultural heritage and will be integrated into one-day visits in main tourism itineraries. Kajaani will not be a main

tourist destination, but a part of Kainuu tourism packages. It will develop year-round tourism. Its tourism clients will be business tourists, leisure and cultural tourists. The average stay in Kajaani will be increased from 1.5 nights to 2.5. Vaala will develop its tourism services and more clearly define its cultural image. It will attract cultural and leisure tourists; it will be either part of larger packages or a destination in itself for some 7-night stays.

- A long-term objective of the city of Kajaani is to promote the well-being of its citizens along with sustainable regional development. The city offers high-quality infrastructure, a competitive cost structure, a green and safe living environment and good availability of efficient business services.
- In Rostock, experts envisage their city as an important cultural capital of the Baltic Sea region, recognising the substantial role that culture and tourism can play towards that end. Such a development entails economic prosperity and a high quality of both life and education. However, it should be noted that some of the respondents lack any vision for their city. On these grounds, it is not surprising that experts are reserved when the question turns to the possibility of vision actualisation. In particular, about 57% of the respondents answered that the realization of the vision is simply (but not highly) possible.

More particularly:

- There is a common concept of urban development using culture as a field of economic growth and as a precondition for other economic sectors.
- Rostock is an old city with modern ideas and an interesting culture. One possibility is the development of the main shipyard industries.
- Both the citizens and politicians suddenly recognise culture as a factor in economic development, especially in a region living mainly from tourism, and they acknowledge that the biggest city in a decaying region has a responsibility to provide incentives for the younger generation.
- Rostock is a cultural capital in the north of Germany. Culture has the most important rate of growth.
- Rostock is a maritime capital in the Baltic Sea region, with powerful economics, high educational standards in schools and university, accompanied by a friendly atmosphere for cultural development.

Concerning Pafos, the vision is for a cultural and natural heritage area able to attract high quality tourism all year round, is improving; at the same time, the quality of life of the residents is improving too. It is argued that what is required is the development of appropriate cultural infrastructure (e.g. new theatre, galleries, etc.), the maintenance and protection of archaeological areas, the improvement of the Archaeological and other Museums and the organisation of events of worldwide impact (such as European City of Culture). It is generally agreed that such a vision is not difficult to realized. Actually, about 60% of the experts surveyed believe that the vision may very possible realize.

6.2 Factors that satisfy the vision of the city/place

With regard to the factors that contribute to the realization of the city/place vision, there are two that score the highest: the participation in European development programmes in cooperation with other cities/places, and the acceptance of the vision by the local community (Table 4).

Table 4: Factors that contribute to the realization of the vision (1: min, 5: max)	NEA IONIA	CHESTER	KAINUU	ROSTOCK	PAFOS	average
The planning and the implementation of a particular city development plan	2.8	4.0	2.4	3.3	4.6	3.6
The identification of particular main development goals	2.5	4.0	3.3	3.7	4.8	3.8
The analysis of the city's internal and external environment (based on particular methods, such as SWOT analysis)	2.0	3.3	3.0	3.7	4.2	3.1
The diagnosis and the evaluation of the city's distinctive characteristics in each development sector	3.0	4.3	2.7	3.7	4.2	3.7
The planning and the development of partnerships between the local authorities and the business community	2.5	4.3	3.3	3.7	5.0	3.8
The planning and the development of partnerships between the local authorities and the academic or research centres	3.0	3.7	3.4	3.7	3.8	3.7
The planning and the development of partnerships between the local authorities and the citizens	3.3	4.3	3.0	3.3	4.0	3.7
The participation in specific European development programmes in co-operation with other cities	3.8	4.0	2.7	3.5	4.0	3.7
The development of a systematic collection of data and information supporting the decision making process	2.8	4.0	2.9	3.2	4.4	3.4
The adaptation and the implementation of new innovative promotional policies by local public authorities	3.2	4.3	2.3	3.3	4.6	3.6

The representation of common interests for city development by the local authorities, the enterprises and the community	3.0	4.5	2.0	3.5	4.6	3.6
The level of capacity and the level of knowledge of the local public authorities to plan and to implement development policies	3.0	4.3	3.0	3.2	4.6	3.7
The understanding of the community that the vision of the city is a common interest	3.5	4.3	2.7	3.3	5.0	3.9
average	3.0	4.1	2.8	3.5	4.4	3.6

The diagnosis and evaluation of the distinctive characteristics of each development sector for Nea Ionia is a crucial factor that could contribute towards the realization of the vision. Also, the significance of the development of partnerships between local authorities and the universities or citizens, in the context of a co-operative marketing strategy, is extremely crucial in order for the vision of the city to be realized. In the end, the ability of local authorities to adopt and implement innovative activities presents quite a high degree of importance for the vision of the city. All other factors are seen as of medium importance, apart from the analysis of the internal and external environment, which is regarded as of low importance. Nea Ionia seems to acknowledge the role and the value of those factors that could contribute effectively in order for the vision of the city to become a reality. Of course, all these factors could operate successfully when all the internal actors and forces of the city represent common interests and develop common activities, taking into consideration that the vision of the city equally concerns all groups.

In the case of Chester, all the factors identified at the beginning of this section are seen as contributing to a high degree to the realization of the city's vision, apart from the participation of the community in the development of the city's vision, which scores very high, and the analysis of the internal and external environment, which is regarded as of medium significance (although there is quite a divergence of opinion among the respondents on this issue).

More specifically:

- The total average is very high (4.1) and this means that the city holds a strong and competitive place marketing orientation among the other cities of the programme.
- The representation of common interests for the development of the city from enterprises, local authorities and the community ranks as the top factor (4.5) that contributes to the realization of the city's vision. This is very interesting since it constitutes the major element in order for a place marketing procedure to be planned and successfully implemented.

Experts in Kainuu pay a lot of attention to the role of public local authorities, as well as the development and planning of partnerships. This leads to the conclusion that the city/place

actors have audited the main dimensions of Kainuu's effective representation and support and they have invested in these factors that will satisfy its vision and goals. But, at this point there is something unusual related to the representation of common interests between the actors. This factor has a limited contribution to the satisfaction of Kainuu's vision. In addition, factors that score low are the provision of a development plan, the utilisation of innovative promotional policies, and the participation of the community in the development of the vision. However, there is a considerable divergence between respondents in the evaluation of the significance of each factor. The total average of Table 4 is quite low, but it is above 50%. In Rostock, respondents give a high rating to the existence of development goals, the analysis of the city's internal and external environment, the identification of the city's distinctive characteristics, the development of partnerships between local authorities, the business community and research centres, the participation in European development programmes in cooperation with other cities, and the participation of the community in the development of the city's vision. Experts in Rostock pay attention to a variety of factors in order to satisfy the vision of the city. They acknowledge the importance of the identification of distinctive characteristics, and, at the same time, support the development of partnerships between the business community and the local authorities. They also give a high degree of attention to the participation in EU programmes. In addition, the average is also high (3.5), something that means city planners have a strong orientation towards the implementation of marketing activities and, consequently, all the factors that support this process effectively. All the rest are deemed to be of medium importance, though there is a wide divergence of opinion in terms of the degree of their significance.

In Pafos, as far as the factors that contribute to the realization of its vision are concerned, respondents unanimously place at the top of the scale the development of partnerships between local authorities and the business community, as well as the acceptance of the vision by the local community. Other factors that score very highly (but not unanimously) are the existence of development goals, the participation of the community in the development of the vision for Pafos, and the level of capacity and knowledge of local authorities to plan and implement development policies. All the rest are deemed to contribute to a high degree towards the realization of the vision. These include the existence/provision of a development plan, the analysis of the internal and external environment (e.g. SWOT analysis), the identification of the distinctive characteristics, the development of partnerships between local authorities, research centres and the citizens, participation in European development programmes in cooperation with other places, and the systematic collection of data and information required for comprehensive decision making. The total average is consequently very high (4.4). This leads to the conclusion that in Pafos, a well-organised effort of developing corporative actions in order to satisfy its vision has already been implemented by the relevant actors and decision makers.

The majority of specified factors are seen to have a medium effect on the accomplishment of the city/place's vision. From those, the ones that are perceived as more important are the development of partnerships between local authorities, the business community, research

centres and the citizens, the existence of development goals, and the level of capacity and knowledge of local authorities to plan and implement development policies. All case studies share the same wider objective, looking forward to economic prosperity, social cohesion and high quality of life for their citizens. The development of the cultural sector can substantially contribute towards this end. It can improve the quality of life and enhance the overall attractiveness of the place, advancing tourism. As expected, however, this general objective is tailored differently by each city/place in the attempt to form a vision that better suits its specificities, conditions, needs and history. Two groups of places could be identified. The first, which includes Nea Ionia, Pafos and Kainuu, have a much clear orientation towards leisure and tourism and, in a rather narrow perspective, seek to develop the cultural sector (mainly infrastructure) and use it as a vehicle for the enhancement of their position as tourist destinations. The second group, which comprises Chester and Rostock, seem to have a wider point of vision, envisaging a strategic role for their cities as cultural centres or capitals. In that sense, cultural development is treated not as just a medium to attract people but as an end in itself.

Whatever the specific stance, however, experts in all places are generally optimistic when the question turns to the possibility of the vision become reality. Respondents highlight a number of factors that contribute significantly to the realization of their city/place's vision, with most importance given to the community's acceptance and ratification of the vision, and the development of partnerships between local authorities and the business community. Interestingly, collection of data/information and systematic analysis of the internal and external environment are deemed to be less significant for the realization of the vision.

Respondents in Pafos, followed by those of Chester, are the most positive when they evaluate the contribution of each factor to the accomplishment of the city/place's vision. In contrast, Kainuu and Nea Ionia seem to be quite reserved with regard to their contribution. On the whole, all specified factors influence the attainment of a city/place's vision to a high degree, apart from the analysis of internal and external environment (it comes last), and the development of systematic collection of data and information required for comprehensive decision making, both of which score medium. In contrast, the factor that is seen as most important is the acceptance/ratification of the city/place's vision by the local community (average score 3.9) followed by the development of partnerships between local authorities and the business community (score 3.8), and the existence of development goals (score 3.8).

7. CONCLUSIONS

This paper has presented and analysed primary information collected from Nea Ionia, Chester, Kainuu, Rostock and Pafos, in order to explore certain aspects of their cultural sector and the overall image the cities/places have or aspire to develop. The particular issues examined involve the overall economic structure, the contribution of the cultural sector to economic development, the infrastructure and environment of the cultural industries, and the overall vision, identity and image that the cities/places have.

Moreover, the research discovered that the relation between the cultural sector and the economy is poorly understood by the experts, as the majority of respondents maintain that the sector makes a marginal, or, at best, moderate, contribution to economic development. One of the main reasons for this is that it is difficult to separate the economy of the cultural sector from the overall local economy. For example, individuals employed in the “business” of creating, producing, manufacturing and distributing cultural goods and services not only increase employment but also receive income just like other workers in the economy, further adding to the country’s GDP (Singh, 2004:7). More specifically, focusing on the role of cultural industries, several studies (Pratt, 1997; Bryan et. al., 2000; Jeffcutt and Pratt, 2002; Oakley, 2004), support that the potential role of the cultural industries in economic development, together with the connected leisure, sport, and tourism sectors, is one factor that has encouraged attempts to systematically analyse the direct and indirect economic effects of such an industrial activity. On the other hand, focusing on the cultural sector organisations, their successful contribution is expressed in the provision of public value above and beyond meeting their mission goals, by creating and sustaining meaningful community relationships, fostering dynamic workplaces that support and develop staff by making long-term, as well as short-term, investments in the organisation’s intellectual capital, and monitoring and improving the financial bottom line of the organisation (Falk and Dierking, 2008). But in any case, the clear understanding of the contribution made by the cultural sector has to be based on an analysis of actions and local policies that the cultural decision makers plan and implement each time. Of course, this requires primary data and empirical findings which are difficult to obtain most of the time.

From the five case studies, Chester was the one that seemed to really appreciate the economic significance and scope of the cultural sector. This is why it envisages a strategic role for the sector (i.e. to enhance the promotion of the city/place), and it has invested a lot in developing cultural infrastructure of good quality.

As far as the issue of a city/place’s vision is concerned, research revealed that cities/places share the same wider objective, looking for economic prosperity, social cohesion and high quality of life, through the development of a strong cultural sector.

Whatever the specific stance, experts in all places are generally optimistic when the question turns to the possibility of vision become reality. The greatest number of optimists seem to be among the respondents from Chester, followed by those of Kainuu, Pafos and Nea Ionia. Residents of Rostock seem to be quite sceptical, something that may reflect the fact that there is divergence of opinion as regards the specificities of the vision. Chester and Pafos are the most positive when they evaluate the contribution of each factor to the accomplishment of the city/place’s vision, in contrast with Kainuu and Nea Ionia, which seem to be quite reserved.

The overall picture leads to some recommendations regarding two important areas for further discussion. Firstly, the structure and the character of the cultural sector and its role on a city’s economic development, and secondly, the satisfaction of the vision. Regarding the first point,

this study recommends that each development sector, and especially the cultural sector, requires internal analysis in order to identify strengths and weaknesses and in particular those characteristics that could create a competitive advantage for the city. The second parameter is based on the efficient analysis of the first. The satisfaction of the city's vision and the overall development objectives is based, primarily, on the representation of common interests and the identification of 'exactly what vision the city wants'. In addition, the satisfaction of the vision requires clear understanding of a city's capabilities, a connection with the city's historical past and the city's identity. The whole process presupposes that local decision makers have clear thought and a particular strategic plan regarding the development of the city, where the accomplishment of the vision is the main aim. The international experience of successful stories supports these recommendations. In this context, apart from Chester, all the other cases have to move on this direction in order for the desired vision to become reality, with consequent positive benefits for their economic and cultural development.

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Understanding the tour operators' point of view for effectively marketing a tourist destination: The case of Athens

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ABSTRACT

Tour operators have been the most important facilitators of international travel in Europe during the last five decades. The present paper focuses on Athens and is the result of a research project conducted by the University of the Aegean on behalf of ATEDCO, the City of Athens' newly founded tourist board. This work explores ways of attracting more inclusive tour travellers to Athens based on the findings of an international survey among tour operators.

Keywords: tour operations, tourism marketing, Athens, Greece

1. INTRODUCTION

Tour operators have been the most important facilitators of international travel in Europe during the last five decades (see, for instance, Hebestreit, 1992). Despite the growing use of the Internet for planning trips independently, the majority of Europeans still book packaged tours for their international travel as in the case of Germans and British (Gruner + Jahr, 2009a; Office for National Statistics, 2008). The marketing effort of both individual suppliers of tourist services (at the micro level) and destination marketing organisations (at the macro level) is to a large extent oriented towards finding ways of better understanding tour operators and, thus, of more effectively motivating them to send more tourists to a business or a destination (Krippendorf, 1971; Freyer, 1999; Koutoulas, 2001).

Supporting decision making with market research is the proper way to plan the marketing task of a tourist destination (see, for instance, Middleton, 1988; Freyer, 1999). Many local, regional or national tourism organisations rely on professionally conducted research in order to make strategic decisions and to allocate marketing funds in the best possible manner. However, there are still destinations (as was the case of Athens until recently) that do not adhere to the most basic principles of marketing planning.

The present paper focuses on Athens and is the result of a research project conducted by the University of the Aegean on behalf of ATEDCO, the City of Athens' newly founded tourist board. This work explores ways of attracting more inclusive tour travellers to Athens based on the findings of an international survey among tour operators. This is perhaps the first time that local authorities of Athens have used scientific research as a direct input into tourism planning.

2. THE INFLUENCE OF TOUR OPERATORS ON TOURIST TRAFFIC TO A DESTINATION

Tour operators have been a major force in shaping tourist traffic in Europe (Koutoulas, 2006). International trips – once a luxury that only wealthy people could indulge in – became affordable for almost the entire population of industrialised European nations after the introduction of inclusive tours. By utilising charter flights and by buying hotel capacity in bulk, tour operators were able to offer inclusive tours at a price significantly lower than the total sum each consumer would have paid if they had bought the components individually and directly from the respective providers (i.e. airlines, hotels etc.). Inclusive tours have been the backbone of the rapid development especially of Mediterranean-bound international leisure travel that emerged on a massive scale over the last five decades. For instance, of all international trips made by Germans in 2006, 58.5% were organised by tour operators (Forschungsgemeinschaft Urlaub und Reisen, 2007).

Tour operators are acting both as producers (by putting together individual components and thus creating a new product – the inclusive tour – offered at an overall price) and as distributors in the marketplace. In the latter capacity, they play the role of wholesalers by buying room and airline seat capacities in bulk and by selling their inclusive tours through retail travel agencies. Hebestreit (1992:20-21) defines the ready-made inclusive tour (as opposed to the tailor-made one) as “a service package comprising at least two complementary travel services; it is created in advance for a yet unknown customer and is offered at a total price, with the prices of the individual services not being identifiable.”

The largest part of the business generated by European tour operators corresponds to sea-and-sun holidays mostly in Mediterranean destinations (Koutoulas, 2006). However, other forms of travel such as sightseeing tours and city breaks command a significant share among inclusive tours. Numerous tour operators actually specialise in certain forms of travel and deal exclusively with these niche markets. There are, for instance, some small and medium-sized tour operators offering only city breaks, while most among the large firms have dedicated units or subsidiaries serving this market. On the German market, for example, mega operators TUI and Thomas Cook compete with specialist operators such as Ameropa and Dertour for market share in the city breaks market (Gruner + Jahr, 2008).

The advent of low-cost carriers and the growing use of the Internet for booking flights and accommodation have to some extent counterbalanced the immense market power of tour operators over the last decade. Individual travellers are now able to easily prepare their trips

by themselves through the Internet and at a cost that is comparable to inclusive tour prices. This has led to loss of market share by tour operators; however they still dominate the Mediterranean-bound leisure travel (Koutoulas, 2006). For instance, eight million out of twelve million tourists from European Union member countries arrived in Greece in 2007 on charter flights used by tour operators, with charter flight passengers commanding an 80%, 75% and 60% share among all British, Swedish and German tourists vacationing in Greece in that year, respectively (General Secretariat of National Statistical Service of Greece, 2009). One single tour operator – Germany-based TUI – contributes 30% of all Greece-bound tourists from twelve West and North European countries that TUI operates in (Koutoulas, 2007).

Some of the major tour operators were quick to react to the growing market share of low-cost airlines and web-based booking platforms. TUI, for instance, has transformed some of its airlines into low-cost carriers and has created state-of-the-art Internet platforms with dynamic packaging capabilities.

3. THE MARKET FOR CITY BREAKS

City breaks can be defined as travel experiences for culture, fun and entertainment in a city and its surroundings with duration of up to three days (THR, PRC and MRB, 2007). Most popular city break destinations in Europe are London and Paris, followed by cities in Germany (Berlin, Munich), Spain (Barcelona, Madrid), Italy (Rome, Florence, Venice), the Czech Republic (Prague), Austria (Vienna), the Netherlands (Amsterdam) etc. (Prountzou, 2008).

City breaks are estimated to represent 15% of all trips between European countries (Gruner + Jahr, 2009b). For instance, 4.2 million Germans – or 6.5% of its total population over 14 years – made city trips outside of Germany in 2008; however Athens could only attract approx. 70,000 German visitors. (German tourists amount to 2.3 million per year in Greece.) Only a part of these 70,000 Germans are actually on a city break; they also include business travellers, congress delegates etc. (General Secretariat of National Statistical Service of Greece, 2009).

No separate statistics are kept at the destination level in regard to city breaks. Available information refers only to total overnight stays made by all visitors of a city and does not make a distinction between city breaks and other forms of travel (e.g. business trips, congress attendance etc.). Nevertheless, these statistics are an indication of the popularity of leading urban destinations. For instance, leading the way in Europe is London (with 119 million overnight stays in tourist accommodations in 2007), Paris (with 36 million overnight stays), Rome (20 million), Berlin (17 million) and Barcelona (15 million). In comparison, Athens achieved around five million overnight stays that same year (Tsartas et al., 2008).

Tour operators represent 60% of tourists visiting Greece (Koutoulas, 2006). This percentage may be lower in the case of Athens; however, tour operator-generated city breaks remain

a largely untapped market for the Greek capital. In an effort to stimulate the demand for Athens-bound trips, the market of both independent travellers and tour operator customers can be targeted as part of an integrated marketing strategy (Tsartas et al., 2008).

4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

A study was assigned by the Athens Tourism & Economic Development Company (ATEDCO), i.e. the tourist board founded by the City of Athens, with the broader aim of appraising the impact of the 2004 Olympic Games on the city's tourism sector (Tsartas et al., 2008). This study focused, among other topics, on the role of tour operators in order for the city authorities of Athens to identify ways of growing visitor traffic generated by them.

As part of this study, a survey among tour operators was conducted. The objectives of this survey were:

- to assess how the demand for trips to Athens has evolved during the post-Olympic period for each tour operator;
- to determine the position of Athens compared to competitive destinations;
- to understand the outlook of Athenian tourism in the international marketplace.

After taking into consideration experience gained from previous research among tour operators (e.g. Koutoulas, 2003), the survey has been kept as simple as possible in order to maximise participation. The questionnaire was limited to 12 questions focussing on the experience and the perceptions of senior tour operator staff and their day-to-day work in selling city tours. Questions asking for potentially sensitive or confidential information were omitted.

The survey was carried out during the period of May-June 2008. The survey's sample of 217 tour operators based in Europe, Australia and the USA was compiled from industry databases as well as from lists provided by the overseas offices of the Greek National Tourism Organisation.

A self-administered 12-item questionnaire was used to collect the required data. The questionnaire structure reflected the aim of the survey to support local authorities and industry bodies in their decision making process. Therefore, questions were put and completed questionnaires were analysed in such a way that straightforward answers could be provided to those end users of the survey.

The questionnaire was sent by e-mail to senior staff overseeing city tours at their companies. An introductory text stated the purpose of the survey and explained how the provided data would be used. An attached MS Word file contained the questionnaire. Respondents had the choice of returning the completed questionnaire by e-mail or by fax. Many of the recipients of the questionnaire also received a phone call explaining the objectives of the research. Two waves of follow-up mailings and phone calls followed in order to reach the targeted response

rate of 15% that was set in accordance with experience from previous research among tour operators (Koutoulas, 2003).

The achieved response rate of the survey was 19%, with 41 out of the 217 sampled companies returning completed and usable questionnaires until the cut-off date in June 2008. Respondents were from the main source countries of Athenian tourism and included all types of tour operators ranging from highly specialised small firms to mega operators including companies.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Profile of tour operators that participated in the survey

73% of replies came from European tour operators, mostly based in the UK, Germany, Bulgaria, Switzerland, Italy and the Netherlands. 15% of the replies originated in Australia and the remaining 12% were from the USA.

Customers visiting cities represented 25% of the total volume of trips organised by the surveyed tour operators. Seaside holiday trips contributed another 32% followed by escorted multi-destination sightseeing and cultural tours corresponding to 17% of all trips sold. 68% of their customers chose a European destination, with 11% and 9% opting for the Americas and Asia, respectively (Table 1).

The position of Athens in the tourist market following the 2004 Olympic Games

The surveyed companies were asked to evaluate the impact of the 2004 Olympic Games 2004 on the tourist image of Athens based on a scale from -5 (very negative impact) to +5 (very positive impact). The average score was 2.7 showing that the Games significantly enhanced the image of Athens in the global tourist market (Figure 1). Still, there were a few tour operators that stated that the Games didn't help or even had a negative impact on the standing of Athens (6 out of 41 companies of the sample). Nevertheless, the vast majority (85%) considers the impact of the Games as positive.

59% of the sampled operators stated that their clients' interest to visit Athens was positively influenced by the 2004 Olympic Games (Table 2). This growing interest resulted from the city's radically enhanced transport infrastructure (subway, tram, road network, airport) mentioned by many survey participants as well as the image of a modern European capital that was attributed to Athens since the successful hosting of the 2004 Olympics. Some companies, however, mentioned that the increased demand for trips to Athens right after the Games was short-lived, as it has significantly softened since 2007.

30 out of 41 sampled tour operators provided data concerning the number of their clients travelling to Athens between 2003 and 2007 (Table 3). 60% of the companies mentioned an

increase over this period as far as trips to Athens were concerned, 27% a decrease and 13% a steady number of visitors. These 30 operators sent a total of 38,073 tourists to Athens, 32% more than in 2003.

45% of the surveyed operators stated that Athens outperformed other urban destinations in regard to sales trends, while 20% stated that Athens trailed the growth rates of other cities in their programmes (Table 4).

Particularly interesting are the comments of the tour operators concerning the advantages and disadvantages of Athens as a tourist destination and also in comparison with their most popular urban destinations. The strong and weak points of Athens are the following (most frequently occurring answers are presented in descending order):

Strong points of Athens as a tourist destination:

- Strong name recognition of Athens; everyone knows it
- Newer and more 'exotic' destination compared to the established European cities.
- There are many things that a visitor can see and do
- A richer history than that of other cities commanding great historic monuments (especially the Acropolis) and museums (especially the Benaki Museum and the National Archaeological Museum)
- Lifestyle (e.g. gastronomy, nightlife and shopping)
- Climate
- Picturesque city districts such as Plaka and Monastiraki
- Warm and hospitable residents
- A wide range of guided tours and activities
- Mediterranean atmosphere, warm sea, beaches, vicinity to islands
- Quality and variety of hotel accommodation
- Transport infrastructure (especially the subway), security, proximity to the sea etc.

Weak points of Athens as a tourist destination:

- Traffic congestion
- Air and noise pollution
- Less established destination and unattractive image compared to that of other European cities.
- Large distance from countries of origin and high cost of air transport.
- Limited number of sights.
- Limited options for entertainment and shopping.
- Lack of green and recreation space.
- The cost of services such as expensive hotels and guided tours, high local costs
- Lack of professionalism and incidents of bad service.
- Deficient cleanliness, appearance of certain parts of the city etc.

These replies include an obvious contradiction as some survey participants consider Athens as a place with many things for the visitor to see and to do, while others think of Athens as a city with limited options in regard to sights, entertainment and shopping.

The tour operators were asked to compare Athens to their three most popular city break destinations. Since the sample included several tour operators that specialise in trips to Greece and the East Mediterranean, Athens and Istanbul were among the most frequently mentioned leading destinations together with Rome (the most popular), Paris and London. A listing of the most popular cities among the surveyed tour operators as well as the strong points of each city is presented in Table 5. Some very interesting *attributes* can be derived from how senior staff of tour operators considers a place as an attractive city break destination:

- **Easy accessibility**, i.e. short flight distance, cost and frequency of flights or having the alternative to travel by car or train is an obvious factor for short trips as in the case of city breaks. Athens has a disadvantage in this regard (due to its remote location when compared to other popular cities) and local authorities should work towards attracting more low-cost carriers. They should also develop the proper sales arguments as to why Athens is worth a longer and costlier flight.
- **Variety and contrasts**, i.e. having the choice among many different and diverse activities, is a most desirable attribute for a city break destination. Athens has failed, so far, to successfully communicate the many recreational opportunities that it offers its visitors. Marketing activities should aim at changing the deeply rooted stereotype among both travelers and travel professionals that Athens hasn't much to offer besides the Acropolis.
- The **proper mix of admiring** (e.g. visiting sights and attending cultural events) and **indulging** (e.g. shopping, enjoying food or nightlife and bathing in the sea) appears to be the key point for a travel professional organizing city breaks. Athenian authorities should work towards convincing those professionals that the city offers a most attractive mix of both elements.
- For many surveyed tour operators it all seems to boil down to **value for money**, especially when considering the affordability of some of Europe's most popular city break destinations such as Barcelona, Berlin and Prague. Athenian authorities should monitor the value of the city's tourist offerings as perceived by visitors and as compared to other destinations and provide specific pricing guidelines to local businesses.
- Several tour operators stressed the fact that they expect **professional conduct** from their local suppliers in city break destinations. Introducing a quality improvement policy and acknowledging that Athenian tourist businesses provide superior services is an obvious route to follow for local authorities.

In order to better understand the competitive environment of Athens and to identify the best practices in the field of urban tourism, the tour operators were questioned on the cities that, in their opinion, practice the most efficient marketing. Their replies are as follows:

City break destinations considered by the surveyed tour operators as most efficient in marketing (most frequently mentioned cities)

- Paris
- Barcelona
- Rome
- London
- Amsterdam
- Vienna
- Madrid
- Berlin

Outlook of Athens-bound travel

Half of the surveyed tour operators (52%) expect that the demand for trips to Athens will remain more or less the same in the years to come, while one out of three (35%) anticipates an increase. Only 13% of the tour operators questioned expect a decrease in the tourist flow to Athens.

Tour operators were also asked how ATEDCO could support them in selling more trips to Athens. The most frequently mentioned recommendations made by tour operators include to regularly provide travel professionals with information on what Athens has to offer, to organise familiarisation trips in order to gain better knowledge of the destination, to upgrade the Internet presence of Athens, to highlight other aspects of the city besides its historic sights as well as to work towards enhancing quality at the destination.

5. RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The Olympic Games definitely contributed to enhancing the city's standing in the city break market and to growing Athens-bound visitor traffic, however, interest to travel to Athens among tour operator clients started to fade in 2008, i.e. four years after the 2004 Olympics. This negative trend was further intensified in late 2008 by the impact of the global economic recession as well as by large-scale riots that took place in Athens and generated extensive negative publicity internationally.

This drop in tourist arrivals shows that Athens has to put in more effort to recuperate losses and, thus, to regain the high visitation levels of the three post-Olympic years. A key to attracting more tourists is to market more efficiently to tour operators.

Part of the surveyed tour operators are well informed about the greatly improved infrastructure and new visitor attractions, however, many still draw attention to the city's traffic and pollution issues. There is also a significant share among those travel professionals who are unaware of many appealing facets of the city besides the Acropolis and the major museums.

Three strategic priorities in regard to growing tour operator-generated tourist traffic to Athens can be clearly derived from the research findings:

- Repositioning Athens and enhancing its image as a world-class city break destination;
- Enhancing existing tourist offerings and developing new products;
- Selling Athens more efficiently.

There is an obvious challenge concerning deeply rooted perceptions and stereotypes about Athens. A well-designed *repositioning exercise* is required in order for the city's tourism authorities to downplay the partly justified, partly exaggerated negative attributes associated with Athens. Instead, the greatly improved public transportation network, the better air quality, the regenerated districts of Athens and the creation of new visitor attractions should be stressed. Repositioning the city should focus on the duality that is so typical of Athens: the universal appeal of the city's past and of its world-class historic sites and museums versus all the trappings of a vibrant modern metropolis such as the wide range of cultural and culinary offerings; the numerous shopping and nightlife options; trendy hotels and spas; and the choice of outdoor activities in and near the city and on the sea. The five attributes of attractive city break destinations that were derived from the tour operator survey and presented in the previous section, should provide the guidelines for the proposed repositioning exercise, i.e. (i) easy accessibility; (ii) variety and contrasts; the (iii) proper mix of admiring and indulging; (iv) value for money; (v) and professional conduct of local suppliers.

A second strategic priority is to *focus on products*, i.e. to enhance quality of existing offerings and to develop new products for the city break market such as special-interest itineraries and visitor activities beyond the historic city centre.

A third strategic priority should be to better organise *promotional activities aimed at tour operators* and their clients. Tour operators need to become more knowledgeable and more motivated in order for them to sell more trips to Athens and to offer a more varied range of Athens-bound itineraries. For this purpose, the city's tourism authorities should consider, among others, a more aggressive web presence, a training programme for tour operators and travel agents by inviting them to take part in familiarisation trips as well as the regular distribution of information and content about Athens to travel professionals.

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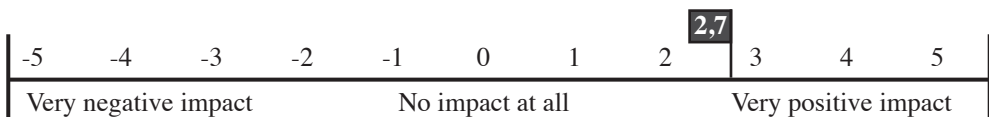
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Table 1
Q1. Average share of customers among surveyed tour operators per type of packaged tour and per continent visited (N = 37)

Trips to cities	Seaside holiday trips	Skiing	Escorted sightseeing & cultural tours to multiple destinations	Cruises	Other trips
25%	32%	3%	17%	8%	16%
Trips to Europe	Trips to Asia & Oceania	Trips to the Americas	Trips to Africa and the Middle East	Multi-continent travel	
68%	9%	11%	7%	5%	

Source: Tsartas, P., Koutoulas, D., Papatheodorou, A. and Prountzou, El. (2008). Study of Athenian Tourism from the Pre-Olympic to the Post-Olympic Period. Athens: University of the Aegean & ATEDCO

Figure 1
Q2. Average score of the assessment of the impact that the 2004 Olympic Games had on the image of Athens as a tourist destination (N = 41)



Source: Tsartas, P., Koutoulas, D., Papatheodorou, A. and Prountzou, El. (2008). Study of Athenian Tourism from the Pre-Olympic to the Post-Olympic Period. Athens: University of the Aegean & ATEDCO

Table 2

Q3. Change caused by the 2004 Olympic Games among the clients of surveyed tour operators regarding their interest to visit Athens (N = 39)

Positively influenced their clients	Negatively influenced their clients	No influence on their clients
59%	3%	38%

Source: Tsartas, P., Koutoulas, D., Papatheodorou, A. and Prountzou, El. (2008). Study of Athenian Tourism from the Pre-Olympic to the Post-Olympic Period. Athens: University of the Aegean & ATEDCO

Table 3

Q4. Comparison of client numbers sent by surveyed tour operators to Athens in 2003 and in 2007 (N = 30)

	Athens-bound clients in 2003	Athens-bound clients in 2007	Change between 2003 and 2007
All respondents:	28,797	38,073	32%
	Tour operators with increased numbers of Athens-bound clients between 2003 and 2007	Tour operators with decreased numbers of Athens-bound clients between 2003 and 2007	Tour operators with the same number of Athens-bound clients between 2003 and 2007
Share among surveyed operators:	60%	27%	13%
Average change (unweighted):	208%	-38%	0%

Source: Tsartas, P., Koutoulas, D., Papatheodorou, A. and Prountzou, El. (2008). Study of Athenian Tourism from the Pre-Olympic to the Post-Olympic Period. Athens: University of the Aegean & ATEDCO

Table 4

Q5. Sales trends for trips to Athens as compared to trips to other cities following the 2004 Olympic Games (N = 40)

The sales trends for trips to Athens compared to trips to other cities have been:	greater	the same	lower
	45%	35%	20%

Source: Tsartas, P., Koutoulas, D., Papatheodorou, A. and Prountzou, El. (2008). Study of Athenian Tourism from the Pre-Olympic to the Post-Olympic Period. Athens: University of the Aegean & ATEDCO

Table 5

Q8. The most popular urban destinations for the tour operators of the sample (presented in descending order according to frequency of reference) and their strong points based on comments from surveyed tour operators (N = 37)

Most popular cities	Strong points of each city
Rome	City of arts, food, culture, history, shopping, lifestyle. High level of services, professionalism everywhere. Pope. Short flight distance from most European countries.
Paris	Appeal, style and history. Quick and easy access by train, vast variety of sights and guided tours. Culture, shopping, food, lifestyle, atmosphere, romance, theatres.
London	Lifestyle, shopping, fashion. Low-cost flights, variety of sightseeing. History and diversity. Professionalism always and everywhere, operators can count on their suppliers. Theatre, musicals.
Athens	Departure point for cruises, interesting place for educated people. Culture, climate, history. Sailing and other water-bound recreation.
Istanbul	Departure point for cruises, interesting place for educated people. Crossroad between East and West. Easy road access from Sofia. Inexpensive destination with great historic and cultural interest. Many monuments. Diversity. Good hotel rates.
Berlin	Capital with historic sights, shopping. All German cities are easily accessible and there are always special offers from tourist companies. One can count on his suppliers that are attentive to detail and can guarantee happy customers. Attractive hotel rates.
Prague	Easily accessible and inexpensive, has lots of places to visit. Culture, attractive prices, new destination. Shopping. Polite cordial people.
Barcelona	Culture, attractive prices, new destination. Low-cost flights, pleasant climate, vast variety of sights and guided tours. Unique architecture, cleanliness.

Source: Tsartas, P., Koutoulas, D., Papatheodorou, A. and Prountzou, El. (2008). Study of Athenian Tourism from the Pre-Olympic to the Post-Olympic Period. Athens: University of the Aegean & ATEDCO

Table 6

Q11. Expectations of tour operators regarding the future demand for trips to Athens (N = 40)

Demand for trips to Athens is expected to:	increase	stay the same	decrease
	35%	52%	13%

Source: Tsartas, P., Koutoulas, D., Papatheodorou, A. and Prountzou, El. (2008). Study of Athenian Tourism from the Pre-Olympic to the Post-Olympic Period. Athens: University of the Aegean & ATEDCO

Trust and loyalty relations among small tourism enterprises in the seaside villages

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This paper studies trust and loyalty relationships among small tourism enterprises (STEs) in the seaside villages in Turkey. A theoretical model of trust and loyalty among small tourism enterprises was developed and tested. The sample consists of four villages which are dominated by STEs, operating under difficult conditions because of the inadequate tourism infrastructure and super-structure in the region. The selected villages are localized in same bay in Bozburun Peninsula. This area has totally 115 STEs, a total of 35 respond were gathered with a response rate of 30 percent. Field study was conducted during August 2008 and February 2009 by using a questionnaire. Findings indicate that friendship and loyalty are related variables. Another finding is that trust has a significant effect on loyalty and that loyalty further breed cooperation. As for mediation, the coefficients are not as robust as they appear and this is likely due to the low degrees of freedom, which in turn is an effect of the low sample size. Still one can claim that loyalty mediate both friendship and trust on cooperation. This is the first case study on the trust and loyalty relations of STEs in Turkey. Loyalty is an important factor for improving cooperation among STEs in the villages. Therefore, collaborative processes based on trust and loyalty must be improved in the destination network eventually.

INTRODUCTION

Small tourism enterprises (STEs) are very important for responding tourist needs or developing a tourism destination (Novelli, Schmitz and Spencer, 2006). But, STEs are not able to provide tourists with all their needs because of their limited scale. Therefore, most of STEs are dependent on others to satisfy all tourist needs (Grängsjö and Gummesson, 2006; Pesämaa, Jonsson-Kvist and Hair, 2007). There is a growing interest on tourism in difficult conditions among researchers recently (Morrison, 1998; Wilson, Fesenmaier, Fesenmaier and Van Es, 2001; Grängsjö, 2003; Haahti, 2007; Capriello and Rotherdam, 2008), and periphery is to be the most difficult condition for developing STEs.

The villages in Bozburun peninsula (Please see Figure 1) have had a drastic change over twenty years apparently. There has been an interesting entrepreneurial culture developed in the villages of Bozburun peninsula despite the inadequate tourism infra-structure such as drainage system, supply of clean water, electricity, etc., and super-structure such as tourism board . There is a total of 115 STEs in the region. Most of them belong to the local residents. They have started-up the businesses without any monetary loan or incentive from govern-

and restaurants are run in non-registered buildings. Surprisingly, these businesses are paying necessary taxes. Official monetary audits were done regularly and strictly. If they have illegal small waterfronts, they are asked to pay 5-6.000 TL (3.000€) as a penalty. There is not sewer drainage system and every building has its own sewer tank. They have to pay proximately 3.000 TL (1.500€) to local authorities for a year to get their garbage collected and benefit from the mobile sewage tank drainage. There is an inadequate water and electricity supply system. The local authority could not supply sufficient service for small waterfronts and STEs. On the other hand, the entrepreneurs cannot supply sufficient funds due to the illegal situation of the building supply in the region. The result is that the production costs are doubled every year and the prices are getting high accordingly.

Seasonality is another problem that the businesses should overcome. Unfortunately, they are getting far from traditional farming and fishing methods, and mostly relying on the tourist dollars. Alternative tourism forms have not been developed yet in order to mitigate the seasonality. Further, assistance of governmental bodies is insufficient. A local tourism board has not been established yet. The lack of cooperation in marketing efforts results in increased marketing costs. In such, each pension and restaurant has its individual web site. But there is not a destination web site. It is observed that trust and loyalty among the businesses are strong, such that they share pension rooms and restaurant tables. But there isn't collaboration at stakeholders' common benefits in the village. Finally, it is encouraging that the local residents have a strong tourism orientation and have a high entrepreneurial characteristic. People also support the tourism development although it provides temporary employment.

Particularly for policy making and long term strategy planning, loyalty orientations can be important to consider in expanding tourism programs within peripheral areas (Pesämaa, Örtqvist and Hair, 2007; Lynch and Morrison, 2007). Therefore, there is a need for longitudinal and case study research examining the internal processes of cooperation mechanisms in the peripheral tourism network in which process oriented theory and methods can be used to guide future research in this area (Wang and Fesenmaier, 2007). In this vein, the paper presents a case study aiming at examining the trust and loyalty relations among STEs in the Bozburun villages, Marmaris, Turkey. This is the first case study on the networks in difficult conditions with limited power in the context of long-term sustainability of tourism in Turkey. Beside, this research is an ongoing process so that for aiming to reveal network relation mechanisms at local and national level and a longitudinal research at international level.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE MODEL

STEs have difficulties identifying and solving operational as well as strategic issues (Pesämaa and Hair, 2007). But, coordinating products, resources and activities in networks support individual enterprises to become successful and thus the overall network (Ford, 1997). The dependencies in each other's capabilities are one of the fundamentals in the network literature (Ford, 1997). At the same time the dependencies stresses network failures (Park and Russo, 1996) because of inadequate contracts and nature of relationships (Pesämaa and Hair, 2007).

STEs are therefore typically stressed to both deal with their cooperative goals (i.e., operational and strategic issues) and simultaneously develop working relationships with cooperative enterprises. This paper therefore suggest a model which rely on the rationale that personal relationship will increase trust, which will further have an effect the stability of the relationship by locking the relationships into loyalties, which will furthermore increase cooperation (Zaheer, McEvily and Perrone, 1998; Pesämaa and Hair, 2007; Lynch and Morrison, 2007). The foundation of the theory is that trust breed loyalties and cooperation (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). Gulati (1995) established early that/those familiarity breed trust which further breed cooperation.

Friendship motivates individuals to consider the feelings of others because they do not just work professionally but also share their leisure interests (Pesämaa and Hair, 2007). Friendship will therefore enhance trust and make communication more efficient (Ingram and Roberts, 2002). The paper uses a definition of friendship similar to Mavondo and Rodrigo (2001) implicating that friendships are more aware of other feelings.

Trust is per se a matter of risk which is basically based on earlier experiences (Pesämaa and Hair, 2007). These experiences also account for some of the values that are embedded in trust and the degree to which individuals have empathy for the others feelings.

One outcome of personal relationships is loyalties. Loyalties protect individuals by saving faces (Mavondo and Rodrigo, 2001) it furthermore discourage opportunism (Zaheer et al., 1998) and enable individuals to work on a long term pace (Pesämaa and Hair, 2007).

Another outcome of personal relationships in business contexts is it is linked to goals and decisions. The definition of cooperation involves shared goals, decision making and a cognitive assumption, which means the individuals are flexible to new situations.

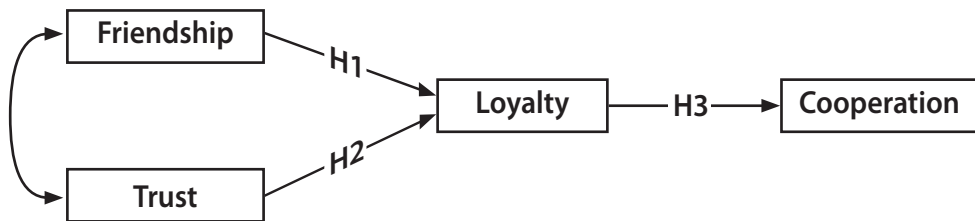


Figure 2. Theoretical model

A theoretical model of trust and loyalty among small tourism enterprises was tested by using hypotheses below.

Hypothesis 1. *There is a relationship between friendship and loyalty in the villages' network.*

Hypothesis 2. *Trust among STEs has an effect on loyalty in the villages' network.*

Hypothesis 3. *Loyalty among STEs has an effect on cooperation in the villages' network.*

METHODOLOGY

This paper is based on summated scales of friendship, trust, loyalty and cooperation (Mavondo and Rodrigo, 2001; Pesämaa and Hair, 2007). Each of these based on Likert scales ranging from 1 not important at all to 7 very important. All specifics about these items can be found in the Appendix A. There are four villages selected as a case sample of Bozburun peninsula. These villages share the common feature that STEs are dominated in the area with similar challenging conditions. There are 115 STEs in the villages. Data was collected by using a questionnaire via a face to face interview in August 2008 and in February 2009, both lasted one week. A total of 35 responds were gathered with a response rate of 30 percent. Since the business owners were very busy, a low response rate was obtained.

Results

Table 1 reports Cronbach's alpha for each of the proposed summated scales. It is found that all scales exceed the recommended .7 suggested by Hair et al., (2006).

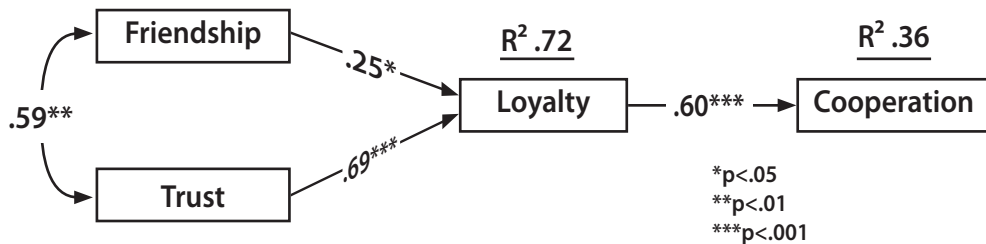
Table 1. Correlation among the scales

	Alpha	1	2	3	4
1. Friendship	.84	1.000			
2. Trust	.87	.594**	1.000		
3. Loyalty	.72	.653**	.832**	1.000	
4. Cooperation	.90	.527**	.648**	.603**	1.000

** p<.01

Test of hypothesis

In order to test the hypothesis Amos software was used (Arbuckle, 2006). It is aimed to get an idea not just about the regression weights of each individual hypothesis but also how much each effect is mediated by loyalty on cooperation.



Chi square=5.24; DF=2; Chi square/DF=2.62; P-value=.07; CFI=.95; NFI=.94

Figure 3. Test of hypotheses

The results of the survey thus indicate that there is a correspondence between the theoretical model and the tested sample. All goodness-of-fit measures indicate a good fit. P-value is significant for the chi square and NFI as well as CFI are above the recommended .90 level suggested by Hair et al., (2006). 72 percent of the variance in loyalty and 36 percent of cooperation was explained.

The proposed exogenous variables: friendship and trust are correlated, which means they can be treated as simultaneous input for loyalty. As expected it is found that the standardized coefficient for the relationship between friendship and loyalty (H1) is significant ($r=.25$; $p<.05$). Similarly it is also found that (H2) trust has a significant effect on loyalty ($r=.69$; $p<.001$). Finally it is seen that (H3) loyalty also has an effect on cooperation ($r=.60$; $p<.001$).

When we test for mediation we found that loyalty mediate both friendship and trust on cooperation. One notion is however, that the relatively low sample size has the implications that results and any implications should be adopted carefully.

CONCLUSIONS

As the results of this study indicate, it is apparent that tourism services in the villages create a need for loyalties. The possible dependencies among STEs require loyalty orientations which is disputably important for maintaining and developing sustainable businesses. Therefore, collaborative processes based on trust and loyalty must be improved in destination network eventually. This is a challenging task since loyalty orientations may be difficult to uncover. However the result would be useful because it could be controlled through collective programs (Pesämaa, Örtqvist and Hair, 2007).

As Lazzeretti and Capone (2006) stated out: "Governments use same strategies as for all destinations without considering their unique characteristics. Policy makers should develop a specific political approach for each case." Before collective programs the settlement law problem of the villages has to resolve by government. This problem triggers other problems and harms trust and loyalty relations among villagers and STEs. Besides, local government and municipality have a big responsibility for sustainable tourism development in the region such as protected by law.

Finally, some collective programs can be developed for cooperation in the villages. This is an evolutionary process (Gibson, Lynch and Morrison, 2005) and never going to be easy (Michael, 2007) so that at the beginning level, the local municipality and universities have to lead the joint programs such as product developing, environmental care, entrepreneurial orientation, guest relations, soft tourism, and eco-tourism. The aim should be forging a network which covers all stakeholders in the villages of Bozburun peninsula.

Acknowledgement

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Appendix A.

Social Relations (Developed from Mavondo & Rodrigo, 2001; Pesämaa & Hair, 2007)

Please assess the importance of items with others within the network for your own business performance? Scale 1= Unimportant – 7=Very important

Friendship
a) How important is it that you interact with your network partner(s) on a social basis outside work?
b) How important is it that your network partner and you are able to talk openly as friends?
c) How important is it that you consider your network partner(s) as being almost as close to you as your family?
d) How important is it that if you changed business partner (s), you would lose a good friend in your current partner(s)?
e) How important is it that you consider whether your network partner's feelings would be hurt before you make an important decision?

Trust
a) How important is it that your network partner(s) is honest and truthful with you?
b) How important is it that you have confidence in your network partner(s)?
c) How important is mutual trust in developing a relationship with your network partner(s)?
d) How important is it that network partner(s) not try to take advantage of your relationship to benefit their company?
e) How important is it that you are not negatively surprised by your network partners actions?
f) How important is it that you can rely on your network partner(s), because you know he/she shares your values?

Loyalty
a) How important is it that you not embarrass your network partner(s) or make him/her feel uncomfortable?
b) How important is it that you not confront your network partner(s) at a meeting even if he/she is wrong?
c) How important is it that you always give your network partner(s) an avenue out so that he/she will not be embarrassed?
d) How important is it that you are likely to resolve conflicts in an agreeable way, rather than through the use of your power or position?
Cooperation
a) How important is it that your partner(s) exhibit goals similar to you?
b) How important is it that network partner(s) understand other partners' temporary difficulties even if it results in short-term losses for your company?
c) How important is it that you and your network partner(s) make decisions together?
d) How important is it that you and your network partner(s) work together towards common goals?
e) How important is it that your network partners are willing to be flexible in the face of changed circumstances?
f) How important is communicating with your network partner(s) to overcome barriers to developing your relationships?

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Cypriot cruise passengers' perceptions and expectations

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The research aims to identify the perceptions and expectations of the Cypriot cruise passengers. A quantitative survey was developed in which respondents were asked to indicate their perception of importance towards twenty-seven value indicators that shaped their overall cruising experience. In addition, respondents were asked to express their level of satisfaction on each of the twenty-seven indicators, which are separated into five broad categories; cabins, food, lobby, shops and other relevant cruise attributes.

In terms of importance respondents rated general cleanliness, cabin cleanliness, food quality, general hospitality and security as the top five factors, whereas, in terms of actual satisfaction the attributes of general cruise services, general cleanliness, general hospitality, cabin cleanliness, and food quantity took the first five places. Difference between the attributed level of importance and the actual level of satisfaction, was revealed in the following six cruise variables: general cleanliness, food quality, general hospitality, security, good experience and shop prices. In addition, the findings revealed a number of significant differences in a variety of cruise attributes according to the respondents' age, gender, income and category of accommodation in which they reside.

Having identified the differences in a variety of cruise attributes, it was suggested that local cruise stakeholders must devote more resources in order to enhance both the industry's competitiveness and their customers' positive value for money perception. The findings are relevant and have value for all local cruise stakeholders, including industry professionals and cruise tourism educators.

Key Words: Cruise industry of Cyprus, cruise attributes, passenger perceptions, customer service.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Tourism is the world's fastest growing and largest industry. The fastest growing sector of tourism, cruise shipping, is undergoing the most extensive period of development it has ever experienced. The industry is seeking to win a market share from land-based resorts, exploring more markets more extensively, to offer a younger clientele a greater choice of amenities aboard larger, more appealing ships than ever before [Lloyd's Shipping, 2001].

The growth (of the Cyprus shipping industry) started with the Cypriot flag at the beginning of the 1970's and was accelerated for Cyprus shipping as a whole by the tragic events of the Turkish invasion in 1974, which led to the division of Cyprus. In an endeavour to revitalise the economy of the country, the idea came up to create a tax exempt offshore industry, which, through the importation of foreign currency and other invisible earnings, and by employing local labour and using the services of Cyprus banks, lawyers and accountants, could make a valuable contribution to the Cyprus economy. The relevant legislation was introduced in 1975, but the offshore industry was to enjoy the tax-free status only for two years, because already in 1977 the legislation was changed, and for the last 20 years ship managers and operators have been paying a tax of 4.25% on their profits [Central Bank of Cyprus, 1998]. Currently, ship management companies are eligible to benefit either from the taxation of the ship management services or to be taxed at the rate of 4,25% on the income derived from the rendering of ship management services (www.mcw.gov.cy). The favourable conditions in Cyprus formed the basis for the growth of the flag and the local shipping industry. It should be noted that tax advantages alone do not create a maritime centre.

The Cyprus Tourism Organization (CTO), a statutory semi-governmental body which aims to organize and promote tourism in Cyprus, developed a strategic plan for tourism development in Cyprus, covering the years 2003-2010 (CTO, 2006). The developed strategy outlines the need to promote sea cruises, and in order for these plans to materialize it was felt that there is a need to identify if Cypriot passengers taking a cruise are satisfied with their cruising experience. The research investigated which cruise attributes are considered important to passengers and whether the provided experience meets or exceeds their expectations, thus satisfies them.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Cruise Market

Although, in the first instance, it would appear arguable by maritime economists that cruising is a shipping activity that falls exclusively within the subject's (i.e. shipping activity) classic framework, further consideration suggests that this is not the case (Wild & Dearing, 2000). Fundamentally, it would appear that the market structure for cruising is comprised of three basic elements. These are transport, typified by a cruise, tourism and leisure, which is attractive to the cruise tourist, passenger or guest and, finally, travel, that forms the cruise itinerary (Wild & Dearing, 2000).

Cruising is part of the market for maritime tourism and leisure and, conceptually it may be viewed as residing in this segment of the market somewhere in the mid-section where these three key elements overlap (Wild & Dearing, 2000).

The cruise industry is distinct from other forms of travel and tourism in that a cruise can be marketed both as a form of transportation and as a destination (Ahmed Z., et al, 2002).

For total world cruise passenger volumes, after expanding from below 4.4 million to 5.9 million in 1995, 9 million in 1999 (Cruise Industry News, 2000; Peisley, 2003; Wild & Dearing, 1999, 2000) and then to 10 million and 9.8 million passengers in 2000 and 2001 respectively, the aggregate is expected to approximate 11.9 million passengers by 2005, 16 million by 2009, 15.5 million by 2010, and almost 19 million by 2015 (Ocean Shipping Consultants, 2003; Peisley, 2003). The cruise industry in the twenty-first century is characterized by diversity and positive growth (Dingle, 2003). Traditional cruises exist, and indeed this market is strong (Michaelides, 2003). The fastest growing sector of tourism (Cruise Line International Association, 2004; Dickinson & Vladimir, 1997; Hall, 2001; Toh, Rivers, & Ling, 2005), cruise shipping, is undergoing the most extensive period of development it has ever experienced. It has recorded a solid growth rate in the past 20 years, with this development being driven by corporate mergers and takeovers (Bjornsen, 2003), the launching of mega-ships, the opening up of new destinations, the offering of a wider range of cruise products in order to target new market segments (Barron & Greenwood, 2006), and the growing propensity of people who choose to cruise (Douglas and Douglas, 2004).

Bookings in the Cyprus cruise industry have increased over the past decade (Republic of Cyprus, 2000). This does not mean that everything goes well. There have been passenger complaints of long delays, missed ports-of-calls, poor service, plumbing problems, and even cruise fares (Lois, 2004). The strong competition has put pressure on cruise liners to find alternative sources of revenue, such as on-board passenger expenditures. Lois et. al. (2001, 2003) and Lois (2004) found factors such as marital status, income, cost, duration, and destinations to be significant in determining the propensity to choose a cruise vacation.

The Cyprus cruise ships can carry up to 700 passengers, and they include gift shops, casinos, beauty saloons, fitness centers, children's programs, video game arcades, wedding services, nightclubs, and photo shops (Louis Cruises, Salamis Cruises, 2005). These services are also provided by the new cruise ships all over the world, which attempt to differentiate themselves from other ships. All these services and attractions are designed to entertain passengers and encourage them to spend their money on-board. Some tourists spent 50 percent of their vacation budget on shopping (Heung and Cheng, 2000). Passengers are captured with hours of shopping time as the ship travels between ports of call.

It is not surprising that Cyprus, one of the most successful and popular tourist destinations, has its fair share of the fast-growing cruising industry with more than two million visitors per year. The movement of travelers in general is divided into two periods, the summer and the winter. The summer period runs from June to September and the winter period is from October to May. The summer period experiences the higher travel traffic accounting for about 70% of the total annual traffic. Sea travel is mainly carried out through the ports of Limassol and Larnaca. The port of Limassol has by far the biggest traffic volume. Table 1 shows that the number of people departing for cruises from Cyprus increased from 1994 to 2000, with certain fluctuations. This trend has not continued and in 2002 the number of passengers was 129,018 compared to 241,506 in 2000 representing a decrease of 46.6%. Since 2003 there

is a declining trend and in 2008 only 54,953 passengers have taken a cruise as compared to 129,018 taking cruise in 2002. This is probably due to a number of factors including the global uncertainty in financial markets, continuing talk of recession and a perception of worsening employment prospects in Cyprus, and also due to political instability in the area of Middle East. Markets are usually subject to some fluctuation and the cruise market is no exception.

Table 1: Persons departing for cruises starting from Cyprus (1994-2008)
Source: Republic of Cyprus, Department of Statistics and Research (1998-2008)

Year	Total	Foreign citizens	Cypriots
1994	264,000	217,000	47,000
1995	230,572	193,855	36,717
1996	189,756	166,117	23,639
1997	194,092	169,653	24,439
1998	187,155	151,743	35,412
1999	221,065	175,162	45,903
2000	241,506	198,894	42,612
2001	156,082	120,026	36,056
2002	129,018	80,067	48,951
2003	87,917	48,438	39,479
2004	99,686	52,850	46,836
2005	76,204	41,688	34,516
2006	57,866	29,381	28,485
2007	59,799	30,892	28,907
2008	54,953	28,255	26,698

The supply side in terms of cruise ships is divided into two groups. One belongs to Cypriots and serves the routes from Cyprus to Greece, Israel, Syria, Egypt and Lebanon (Louis Cruise Lines, Salamis Cruise Lines, 2006). The other belongs to third parties, is either chartered or represented by local tourists' offices and serves the same routes as the one belonging to Cypriot ship owners.

The ships belonging to Cypriots are more or less on the said routes on a continuous basis year after year while the other ships serve these routes on an opportunistic basis, that is, they do not serve the routes throughout the year; they often show up for only one period, usually from June to September.

2.2 Customer Satisfaction

The concept of consumer satisfaction in this type of research is very important. Whilst much has been written since Cardozo's (1965) study on customer effort, expectations, and satisfaction, Perkins (1991) claimed that more than 900 articles had focused on the same issues between 1982 and 1990. Anton (1996) defined customer satisfaction as a state of mind in which the customer's needs, wants and expectations throughout the product or service life have been met or exceeded, resulting in subsequent repurchase and loyalty. Vavra, (1997) stated that the criteria for determining the quality delivered to customers through the product or service is their satisfaction, therefore measuring this satisfaction is an integral part of improving the quality of that product or service leading to a company's competitive advantage (Cravens *et al.*, 1988). Where companies fail to take into consideration the needs of the customer this will lead to negative and unfavorable evaluation (Chon *et al.*, 1995).

Over the years, scholars have been trying to identify the attributes that lead to positive favorable evaluation. These attributes varied depending on: (a) whether the travelers were business or leisure travelers (Ananth *et al.*, 1992; Gundersen *et al.*, 1996); (b) the frequency with which the traveler visited that destination (Weaver and Heung, 1993); (c) the luxury of the hotel (Griffin *et al.*, 1996); (d) the culture of the traveler (Choi *et al.*, 2000); and finally, (e) the age of the traveler (Wei *et al.*, 1999).

As far as age related expectations are concerned, older customers value as important the tangible aspects of safety-related features in the room or public areas (Murray and Sproats, 1990; Ananth *et al.*, 1992). Room facilities such as better lighting, safety features in the bathroom, easy to handle door knobs, comfortable, supporting mattresses and chairs were among their main concerns (Ruys and Wei, 1998). Price or value for money is another factor strongly associated with high customer loyalty and revenue (Shifflet *et al.*, 1997). Older people are often price sensitive and very responsive to price inducements (Wheatcroft and Seekings, 1992).

A number of scholars suggest that attributes such as cleanliness, comfort, well-maintained rooms, convenient locations, a safe environment, and prompt and courteous service are considered important determinants of customer satisfaction (Knutson, 1988; Cadotte and Turgeon, 1988). In Saleh and Ryan's (1992) study of 30 lodging attributes, important or determining factors for guests' selection of hotels were found to be: cleanliness, spacious rooms, comfortable bed, the availability and food value of a restaurant, friendly staff and efficient service, convenient parking, as well as interior decor and exterior aesthetics.

Research studies have shown that in service settings, including the majority of hospitality encounters, the quality of the interpersonal interaction between the customer and the contact employee greatly influences customer satisfaction (Bitner *et al.*, 1994; Lovelock, 1996). Taken further, a good service relationship is a valuable competitive advantage for the business (Webster, 1992; Juttner and Wherli, 1994).

Prompt and courteous provisions of service, food value of a restaurant, interior decor and exterior aesthetics and positive value for money perceptions are factors that are strongly associated with high customer loyalty (Saleh and Ryan, 1992; Ananth *et al.*, 1992; Shifflet and Bhatia, 1997). In addition, Wilensky and Buttle (1988) support the view that personal services, physical attractiveness, opportunities for relaxation, standard of services and appealing image are factors that travelers consider when they shape their value for money perception.

Parasuraman *et al.* (1988) developed SERVQUAL, a conceptual instrument that measures the discrepancy between customers' expectations and their actual perceptions of a service encounter, in which quality is viewed as the gap between perceived and expected service. The model measures this discrepancy with the utilization of five dimensions (a); tangibles, (b) reliability, (c) responsiveness, (d) assurance and (e) empathy. Variations of the instrument were implemented in a number of sections of the hospitality industry. In particular, Knutson *et al.* (1990) developed LODGSERV, a tool utilized to define and measure service quality in the lodging industry, while several years later, Stevens *et al.* (1995) developed DINESERV for restaurants.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research purpose is to investigate which cruise attributes are considered important to Cypriot passengers and whether the provided experience meets or exceeds their expectations, thus satisfies them. For these purposes a quantitative survey was developed in which respondents were asked to indicate their importance perception and their actual level of satisfaction towards twenty-seven cruising attributes that shaped their overall experience. The twenty-seven indicators were separated into five broad categories; cabins, food, lobby (lounge), shops and other relevant cruise attributes. *Table 2* exhibits the twenty seven indicators utilized in the survey.

Table 2: The twenty-seven indicators

Categories	Indicators / Attribute
CABINS	1. Cleanliness 2. Size 3. Services
FOOD	4. Quantity 5. Quality 6. Services
LOBBY AREA	7. Comfort 8. Music 9. Services 10. Entertainment 11. Services
SHOPS	12. Prices 13. Variety 14. Services
OTHER	15. General Cleanliness 16. General Services 17. Hospitality 18. Activities for Children 19. Relaxation 20. Good Experience 21. Pleasant company 22. Security 23. Romantic Atmosphere 24. Size of ship 25. Pool 26. Gym 27. Accommodating for Pets

In particular the research activity addresses the following three research questions (RQ):

RQ.1 Which are the most important cruise attributes that shape individual's cruising experience?

RQ.2 What is the tourists' level of satisfaction on each of the twenty-seven cruise specific value indicators?

RQ.3 Are there any significant statistical differences between the passengers according to their age, gender, annual income, and category of accommodation in regards to their cruising experience?

Five hundred questionnaires were administered to Cypriot passengers taking a cruise from Cyprus in the months of June, July and August of 2009; the high period in which most

Cypriots take their holidays. Two hundred and fifteen (215) were completed and returned to the researcher. Of these, three survey questionnaires were incomplete, and thus excluded from the study, reducing the number of usable surveys to two hundred and twelve (212). The overall response rate of 42.4% was viewed as satisfactory. Prior to administration, the questionnaire was piloted and tested for both validity and reliability with the utilization of the test-retest method and a panel of experts. Descriptive and inferential statistics, namely one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) with Post Hoc Multiple Comparison Tests (Tukey HSD), Independent Sample t-test and Paired Sample t-test were utilized to analyze the collected data. The factors were ranked according to importance and satisfaction, enabling an investigation of probable differences between the respondents according to their age, gender, and category of cabin accommodation to be made.

4.0 ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

4.1 Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Table 3 displays the demographic profile of the participants in relation to four different variables: gender, age, category of accommodation residing, and annual income.

Table 3: Demographic profile of the respondents (N=212)

Variable	Frequency	Valid Percentage
Gender		
Male	109	51.5
Female	103	48.5
Age		
20 – 30	21	9.8
31 – 40	61	28.8
41 – 50	50	23.9
Over 50	80	37.6
Category of Accommodation		
Inside with facilities-“I”	36	17.1
Outside with facilities-“O”	124	58.5
Suite-“S”	52	24.4
Annual Income		
Less than €10,000	13	6.1
€10,001 – €19,999	23	10.9
€20,000-€29,999	90	42.5
€30,000-€39,999	48	22.6
More than €40,000	38	17.9

Findings (see Table 4 below) underline the great importance passengers attribute to cleanliness. Respondents' ranked general cleanliness and cabin cleanliness as the most important attributes influencing their cruising experience. The quality of food, the feelings of hospitality and security conclude the five most important attributes that influence passengers' expectations. The findings seem to be aligned with the ever changing customer expectations which attribute more importance to cleanliness, compared to some years ago. In contrast, attributes such as children's activities, size of the ship, gym facilities, and shop variety were ranked with low to moderate importance by the respondents.

The attributes of general services, general cleanliness, the feeling of hospitality, cabin cleanliness and food quantity were ranked by the respondents as the top five with regard to their overall feeling of satisfaction. In contrast, attributes such as shop prices, shop variety, activities for children, shop services and gym facilities fail to meet the minimum expectations of the respondents.

Table 4 exhibits the 27 cruising attributes and their respective level of importance and satisfaction. In addition, the table exhibits the differences between the attributes level of importance and satisfaction with the utilization of the paired sample t-test.

Table 4: The 27 attributes and their respective level of importance, satisfaction and differences (Paired Sample t-test)

Cruise Attribute	IMPORTANCE			SATISFACTION			Paired Sample T-Test	
	Std Dev.	Mean	Rank	Std Dev.	Mean	Rank	t	Sig (2-tailed)
General Cleanliness	.204	2.96	1	.400	2.86	2	3.550	.001
Cabin Cleanliness	.225	2.95	2	.477	2.83	4	2.713	.083
Food Quality	.252	2.94	3	.610	2.74	12	3.624	.000
General Hospitality	.297	2.92	4	.417	2.86	3	2.303	.023
Security	.301	2.90	5	.452	2.79	8	2.446	.016
General Cruise Services	.322	2.88	6	.393	2.87	1	.821	.413
Relaxation	.367	2.86	7	.454	2.79	9	1.934	.055
Food Services	.380	2.84	8	.478	2.82	6	1.237	.218
Cabin Services	.427	2.82	9	.500	2.80	7	-.257	.797
Good Experience	.413	2.80	10	.525	2.71	15	2.498	.014
Pool	.489	2.80	11	.479	2.77	11	.588	.557
Cabin Size	.480	2.71	12	.474	2.78	10	-1.745	.083
Lobby Services	.513	2.68	13	.517	2.72	14	-.831	.407
Lobby Comfort	.595	2.55	14	.526	2.73	13	-2.719	.008
Food Quantity	.582	2.46	15	.458	2.83	5	-5.770	.000
Pleasant company	.611	2.44	16	.547	2.59	18	-2.727	.007
Shop Prices	.651	2.37	17	.688	2.14	26	3.224	.002
Shop Services	.660	2.36	18	.608	2.33	23	.483	.630
Leisure Lobby	.602	2.34	19	.476	2.68	16	-2.551	.018
Shop Variety	.654	2.33	20	.652	2.24	25	1.021	.309
Lobby Entertainment	.677	2.20	21	.517	2.72	20	-2.221	.036
Romantic Atmosphere	.709	2.14	22	.554	2.50	19	-4.141	.000
Lobby Music	.713	2.09	23	.618	2.44	21	-3.979	.000
Size of Ship	.722	2.08	24	.516	2.61	17	-8.333	.000
Gym	.730	2.04	25	.643	2.39	22	-3.789	.000
Children Activities	.841	2.01	26	.672	2.27	24	-2.275	.025
Pet Services	.511	1.24	27	.619	2.13	27	-3.896	.001

N=212; Significance Level ($p < 0.05$).

Scale Importance: 1=Not Important, 2=Neutral, 3=Important

Scale Satisfaction: 1=Not Satisfied, 2=Neutral, 3=Satisfied

One of the primary objectives of the study was to investigate probable differences between the respondents according to their age, gender, income level and category of the cabin accommodation they experience. The following is a brief summary of the most important findings for each of the four statistical analyses.

4.2 Age differences

With regard to age, the author investigated whether there are significant differences between respondents who are younger than 40 years of age and those who are older. The findings revealed that the two groups have similar views as to the importance of the majority of the twenty-seven attributes that influence their cruising experience. Significant differences between the two groups were revealed in the attributes of cabins size ($t=-2.413$; $p=.017$), comfort in the lobby ($t=-2.310$; $p=.022$) and entertainment in the lobby ($t=2.359$; $p=.025$). It seems that respondents over 40 years of age give more importance to the physical size of their cabin compared to their younger counterparts perhaps because they spend more time in the cabin rather than the younger ones. Regarding comfort in the lobby, again, individuals over 40 years of age attribute more importance, while, in contrast, entertainment in the lobby is perceived as more important by their younger counterparts.

Significant differences in a number of variables were revealed between the two age groups as regards their level of satisfaction. In particular, differences are revealed in the variables of lobby music ($t=-2.440$; $p=.016$), feeling of general hospitality ($t=-2.023$; $p=.045$), feeling of relaxation ($t=-2.614$; $p=.010$) and services for animal pets ($t=-2.737$; $p=.016$). Overall, individuals who are older than 40 years of age seem to be more satisfied with these attributes compared to those who are younger.

In order to gain a more precise view of how age groups perceive the importance of the twenty seven attributes we separated the respondents into four groups. The one-way ANOVA test suggests that there are significant differences between respondents younger than 30 years of age and those who are older in the variables of activities for children ($f=4.550$; $p=.004$) and general cleanliness ($f=4.744$; $p=.003$). It seems that respondents who are more than 30 years of age give more importance to variables such as children's activities and general cleanliness.

4.3 Gender differences

Significant statistical differences between men and women were revealed in the variables of food services ($t=-2.712$; $p=.007$) and music in the lobby ($t=-2.957$; $p=.004$). Women attribute more importance to these variables compared to men. With regard to their levels of satisfaction, findings revealed a significant difference in the attributes of pleasant company ($t=-2.100$; $p=.038$) and gym ($t=-2.087$; $p=.039$). Again, it is suggested that women are more satisfied with the specific cruise attributes compared to men.

4.4 Differences according to the respondents' level of income

A number of differences exist between respondents with different levels of income. In terms of importance, a one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) revealed significant differences in the attributes of cabin services ($f=3.733$; $p=.006$), general cleanliness ($f=3.402$; $p=.011$), romantic atmosphere ($f=2.961$; $p=.022$), and pool facilities ($f=3.222$; $p=.014$). Post Hoc Multiple Comparison Tests (*Tukey HSD*) revealed that all four differences exist between individuals with less than €10,000 in annual income and those earning more than €10,000 since the first bestow a lower level of importance on each of the four attributes. In regards to the perceived level of satisfaction, differences between the groups exist only in one attribute, the romantic atmosphere ($f=3.551$; $p=.009$).

4.5 Differences according to the category of Cabin Accommodation

Utilizing the one way ANOVA with Post Hoc Multiple Comparison Tests (*Tukey HSD*) we investigated whether there were significant differences according to the respondents' category of cabin accommodation. In terms of importance, one-way ANOVA revealed significant differences between the respondents staying in Categories "I", "O", and "S" in the attributes of cabin size ($f=4.514$; $p=.012$) and food quantity ($f=3.405$; $p=.035$). Findings revealed that cabin size is much more important for individuals staying in Categories "O" and "S". With regard to food quantity, findings revealed significant differences between individuals residing in Categories "O" and "S"; respondents residing in Category "O" place much more importance on the quantity of food compared to the other groups.

No significant differences were revealed between the three groups in terms of their perceived level of satisfaction for twenty-six of the twenty seven cruise attributes. Gym facility is the only attribute where a significant difference exists ($f=4.375$; $p=.014$) between respondents residing in Categories "I", "O", and "S". It seems that individuals residing in Category "I" were not satisfied with their establishment's overall level of gym facilities.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

General cleanliness have captured the attention of many scholars (Knutson, 2000), particularly during the last decade. Customers' evolving needs have placed cleanliness as a crucial component of any hospitality experience. In addition, the tragic events of 2001 in the United States in relation to the global threat of terrorism and political instability in the Middle East enhanced the individual's needs, thus the level of attributed importance, for safety and security when they are away from their own home. Another issue that requires the immediate attention of local cruise stakeholders is shop prices. In a number of cases tourists were asked to pay 2€ for a Cyprus coffee, which is normally priced at less than half a euro. Such incidents require an immediate and drastic government intervention, not only to protect unsuspecting international travelers, but foremost to preserve the industry's image and reputation.

Findings suggest that Cyprus cruise operators are devoting a considerable amount of their resources on attributes that are considered of less importance to their customers, and fail to satisfy them on the important ones.

Whilst cruise operators ask their passengers to fill in a questionnaire when they depart from their premises most of those tools lack methodology and professional statistical analysis. Given that the management in most cruise ships normally reviews the questionnaires according to their own vested interests they may opt to overweight favorable responses and disregard unfavorable. Therefore, it is suggested that cruise operators use independent bodies to carry out unbiased satisfaction surveys aiming to avoid wastage of resources. Furthermore, local operators need to clearly identify the segment of tourists they are targeting and which attributes that segment considers important since our research revealed a correlation between various cruise attributes and age, gender, level of income, and cabin category. The goal is to provide such a cruising experience that will ensure the segment's satisfaction and retention.

The Cyprus cruise industry is facing a number of challenges most of which threaten the country's competitive niche; the sun and sea experience. Issues such as labor shortages, especially in entry level positions, energy costs, threats of terrorism, and the ever-changing market needs necessitate immediate actions. Local cruise operators must redefine their 'traditional' product by upgrading it to a memorable experience able to meet or exceed customers' expectations. Identifying the importance and the customers' level of satisfaction on cruise-specific attributes and probable expectation discrepancies, like the ones presented in this study, will most certainly improve cruise operators' knowledge and enhance their ability to provide such an experience.

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An empirical study on customer expectations and perceptions in upper class hotels in Bangalore

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ABSTRACT

This study, based on five star hotels in Bangalore, indicates that the Hospitality industry requires more adequate and comprehensive policy and strategy to compete with multinational brands and to satisfy each customer with the quality of service offered. This study emphasizes the importance of abridging the gap between customer expectations and the quality of service delivered. Besides, There are many factors directly involved in determining customer satisfaction especially in the hotel Industry. This study reveals the major challenges and provides valuable suggestions to face these challenges without the loss of existing customers. It also throws some light on the importance of customer satisfaction through employee satisfaction. Comprehensive Human Resources Policies for hotel employees are thus important to reduce the rate of attrition and also to ensure quality output from employees.

Key words: Customer expectation, Service delivery, Repeat customers, Customer satisfaction index, Challenges in the Hospitality sector, Technology assisted service, H R policies, Mid market segmentations.

INTRODUCTION:

Bangalore, popularly known as the Garden city and also being the IT capital of India, is looking for more hotel projects by the end of 2011 to meet the ever-growing demands for quality accommodation and recreation especially for business clients and tourists. According to the estimation of the Country report- India 2008 of the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), Indian tourism demand will grow up to 7.6% from 2008 to 2018 in real terms, which would place India as one of the most rapidly growing tourism markets in the world.

For a country of India's size and potential, it is quite astonishing to find the ratio of hotel rooms in comparison to the population. India has approximately 2000 registered hotels with a total room count of 1,20,000 rooms (HVS 2008), approximately. It is quite clear from the above that there is a dearth of hotels across every category and city in India. As a good sign, a metro city like Bangalore is expected to add 10,000 more rooms by the end of 2011 as per the report published by Express Hospitality Service (July 2008).and Times of India 2008.

OBJECTIVES OF THIS STUDY

- To analyze the need for a detailed study on customer satisfaction and perception in upper class hotels in Bangalore.
- To suggest possible strategies in order to meet the customer satisfaction and thereby increasing the percentage of repeat customers.
- To minimize the gap between customer expectation & the quality of service by adopting possible practical solutions.

India being one of the most up coming tourist destinations in the world, the major hotel chains that cater to tourists and corporate business travelers have figured low in customer satisfaction and also have a low percentage in retention of existing customers. Indian hoteliers have discovered an average of 35% of their customers are repeat customers, where as, the global average is 60% (Source- JD Power Associate- 2009.)

Average Percentage of Repeat guests in the Major cities in India -2008

Bangalore	40%
Delhi:	28%
Mumbai:	56%
Kolkotta:	36%
Vizag	72%

Source:- FHRAI-HVS Survey Report- 2008

Due to the influx of multinational hotel giants into the Indian hospitality market, it is a crucial time to take adequate measures to examine the quality of service extended at customers and reaching up to their expectations from Indian hotels at present time. Moreover, it is also important to analyze the gap between expectations and perceptions and take adequate steps to improve the quality of service delivered by Indian hotels. Such initiatives would obviously help the industry to raise the percentage of repeat customers at par or more relative to the International average. It is quite obvious that the competition prevailing in the hospitality service market is going to be more aggressive in the forthcoming period. Therefore, it has become the responsibility of each hotel group to think in terms of increased customer satisfaction in order to increase the percentage of repeat customers so as to sustain their market share in the long run.

In the recent times, the hotels in Bangalore have encountered difficult times due to the increase in customer demands and also due to strong competition in the Industry. However, the hospitality industry's main concern around the globe is to cater for its customer needs and their desires, which are mostly addressed through personal service. Therefore, hotels that are able to provide quality services to their ever demanding customers in a warm and efficient manner, are the ones likely to obtain long term competitive advantage over rivals.

Index of Global Average in Hotel Customer Satisfaction As per the survey report published by J D Power Associates- 2009, the following table provides information on the global scenario

2009 European Hotel Customer satisfaction Index

Upper upscale Hotels average index	=	78%
Upscale segment average index	=	74%
Midscale segment average index	=	74%
Economy segment average index	=	69%
Repeat Customers average Index	=	67%

Source: JD Power associates-2009

2009 American Hotel Customer Satisfaction Index

Upper upscale Hotels average index	=	81%
Upscale segment average index	=	78%
Midscale segment average index	=	74%
Economy segment average index	=	76%
Repeat customers average index	=	61%

Source J D Power associates-2009

Unfortunately no such survey or research has been conducted yet in Indian hotels by any professional organization. As such, no authentic information is available regarding the average customer satisfaction index. However, as per the report published by FHRAI & HVS in the year 2008, the national average index of repeat customers in the year 2008 was 44% only. Therefore, it is clear from the above that there is a wide gap between the global average of repeat customers and the Indian scenario. Hence, this peculiar situation of the Indian hotels should be analyzed and examined to find out the root causes for the low percentage of repeat customers in Indian hotels. This would enable researchers to provide solutions to augment percentage of satisfied repeat customers. Hotels in Bangalore too experienced a 40 % rate of customer retention.

2009-Asian Hotels Customer Satisfaction Index (based on Japan & Hongkong Hotels)

Upper upscale Hotels average index	= 73%
Upscale segment average index	= 68%
Midscale segment average index	= 66%
Economy segment average index	= 64%
Repeat customers average index	= 52%

Source: J D power associates- 2009

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The service literature provides a good number of operational and theoretical frame work studies, which introduces various methodologies in order to measure service quality in different hospitality sectors (Ryan & Cliff-1997; Getty & Thompson-1994, Saleh & Ryan,1991, Pizam & Milman 1993). However, in the service industry, the definitions of service quality primarily focus on meeting customers needs and expectations and helps in understanding the productivity of the potential service that is delivered (Lewis & Booms-1983). Gronoos (1985) stated that the perceived quality of service depends on the comparative evaluation process. However, Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry(1985) had developed the GAP Model and subsequently the SERVQUAL Model within the frame work of GAP . They had defined “service quality” as the degree and direction of discrepancy between customers’ perceptions and expectations as they had perceived service quality as the gap between customers’ perceptions and expectations as a measurement of service quality. Therefore, the smaller the gap between customers expectation and perception, the better will be the service quality provided and thereby it results in greater customer satisfaction. *“Customers do not always focus on products. Rather, they pay more attention to experiences, and therefore, creating valuable experiences for more customers becomes a vital challenge for business”* (Yuvan & Wu-2008).

Successful business creates repeat customers and loyal customers by providing memorable experiences. These are memorable activities created by business through its products and services to the customers (Pine& Gilmore-1998). However, Schmitt (1999) argued that the experiences are formed from the interaction among different events and mental states. Prahalad and Ramaswami (2000) further argued that creating personal experience would be the future competitive edge for any business organization.

What is service quality?

Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985) developed a widely accepted conceptual model of service quality. They argued that customer satisfaction rises from the difference between customers’ perception and expectation of the service. De Morganville and Beinstock (2003) identify service quality as a measure to asses service performance, diagnose service prob-

lems, manage service delivery and also as a base for employee and corporate rewards. Expectations are established from word of mouth, personal needs, past experiences, and external communication, whereas, perceived service quality is created through moments of truth. When the perceived service is beyond customer's expectations, the customer is satisfied. However, when the service is below expectations, the customer is dissatisfied. Service quality has been defined in different ways. Garvin(1984) believed that service quality derives not from customers' objective evaluation but from subjective recognition of service. It is also considered as an attitude about an overall evaluation of service. Bitner, Booms & Mohr (1994) proposed that service quality comes from customers' subjective decisions. Therefore, it is always better to define it as a subjective perception referring to the evaluation of the service that customer encountered and focusing especially on interactions with the service provider. The main responsibility of the hoteliers is the delivery of quality service to the customers (Su 2004; Hanny, 2005) suggesting that to be successful in the industry, hoteliers must provide customer satisfaction .

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Pursuing customer satisfaction is a critical goal for organizations, especially in the highly competitive hospitality and tourism industry. The concept of customer satisfaction is different from the concept of perceived service quality (Oh & Park- 1997). There are many alternatives customers can choose from, as the cost of switching from one service provider to another is modest (Ssandvik & Gronhaug- 2007). Kotler (1991) argued that satisfying customer needs and desires is the only constant principle in organizations. In the hospitality service literature, most of the studies in the area of customer satisfaction have focused on identifying service attributes which can also be treated as customer's needs and wants. Customer satisfaction, further more, plays an important role in achieving customer loyalty and profitability (Barsky & Nash 2003). Therefore, learning how to define and measure customer satisfaction is the major task for managers in the hospitality Industry. Customer satisfaction is a subjective comparison between the expected and received experience of a product or service. All impressions of enjoyment, entertainment, excitement and enlightenment can be assessed as the final outcome of satisfaction (Oliver-1997). Swan, Trawick & Carroll (1982) consider that satisfaction is an evaluative or cognitive opinion that analyses whether the product offers satisfactory or poor results. It is also an emotional response related to a certain transaction resulting from comparison of outcome of the product/ service to some set standards prior to purchase (Halstead Hartman & Schmid-1994). Anton (1996) further defined customer satisfaction as *a state of mind in which the customers' needs, wants, and expectations throughout the product /service life are met*. A few studies on customer satisfaction suggest that satisfaction can only be measured at best as perceived performance. Besides, they question that the information over expectation is not very reliable if the service is sporadically used (Millen & Esteban-2004).

Many studies assess the relative influence of different variables on satisfaction. Few studies have been initiated to compare the components of customer satisfaction in terms of their

levels of impact on satisfaction. Accordingly, Cultural traits lead to different degrees of holiday satisfaction (Ressinger & Turner 1999). Therefore, the interfering variable, the cultural background, should not be ruled out.

CHALLENGES IN THE INDIAN HOSPITALITY SECTOR.

As of now the leading international hotel chains like The Hilton, J W Marriott, Ritz Carlton and Star Wood etc are well known for the highest percentage of customer satisfaction and also for the highest percentage of repeat customers in the west. (Acsi-2007)

Their entrance in the Indian Hospitality sector would contribute certain challenges to the existing Indigenous hotel groups in terms of the following.

1. Severe shortage of trained and skilled humanpower.
2. More Investment on upgrading of technology and standards of service quality.
3. Retention of existing customers
4. Better human resource management policies
5. Focused approach on food & beverage revenue.
6. Mid market segmentation

1. Severe shortage of trained and skilled human power.

It is lucid that most of the Multinational brands recruit experienced and skilled human power for their projects in India. However, they would give preference to the experienced staff working in the hotels and will attract them by offering better salaries and perks which is an evident constraint for Indian hoteliers even today. For example, when The Hilton group had ventured into a management partnership with one of the resorts in the outskirts of Bangalore in early 2000, most of their staff was from the established hotels in Bangalore city. Though The Hilton property was quite far from the city limits, people preferred The Hilton because the pay and perks offered were the best and the highest compared to any five star deluxe property in Bangalore. More over, the working ambience in The Hilton was the important factor for employees which influenced their performance as well.

There are more foreign brands like The Hilton, Marriott, Ritz Carlton etc which have already ventured into the Bangalore market. As such, there is a dearth of qualified and skilled human power in the hospitality industry; it will grow worse when more projects are commissioned. Therefore, hoteliers should develop concrete measures and long term policies to tackle this issue rather than opt for the short term or sweep the problem under the carpet.

2. More investments in technology upgrades & service quality.

Technology assisted service is something that is inevitable today. Though there are lots of upgrades taking place in Bangalore hotels, they should be based on basic parameters like

- a. user-friendly
- b. Optimum utilization
- c. Easy maintenance and service
- d. Increase in revenue
- e. Security
- f. Better service quality

Since the quality of this technology assisted service comes with a price the initial investments would be quite high and once the investment is made according to expectations it should provide better quality of service to the customers. For example, over the past two years, Marriott hotels have been implementing changes in order to provide better service to the guests. They added new, plusher bedding; introduced modern rooms with flat-screen, LCD high-definition televisions and connectivity panels; and eliminated smoking in North American hotels. Eco-friendly concepts have become more popular and are now the buzz words in almost all sectors. Hotels can also follow the concept of Green, so that, they could be more responsible social organizations as well.

Advanced Technological Aids available at present should be utilized by Indian hoteliers to be on a par with the international brands and also to provide better quality service to their customers and thereby improve the retention rate of their existing customers. Above all customers should feel warmth every time over the cordial service offered, making them more satisfied and loyal to the organization.

3. Retention of existing customers

According to the recent survey report published by the WTTC- HVS Research, international tourist/business clientele arrivals in 2008 were 5.3 million. Over the last eleven years, foreign tourist arrivals in India have recorded a growth of 124%. Though there was a fall in the percentage of foreign tourist arrivals in the month of January 2009 because of the terror attack in Mumbai, the flow of foreign tourists has increased again. Retention of existing customers and gaining many new customers would really be tough for the existing Indian hotel brands. Foreign tourists might prefer to stay with the multinational brands since it would be easier for room reservation, food and other logistic arrangements from their own country rather than sending e mails and faxes or approaching travel agents. In the marketing literature since Cardozo's (1965) initial study of customer effort, expectations and satisfaction, research work in this field has expanded greatly, with more articles on customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Perkins1991). One citation is insufficient when declaring that the field has greatly expanded, and especially a citation that is almost 20 years old. However, since service quality

plays an important role in attracting repeat customers successfully. Moreover, consistency in delivering high quality services must be considered as an essential and crucial strategic element for survival in today's competitive global environment.

Therefore, the time has come to face reality and develop some unique strategies to compete with the leaders from west so as to retain market share. Hence, the need is felt for executing more on quality initiatives and to focus more on enhancing the percentage of customer satisfaction.

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4. Better human resource management policies.

As per Pratten, (2004), when seeking to enhance the customer experience, the ambience can be controlled, but the quality of the food and its service rely upon the variable of staff. It was felt that many young entrants view jobs in the hospitality industry as temporary opportunities whilst studying or traveling, before beginning a career in another industry (Kelliher and Perrett-2000). It is true that the employee's turnover ratio is higher in the Indian hospitality industry than in their western counterparts. There are various complex reasons for this high turnover ratio. The most important one is lack of job satisfaction; it may be due to several other reasons such as lack of motivation, poor salary and working conditions, dignity, and mindset of society, peer pressure etc, which could lead employees to contemplate on better options available outside the hospitality service industry. Attitude is another important aspect. But above all it is the policy of the organization and the working culture that matter.

"The Present Human Resource Management system followed in the Indian Hotel Industry is the one followed 25 years back in the western countries" (Charles De Foucault- Former GM Leela Palace Bangalore)

It is also true that a satisfied hotel employee could make his/her customers totally satisfied in terms of meeting their requirements by providing anticipated services. This is where the importance of better human resource management policies for hotel industry is felt.

According to the recent publication of HVS-2008- hotels should focus more towards ensuring the availability of skilled workforce. The country's demographics- especially young and substantial English speaking population could be turned into the greatest assets to augment the growth of this sector. The New Multinational Brands entering the Indian market have a far leaner structure that are supported operationally by technology and service standardization (HVS-2008).

Therefore, it is quite obvious that productive policies in human resource management are required to compete with the multinational brands in terms of employee retention and better

quality of service to customers. Similarly, investment in training and development of skilled human power could be done in such a manner that the hotel would not lose the employee after investing in him/her. In addition, a professional approach in terms of management of human resources should be adopted.

5. Focused approach to food & beverage revenue.

Apart from room revenue, another major source of hotel revenue is from the Food & Beverage Department which consists of restaurants, bars, banquets etc. The major challenge facing upper class hotels now is from first class restaurants, stand alone budget hotels and theme restaurants that have already made an inroad in the market with their unique concepts. As such, there are trends, like customers who prefer to stay in a five star hotel also prefer to have their meal in outside restaurants. For example most of the upper class hotels in Bangalore see their guests preferring to have breakfast in the hotel because mostly it is included in the room tariff; but they might have their lunch / dinner out side. Therefore, revenue from food and beverage could not be estimated or compared with the percentage of occupancy today because even a high occupancy rate will not support or assure proportionate revenue from the food & beverage department today.

In a city like Bangalore, there are many stand alone specialty restaurants which have made their name and fame by delivering quality food and services. It is then necessary to have a clear cut marketing strategy for the upper class hotels in terms of optimizing revenue from their food & beverage departments .

6. Mid Market segmentation

The percentage of domestic travelers was 74.3 in 2008 and it continues to be the largest segment in the country. Within this domestic sector, business travelers hold the greatest weight: 37.7% of the overall demand. The domestic traveler is the primary demand generator for mid market, budget and economy hotels. These domestic segments would gain more importance in the near future. Therefore, it is important that hotels try and understand the demographics of Indian customers and customize their products to suit the requirements of this segment rather than blindly adopting and executing international norms. It is a fact that domestic Indian customers have more brand loyalty towards Indian hotels than foreign customers (HVS -2008). The performance of the stand alone hotels in the budget economy category would be much better than the five star or deluxe categories because these hotels can offer their customers better facilities at a cheaper rate. As such, their customer satisfaction rate is much better than for the upper class ones.

CONCLUSION

The principal objective of this paper is to throw some light towards the need for a detailed study on improving service quality in the upper class hotels in Bangalore to meet the ever growing demands of their customers and also to face the competition prevailing in the hospitality service sector. The center of this study consists of all approved five star category hotels in Bangalore. In the absence of authentic data regarding customer satisfaction in Indian Hotels, it would be ideal to have a detailed study on customers' experience so that the reasons for the low percentage of repeat customers in Indian hotels and the actual customer satisfaction index could be identified. It may also be useful in two different dimensions: if the results of this particular survey reveal that the gap between customer expectation and experience is wider, the hoteliers could really contemplate on the issue and work on minimizing the gaps. Secondly, If the gap is comparatively less than the western and eastern countries, it would contribute towards up gradation of hospitality practices.

Indian hotel companies should revamp their policies and strategies according to present global trends. The more they delay the process the more they are likely to lose customers, employees and business. Therefore, a detailed study on customer expectation and experience in the hospitality sector would help the industry focus more on customer satisfaction thereby enabling the growth of the hospitality sectors in India.

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The Educational Program “Social Ecology and Tourism” at the Black Sea Branch of M.V. Lomonosov Moscow State University

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ABSTRACT

The paper discusses the need for well-defined criteria for quality education assessment and the link to the priorities in the country’s development. The dominant role of spiritual and moral foundations and the importance of geographic science for sustainable development are demonstrated. A model of the system of educational courses on sustainable development and its implementation at the M.V. Lomonosov Moscow State University Black Sea Branch (Sevastopol, Ukraine) are described.

Key words: education for sustainable development, spiritual and moral foundations, education model and its implementation.

INTRODUCTION

There is a wide range of opinions about Russian education. Some experts consider it to be the best in the world while others give the most negative assessments and appeal to break the old education system and to build a new one following the pattern of western education. But are there any well-defined criteria that allow one to assess the quality of education except for experts’ opinions? Is there a clearly defined goal that we want to reach at the end? From our point of view, there is no clear understanding of this issue. Do we want to improve the quality of education, making it competitive with the best schools in the world, keep it accessible to the general public, etc.? Could it be the case that we are addressing all these goals at once? This situation is common to many areas of our life on all levels.

For example, what are the priorities for the development of Russia? Do we want to stop the growth of depopulation and improve the quality of life, or do we want to preserve the territory of Russia and provide for the growth of the economy? These tasks require clarity and certainty in using single-valued and understandable criteria for preferences. Education priorities should also be clear. Education should correspond to the basic aspirations of society and conform to the idea of sustainable development of society. In this case, we should be talking about prioritizing education in context of sustainable development. This indicates not only the need for creation of special educational courses, but the systematic implementation of sustainable development ideas into existing courses at all levels of current education

practices. This notion may represent a tie that connects environmental, economic, social and other disciplines into one system. This system would easily adjust to priorities of the current situation.

The goal is to improve the demographic situation in the country. In this case, the education must begin to address this goal and identify priorities (in the allocation of finances, training time, etc.) for social, environmental, and economic disciplines. It is important to immediately indicate the key points of the educational impact. For this case these are declining mortality, an effective migration policy, and the birth rate increase. The tasks are not achieved instantly and require some time, but we should insure future professionals, first and foremost, deeply understand these key aspects. We should therefore determine which courses or sections of courses must be «tuned» to achieve this goal, while not ignoring the possibilities of achieving the goal by different means thus achieving the diversification of education. Each section has its own sub-goals that need to be identified in order to isolate core elements to better present education material using appropriate scenarios. For example, we should attempt to show causes of 1) higher-mortality rates in working-age male population, 2) ensuring the priority for migration of ethnic Russian population to Russia, 3) stimulating the birth rate among the indigenous population. Furthermore, it is important to enable students to arrive at their own solutions.

It is also feasible to demonstrate the significance of other possible priorities (for example, energy security issues). For energy security specifically, its own set of possible priorities should be developed and incorporated into the structure of educational courses. Again, after the purpose is identified, there may be different ways to achieve it while demonstrating a variety of other possible goals that may be targeted.

For example, it is possible to suggest a scenario, which limits the oil production (an assumption that we shouldn't produce and sell large volumes of oil that only adds to a stabilization fund allocated abroad which loses value over time, but instead store our wealth in the form of oil deposits in the country.) The argument to this scenario is that if we do not sell oil at the peak of high prices, in 50 to 70 years this resource will simply not be needed because of changing technologies (as was the case with other technologies only a little over a hundred years ago.) But even if new technologies develop, a transition to their use will still be a slow process (that may continue for several decades), oil will therefore be in demand for a very long time. In addition, demand for oil will not be based on its use as energy resource alone, but also on its use as a raw material for the development of existing and future chemical technologies.

The process of oil transport should not be seen as only a transportation problem from point A to point B. Main oil and gas pipelines should be designed to facilitate creation of new industries, support jobs for people living along the lines, etc. Scenarios for deep processing of oil close to the extraction sites must be developed. These options would eliminate a need for the construction of expensive pipelines. Processed products may be exported, for example, by

rail which is a more developed network. Railroads may represent an alternative to pipelines and will give an opportunity to avoid the influence of neighboring states whose territories are traversed by the pipelines.

Another area to consider is the assurance of information security - Russia has a great potential for the implementation of this goal. During the period of technological revolution, Russia was not among the leaders. Perhaps, there is a chance to catch up in the information era? An appropriate background for advancement undoubtedly exists. It should be emphasized that in any case the fundamental task is the revival of spirituality as a foundation for reaching these goals.

Tourism industry is developing rapidly in the entire post-Soviet space. There are many educational programs worldwide that focus on tourism industry. The unique feature of the program that we have developed and offered at the M.V. Lomonosov Moscow State University Black Sea Branch (Sevastopol, Ukraine) is that it is based on a broad foundation of social ecology concepts. Specifically focus on social ecology helps our students to find jobs in wide range of applications.

The spiritual foundation for sustainable development and geography

Sustainable development is impossible without the spiritual and moral uplift of the people and without some unifying idea of harmonization in the system «nature - society - economy». The social and environmental development of the system is defined by its potentials: social (including spiritual, intellectual and demographic, which, in turn, includes genetic), industrial, and natural resource (Myagkov, 2001). The importance of the sequence of changes or reforms for any type of society should be specifically emphasized - the process should proceed exactly in the following order: formation of moral aspects, of social infrastructure, economy improvement with preservation of nature to a maximum degree possible. Consciously or not, these views are shared by broad masses of people around the world.

For example, the sociological survey which was conducted in Russia showed that, above all, people consider «justice» as the basis for the revival (44% of respondents), followed by «human rights» (37%), and «order» (36%) (Levashov, 2001). V.K. Levashov specifically treated «justice» as an integral moral and legal base for Russian society, referring to the primacy of good over evil, faith in a righteous cause, the rule of law and human freedom over violence and contrariness, the quest for truth in the scientific exploration of the world, religious and spiritual basis of the righteous way of life (p. 122). A depressed society is unable to create an environmentally safe economy and to elevate health, science, education, and culture to suitable levels.

The natural component of the system performs the following functions: environmental (provides for natural conditions that support life on Earth), production (creates biological products consumed by people), information (preserves the structure and functions of bio-sys-

tems), and spiritual and aesthetic (impacts the development of human culture) (The National Strategy..., 2001).

A primary priority for most of the world, with the exception of maybe the poorest countries, is not the economic development and improving of standards of living (it should be noted that acceptable standards of living may differ for different nations and social groups), but the investment in the spiritual side of life while recognizing the diverse nature of civil society and considering a fact that spiritual life is only one of its positive aspects together with bio- or ethnic diversity. Without appropriate education, in general, we can't speak of any voluntary restrictions of consumption that are necessary to realize sustainable development. Furthermore, spiritual, development first of all requires the improvement of education at all levels. Only then— it is possible to develop rational management of the economy that exists in harmony with nature and serves as natural habitat for humans and not only as a source of natural resources.

Of course, nobody calls for diverting attention from the economy, which provides material basis for all aspects of life, but priorities must be clear and unambiguous. It is necessary to build strategic plans to improve and sustain spirituality that may be implemented primarily through the mechanisms of information, propaganda, education, and retraining at all levels. We thus believe that relevant courses oriented towards the development of the spiritual side of life should serve as the basis for education on sustainable development. Geography should play important role in the formation of such system.

In Russia, geography has matured as a science that promotes development, growth and strengthening of the country. During the period of «geography of the growth» characterized by theoretical and sectoral nature of research, the number of areas of science of geography have advanced to the world leaders ranks. At the present time, the «geography of sustainable development» is emerging (Myagkov, Tikunov, 1998). As was mentioned above, first, it must be conceptually linked to social, ethnic and other sciences that comprise the field of knowledge called “social ecology.” Second, the main focus should be on the viability of territorial population complexes, economy, and natural resource. Third, it is necessary to standardize concepts and indices applicable for communication with colleagues in social ecology or with potential consumers of products of «geography of sustainable development»

Model formation and design of the system of training courses

Nowadays, courses on sustainable development are designed as separate educational disciplines as well as separate modules incorporated into current disciplines. One of the possible versions of the first type is the structure of a training course on sustainable development developed by Golubev et al. (2004). A brief description of this course and the titles of individual disciplines are provided below.

GEOGRAPHIC FOUNDATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The basic concept of the course

Many ideas of the concept of sustainable development are being discussed within various academic disciplines in accordance with the existing educational programs beginning from courses taught during the first year. There is no need, therefore, to repeat material on sustainable development presented earlier, i.e., start from «zero» level.

The basic idea of the course should clearly demonstrate the important place of geography as a fundamental science that describes spatial organization of nature and people who contributes to sustainable development of society. The course must explain specific role of geography in general and its disciplines in particular as prerequisites for social progress.

In this context, a critical analysis of the current level of modern scientific knowledge in relation to the ideology of sustainable development represents the main content of the course. This analysis can be offered as a retrospective of the achievements of geography from the standpoint of its contribution to ensuring the long-term social stability, or as a system organization of scientific problems and their possible solutions.

Existent higher level courses for students completing their education that are in many ways similar to the proposed discipline, may probably gradually merge with the new course or transition into it. In this case, the established educational tradition gains the actual innovative benefits.

The purpose of this course is to identify and demonstrate the role of geographic foundation of the ideology of sustainable development in improving the efficiency of research and enhancing its influence on the development of society.

The main objectives of the course:

- assessment of the contribution of domestic and international geography to the ideology of sustainable development;
- methodological interpretation of the environmental component of the ideology of sustainable development;
- methodological interpretation of the economic component of the ideology of sustainable development;
- methodological interpretation of the social component of the ideology of sustainable development;
- methodological interpretation of the spatial component of the ideology of sustainable development;
- inventory of fundamental and applied scientific geography problems that support the ideology of sustainable development;
- development of student skills to identify scientific potential within academic disciplines and areas in support of sustainable development.

Main features of the course

The course demonstrates a need for geographers of all specialties to purposefully focus in their professional training and career on providing scientific foundation and practical solution for sustainable development that meet demands of modern society.

A social aspect of advanced research is ensured as a result.

Professional imperative. The course allows one to review fundamental and applied achievements in geography in context of contemporary challenges and identifies and rationalizes future development of new branches and individual divisions of this science. An outcome of keeping relevant research in line with current issues is thus achieved.

Integration imperative. The course promotes understanding of geography as a complex differentiated system of scientific disciplines that have methodological commonalities and develop their potential through cross-links between different sciences. A foundation is built for the integration of various disciplines to solve the most challenging scientific tasks of sustainable development.

Pragmatic aspect. The ideology of sustainable development offers clear criterion for selection and planning of scientific achievements ensuring its relevance to the stability of society. This criterion specifically determines the content of the course.

Methodological aspect. The course is conceived as a social philosophy of science (specifically - geography) and its individual branches. Within the course, an instructor discusses the role and social functions of geography on practically equal terms with the audience of future specialists and works towards developing critical thinking skills and understanding of their professional contribution to social progress.

Conceptual aspect. The course on the position of geography in the ideology of sustainable development requires clarification of the issue of sustainable development of the geography itself and its individual geographical disciplines. This goal may be primarily achieved through the involvement of recognized experts in established scientific fields. Therefore, it is necessary to engage leading professors and instructors of the Geography Faculty as well as other invited professionals active in sustainable development research and practice in course participation.

Training and methodological support. The character of the course is that it can not have a standard curriculum in the usual sense. The course structure should be strictly defined. However, the specific content of the course is very dynamic from year to year and is determined by the instructors themselves. A lively and creative character of the course requires the most creative approach to its delivery. An updated course of lectures written by a collective of authors – instructors, should serve as the core training manual for the proposed discipline. This manual would have both scientific and educational value.

The structure of the course

The course consists of three main parts (presented below) that reflect the levels of treatment of sustainable development in geography.

Curriculum of the course

Part 1. Sustainable development and geography (for students of all specialties)

Lectures and a brief content:

1.1. Sustainable development and geography

Historical background of the concept of sustainable development and its social mission. Its main theses and scientific foundation. The Russian concept of rational environmental management as the domestic analogue of the western concept of sustainable development. Geographical context of the concept of sustainable development. Contributions of national and world geography to the ideology of sustainable development. Current challenges and the future of geography. Fundamental and applied problems of geography.

1.2. Social-geographical aspects of sustainable development.

Social issues of sustainable development, the problem of assessment and quantification of sustainable development. Global phenomenon of ethno-cultural diversity. The issue of cultural space of social development. Cultural heritage as stabilizing factor of development. The problem of balance between traditions and innovations in development. Protection and use of cultural heritage at global, national and local levels. Unity of natural and cultural heritage.

1.3. Economic-geographic aspects of sustainable development.

Natural factors of social and economic development and its ecological restrictions. Economic parameters of sustainable development. The problem of population growth, overpopulation and population deficit. A problem of economic growth and its geographic implications. Making the economy more environmentally friendly. Territorial structure of economy and its ecological adaptation. Territorial justice and possibilities of its realization. The division of labor and other tools of sustainable development.

1.4. Geo-ecological aspects of sustainable development.

Natural resource and spatial foundations of sustainable development.. Natural resource security of development of human society and its spatial differentiation. Basic ecological problems of the development of society. Geo-ecological parameters of sustainable development. A problem of [HYPERLINK "http://www.multitrans.ru/c/m.exe?t=839525_1_2"](http://www.multitrans.ru/c/m.exe?t=839525_1_2) comprehensiveness and reliability of knowledge related to the development of natural processes and interaction of nature and society.

1.5. Globalization and regionalization.

The phenomenon of globalism, its historical inevitability and internal contradictions. Global tendencies and their influence on the development of countries and nations. Regionalism and its social-ecological nature. Regionalization and its social context. Integration of systems of the East and the West as a condition of global social-cultural dynamics. Prospects for social consensus and sustainable development in the global world.

1.6. Spatial basis of sustainable development.

The phenomenon of geographic space in history and modern politics. Space as a development factor and its ambiguity. Spatial behavior and its state of knowledge. Geographic bases of spatial management. Cartographic ideology of spatial comprehension. GIS and other modern geographic technologies for ensuring stability development.

1.7. Geographic problems of transition of Russia to sustainable development

Natural potential of stability of the country and its regions. Historical background of sustainable development in separate nations and regions. Historical retrospective of deviations from stable development and its reasons. Russian specific characteristics of sustainable development. Preconditions and conditions of transition of Russia to sustainable development. Geographic methods of scientific support of transition of the country to sustainable development.

Part 2.

Sustainable development and main scientific trends in geography (for students in basic streams: physical-geographers, economical-geographers and hydrometeorologists)

Lectures:

2.1. The theory and methodology

Methods and technologies

The practice

Part 3.

The Sustainable development and geographic disciplines (for students from all specialties in separate classes taught by leading professors)

Lectures:

3.1. The contribution of achievements in geography to sustainable development

3.2. Fundamental and applied problems of support for sustainable development.

Implementation of the model at the Black Sea branch of M.V. Lomonosov Moscow State University

The model (the system of courses), was partly implemented within the framework of student education at the Black Sea branch of M.V. Lomonosov Moscow State University (MSU) in Sevastopol (Ukraine) in the program «social ecology and tourism» under limitations that exist at the branch. The following structure of courses was established under constraints of available teaching personnel and maximum permissible teaching load:

CONCEPTUAL FUNDAMENTALS

- Philosophical bases of social ecology
- Physical geography of continents and oceans
- Physical geography of Russia and adjacent territories
- Development and transformation of the geographic environment
- The theory of the world development
- Geopolitical problems
- Ethno-cultural bases of sustainable development
- Natural and a cultural heritage

SOCIAL-DEMOGRAPHIC MECHANISMS

- Population geography with fundamentals of demography
- Sociology
- Environment and human health

ECONOMIC MECHANISMS

- Economics fundamentals
- Geography of the world economy
- Economics of natural resources management

GEO-ECOLOGICAL FUNDAMENTALS

- Actual problems of ecology
- Global and regional problems of geo-ecology
- Fundamentals of natural resources management

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION AND CARTOGRAPHIC SUPPORT

- Geoinformatics
- Social and economic cartography

MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- The Theory of management
- Regional economy and management

The branch is currently focusing on the following: creation of models for distant education; development of Internet based core courses, adaptation of international courses to Russian conditions, conducting schools-seminars and conferences with the involvement of foreign scientists, development of international courses in the electronic format with the support of several foreign universities, and approbation of the integrated educational-scientific process at leading educational scientific institutions of the country. It will provide for mitigation of some shortcomings mainly related to the absence of qualified instructors in certain areas.

The focus should also be on aspects of future professional activities of students. At the Black Sea branch of Moscow State University the main specialization in the field of social ecology is thus combined with tourism, which gives graduates an opportunity to apply both practical and theoretical knowledge in one of the most promising occupation areas in the region - the development of all types of tourism based on ideology of sustainable development of territories. The following courses are offered:

- Fundamentals of tourism
- Natural and recreational resources of the world
- The economy of international tourism with fundamentals of statistics
- Basics of international tourism law
- Tourism marketing and advertising
- The geography of the world tourism market
- Tourist information and excursion business
- Monetary regulation and taxation in tourism
- Fundamentals of pricing and finance in tourism
- Fundamentals of accounting of travel agencies, fiscal control, audit
- Insurance in tourism
- Diplomatic protocol and consular services in international tourism

CONCLUSION

The educational program described herein has been implemented (beginning in 2002) at the M.V. Lomonosov Moscow State University Black Sea Branch (Sevastopol, Ukraine). The graduates of this program are in high demand in tourism industry, social ecology, and other fields of science and practice in Ukraine. We are hoping that this publication will help us to find interested parties who have developed similar educational programs, receive constructive criticism of our educational model, and expand the scope of our program to cover other than Ukraine countries. We are also looking at attracting students from other countries.

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The contribution of open-air museums to tourism in the Czech Republic

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Summary: The paper will present the results of the marketing research in two Czech open-air museums. We will discuss what is important for the satisfaction of visitors and what tourists and holiday makers find most attractive about such museums.

Key words: village architectural, architectural heritage protection, tourism, marketing research, open-air museums.

INTRODUCTION

Cultural tourism can be defined as a “form of tourism whose participants mainly want to learn about the cultural heritage and culture of the respective country and its citizens“. As per the estimate of the UNWTO and the American Travel Industry Association, the intent to participate in a given form of cultural activity is present in approximately 60% of all (multiple day) journeys of international tourists; in about 35% of journeys cultural activities are the dominating reason for travelling⁶.

Culture is an important aspect of the life of modern society and significantly contributes to its integration. It helps to develop the intellectual, emotional and moral qualities of every citizen and fulfils the educational function. Cultural tourism is very significant for the Czech Republic and the cultural sector should naturally be a strategic partner for tourism³.

There are two methods how to protect architectural structures in the Czech Republic. In the past, wooden structures were usually protected by their being incorporated in an open-air museum. The other method how to protect valuable structures is to list them for their architectural excellence. This status protects buildings from damage and from harmful renovation because they can only be rebuilt after specialists from the national heritage protection institute give their opinion regarding the planned renovation⁴.

It became apparent that in some towns and villages very old structures have survived. To everybody's surprise, it was discovered that bricked as well as wooden structures dating from the late Middle Ages, i.e. from the time before the Thirty-Year's War, have survived in villages and their history is often equally interesting as of those in historical towns.

Also museums of folk architecture are important parts of the cultural heritage of the Czech Republic, especially due to the cultural and art traditions they preserve. The preservation of local specific features is one of the significant trends in the regional policy of the European Union, and open-air museums play an important role in this. In the world, open-air museums are often “inhabited” by people who perform period crafts and breed domestic animals. The target of this work was to discover to what extent this trend was accepted by Czech open-air museums⁵.

Dr. Artur Immanuel Hazelius¹ was the founder of the first independent ethnical museum in the world. He established Nordiska Museet in Stockholm in 1872-1873. On 11 October 1891 the first open-air museum in the world was open. It was in Stockholm again, on a hill called Skansen which in English means town-walls. Some countries in Central and Eastern Europe started using this word to denominate open-air museums. A declaration about open-air museums from 1957 gave some rules to tendencies in this field. It determined what elements are necessary for an open-air museum, specified the so-called „settling“ of museums and dealt with the issue of copies and renovations.

Czech open-air museums can be divided into two groups: original historic villages and newly established museums. As far as museums made from original villages are concerned, their designers can take advantage of the original space relationships, and of the existing buildings.

The largest open-air museum in the country is the Wallachian Open-air Museum in Rožnov pod Radhoštěm, open to the public since 1925. A set of folk structures and presentation of folk craft can be seen in the town of Hlinsko too. The museum also focuses on things interesting from the technical point of view and on production equipment and devices. Polabské Open-air Museum in Přerov nad Labem² was established as the fourth open-air museum in Europe on the end of 19th century, being re-opened in 1967. Its creation was inspired with Nordiska Museet in Stockholm. A museum of Bohemian village was established in Kouřim in 1927 and is situated in a large orchard on the outskirts of the town. It was established with the aim to preserve some structures from the Želivka River flood area. A year later the construction of a Museum of South-Moravian Village started in Strážnice (1973) and it shows typical features of villages from this area from the turn of the 20th century. Near the museum there is an open-air theatre where an International Folkloristic Festival is held annually. A group of folk structures in Rymice near Holešov (1977) shows examples of folk architecture in a region called Haná. Many buildings in these museums are settled or used for educational purposes. The above list of open-air museums in the Czech Republic is by far not complete.

The basic task of a museum is to preserve the cultural heritage. From the point of view of a “consumer” of the cultural heritage, the basic product is the visitor’s impression. We can also say that the product of a cultural destination is a whole set of experience and impressions obtained by a tourist from the beginning of his/her journey till its end.

RESEARCH METHODS

The target of the research carried out in the Wallachian Museum in Rožnov pod Radhoštěm and the Museum of South-and-East Moravian Village in Strážnice was to discover and analyze the satisfaction of visitors with the museum and to discover the degree of participation of the town and museum administrator.

During the survey we addressed individual visitors, during various days of a week and during a peak tourist season and during an off-season too. A total of 200 respondents were addressed in each of the museums, in addition to that a controlled dialogue was performed with a competent representative of the town and the museum.

The Museum of South-and-East Moravian Village in Strážnice (MVJ). Its construction started in 1973. The main targets of its designers was to present folk architecture in individual regions in this part of Moravia, therefore, the museum is divided into sections representing these regions. The public can see the following sections: Moravian Kopanice, Luhačovice Zálesí, Hornacko, water technical structures, a vineyard section and a meadow management section. There are 64 buildings in total in an area landscaped in such a way to commemorate the original environment.

The Wallachian Museum in Rožnov pod Radhoštěm (VMP). The first design for the museum was made in 1913, strongly influenced by Scandinavian journeys of Alois Jaroněk. However, the construction of the museum was thwarted by the WWI and the museum was built only a few years after it. Jaroněk brothers and a museum association, whose members they both were, took advantage of the favorable atmosphere in 1925 when the first folklore festival in Moravian Wallachia was prepared in Rožnov. They succeeded in persuading the organizers of this festival to hold it on the premises of the newly established open-air museum located in a spa park where copies of the first wooden houses from Rožnov square already stood⁶.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

More than half of the addressed people visited the MVJ in Strážnice for the first time, while only about one seventh of the respondents visit the museum regularly. People had two main reasons to visit the MVJ: first to see interesting buildings and to learn something about folklore, and second to relax and get inspiration. More than half the respondents spent more than one day in the region, approximately 5 days. About one third of the questioned people made just a one-day trip to the region. The general impression from the visit and satisfaction with the quality of services was on a good level. Visitors appreciated the reasonable admission fee, friendly behavior of museum employees and the natural environment. On the other hand, they were rather dissatisfied with the quality of guiding services, and places for resting. They would appreciate more freedom of movement in the museum; they complained about extremely long waiting times for a tour. They would appreciate additional services enhancing the museum and increasing its attractiveness and resting zones on the museum (see table and figure).

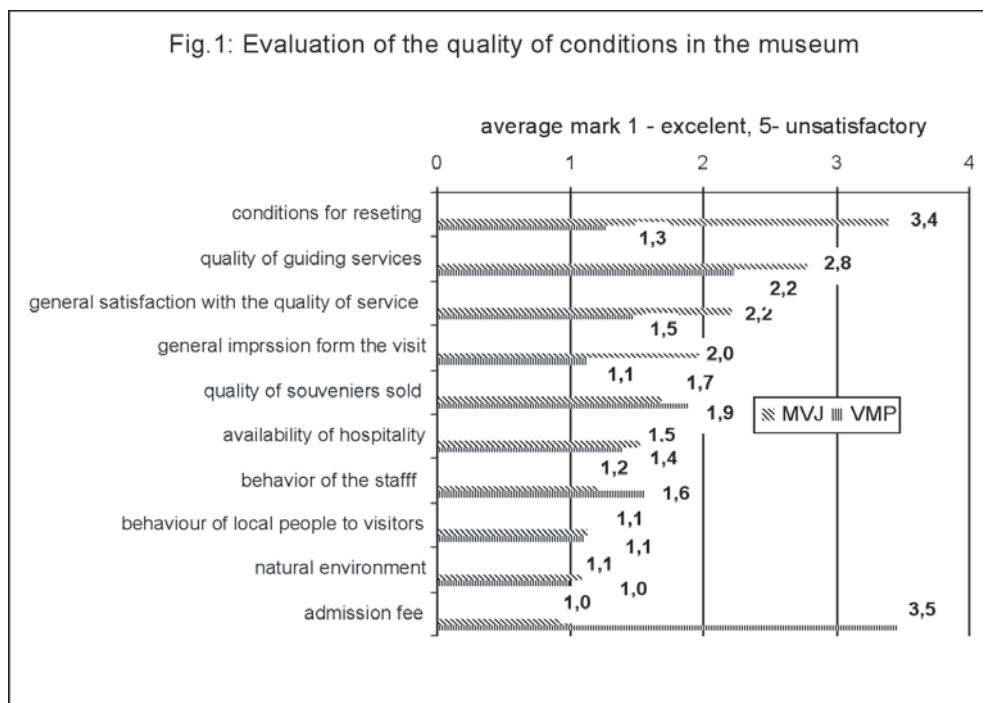
Results of the marketing research

Question 1	Museum	For the first time	Has visited the museum before		Comes often	Number of visits	
How many times have you visited the museum?	MVJ	53 %	32 %		15 %	3,0	
	VMP	15 %	55 %		29 %	4,7	
Question 2	Museum	Did not plan it	2 weeks	1 month	3 months	6 months	Average (days)
How long in advance did you plan the visit?	MVJ	62 %	13 %	11 %	5 %	9 %	26
	VMP	11 %	16 %	38 %	14 %	21 %	64
Question 3	Museum	No source (own experience)	Recommended by friends	Offered by a tourist agency	Commercials, promotional mat.	Internet	Others
Sources of information before the journey	MVJ	28 %	31 %	6 %	14 %	9 %	12 %
	VMP	29 %	12 %	3 %	45 %	7 %	4 %
Question 4	Museum	Alone	With friends	With my family	With a group		
Who did you come with?	MVJ	5 %	22 %	52 %	21 %		
	VMP	6 %	17 %	68 %	9 %		
Question 5	Museum	Holiday, relaxation	Sightseeing, folklore	Cultural program.	Just passing	Other reasons	
Reason for visit.	MVJ	41 %	49 %	0 %	9 %	1 %	
	VMP	36 %	22 %	32 %	2 %	8 %	
Question 6	Museum	Car, motorcycle	Bus, coach	Train	Others		
Means of transport.	MVJ	63 %	27 %	6 %	4 %		
	VMP	52 %	32 %	6 %	10 %		
Question 7	Museum	Hotel	Bed & breakfast	Visiting friends, family	Camping site, rented cottage		
Accommodated where	MVJ	9 %	13 %	41 %	37 %		
	VMP	19 %	14 %	26 %	41 %		
Question 8	Museum	Certainly yes	Probably yes	Probably not	Certainly not		
Will you recommend the museum to other people?	MVJ	28 %	59 %	12 %	1 %		
	VMP	83 %	14 %	3 %	0 %		
Question 9	Museum	Element. school	Apprentice school	Secondary school	University degree		
Education	MVJ	3 %	19 %	42 %	36 %		
	VMP	7 %	14 %	36 %	43 %		
Question 10	Museum	Less than 30	30 to 50	over 50 years of age			
Respondents' age	MVJ	22 %	51 %	27 %			
	VMP	33 %	41 %	26 %			
MVJ - The Museum of South-and-East Moravian Village in Strážnice							
VMP - The Wallachian Museum in Rožnov pod Radhoštěm							

More than half of the addressed people visited the VMP in Rožnov repeatedly, while less than one third of the respondents come to the museum regularly. The most frequent sources of information which inspired people to visit the museum were commercials in the media. There were two principal reasons why people visited the museum: most of them came to the museum to relax and get inspiration, and many of them also came because of cultural programme. As a matter of course, numerous visitors come to see interesting buildings and learn something about the folklore. About half the addressed people visited the region for one day only, and about the same number stayed in the region for more days (6.8 days on average). Visitors appreciated the natural environment in the museum and were generally impressed by the museum. They complained about the information system and high admission fee.

The results of the marketing research show that visitors more frequently return to VMP in Rožnov and they usually plan their trip long in advance. The promotion of this museum was significantly better since half of the visitors were influenced by commercials and various promotional materials. Both the museums are most often visited by families; MVJ Strážnice is more often visited by organized groups. Visitors come to Strážnice mainly because of the folklore. Most people come by cars to both the museums. About one third of visitors are accommodated in a hotel in Rožnov, and only about one fifth of visitors use accommodation facilities in Strážnice. People also often stay in camping sites and rented cottages. As far as the demographic structure is concerned, there is the highest ratio of people with a university degree, middle-aged people, and there are a few more women than men.

The evaluation of the quality of services in both the compared open-air museums differs. The general level of services and visitors' satisfaction is much higher in Rožnov. These results from the fact that visitors are allowed to see the museum either individually or with a guide, while in Strážnice they can only visit the museum with a guide. This experience also influences people's intention to recommend a visit to the museum to relatives and friends. While in Strážnice less than one third of visitors intend to recommend the museum to other people, in Rožnov this question was answered positively by 83% of visitors. The Rožnov museum cooperates with the town much better and the town considers the museum very significant.



CONCLUSION

We can draw the following conclusion from the performed survey:

- Both the museums are of high quality and have a unique potential available. However, in the VMP in Rožnov we can see an effort to create a “live museum“, which was apparent from the very beginning of its existence. The museum can be evaluated as a facility with a very good position within the tourist market in the Czech Republic. It has all prerequisites to become internationally famous.
- On the other hand, MVJ in Strážnice could do much more in the field of “enlivening“. Many more cultural events could be held there, namely because the museum is situated in Strážnice, a town where an international folklore festival is held every year and where the National Institute of Folk Culture has its seat.
- An important aspect influencing further development of folk architecture museums and settled groups of folk architecture structures is the implementation of culture in the basic strategic targets of the Czech Republic, the selection of cultural destinations as one of the primary factors of the regional development and the growth in the international competition in the free-time and tourist market.
- The results of benchmarking both open-air museums were used for the improvement of the activities of them.

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Tourism development & sustainability: A case study of Madurai Meenakshi Temple, Tamilnadu, India

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ABSTRACT

Sustainability is essential for any business forever. Meeting competition would be possible only when sustainability is attained. In the 2006-07 even though Madurai Meenakshi Temple gave a tough-competition in the first voting stage of new seven-wonders of the world, this could not find a place in the second stage, regardless of the fact that this temple carries with it a huge cultural and religious heritage.

This paper attempts to focus the issues faced / being faced by Madurai Meenakshi Temple that might have caused not to find a place in the new seven wonders of the world. Meanwhile, attaining the sustainability also becomes important in this modern era to preserve and maintain its heritage. Attention would also be also paid to list down suggestions for the same.

Keywords: Sustainable Tourism, Sustainability, Religious Tourism, Cultural and Heritage Tourism.

INTRODUCTION:

For an ever-gradual growth of the tourist destinations, sustainability is an important factor that would, not only, preserve the tourist centres, but also develops it. The World Tourism Organization has defined the word 'sustainable tourism' as "*Sustainable tourism development meets the needs of present tourist and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future.*"

Therefore, it asserts that all tourism activities should fit into this definition irrespective of which market segments they target. This definition of tourism is said to be particularly "*important for tourism based on nature and cultural heritage where the risk of damaging the environment and the socio-economic fabric of a destination is potentially higher*".

A 4-Step model as listed below can be opted for developing cultural tourism sustainably in any destination:

1. Assess the Potential
2. Plan and Organize
3. Prepare, Protect and Manage, and
4. Market for Success

OBJECTIVES:

This study aims to discuss the correlation between the tourism development and sustainability of a destination in particular. In order to get concrete results the researchers identified Meenakshi Temple of Madurai as the case for study. Therefore, the present study was conducted in order to achieve following objectives:

- (1) To find out influence of tourism developmental activities on the sustainability of a destination.
- (2) To identify major concerns influencing the sustainability of Meenakshi Temple, Madurai.
- (3) To suggest measure to be implemented to cope up with the tourism development and making Meenakshi Temple, Madurai, a more sustainable tourism destination.

METHODOLOGY:

The research was based on the secondary analysis of literature on the topic of sustainability of heritage attractions and their proper upkeep. Literature on sustainable tourism policies in India, although having received attention during the last few years, is still limited. While the primary source of this work is the personal visit to Madurai Meenakshi Temple for perception, the secondary sources are various books, journals, portals and newspapers. The prime objectives of the research work were (i) *To throw light on the importance of Madurai, a temple city, and Madurai Meenakshi Temple* (ii) *To address the problems being faced by the tourists / devotees at the temple, and* (iii) *To make suggestions for the problems faced.* Non-availability of data, shortage of funds and time are the main constraints of this study. Perceptual method of primary source is only undertaken for data collection.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

As sustainable development seems to become a goal pursued by increasingly more destinations globally, research on the activities that contribute to this goal becomes important. **Moore (1996)** defines sustainable tourism development in line with the World Tourism Organisation's characterisation – that is, to be sustainable tourism development must meet the need of the present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. Sustainability, according to Moore, also involves total integration with the community in which the tourism organisation is located. Total integration here is referred to

as involving health and safety issues, conservation of natural resources, renewable energy supplies, and other environmentally friendly manifestations. *Leposky (1997)* also dwells on the issue of total integration, and emphasises that it entails ‘maintenance and preservation of lifestyle and dignity of the local inhabitants’ via the protection of the social fabric of the local community, assuring local economic opportunities, and guarding against exploitation by the outside world (*Leposky 1997, 10*).

For many decades, tourism destination development has been dominated by a philosophy of “promoting established attraction- and service facilities.” The assumption was that the development of destination’s facilities would follow (*Gunn 1994*). The attraction and service facilities establish themselves, independent of other developments and sectors, of a destination (*Inskoop 1991*). Nowadays, it is generally acknowledged that these ‘unplanned’ types of development are the ones most likely to be associated with low levels of visitor satisfaction and adverse impacts on resources.

In the last ten years, destination sustainability has been significantly promoted by a number of important international institutions as a sustainable economic activity, particularly for communities with low levels of economic income per capita that live in rich, diverse natural and cultural environments. It is seen to successfully combine a number of objectives such as environmental protection, financial improvement of individual livelihoods, regional economic development, preservation of cultural identity and community self-sufficiency (*Wood, 2002*). These are all crucial in achieving sustainable development and, as a result, a significant number of destinations in the developing world have responded positively, adopting it for their betterment.

STUDY AREA:

Tamilnadu is rich of history and tradition combined with culture to live in harmony. Tamilnadu, well-off in ancient monuments and temples, which reflect the religious, artistic and cultural accomplishment of the state, has been surrounded by Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh in the north while Kerala lies on the west. The Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean form the eastern and southern limits respectively. Mudumalai wildlife sanctuaries and Point Calimere form the western and eastern boundaries of the state whereas Cape Comorin or Kanyakumari forms the southernmost tip of Tamilnadu.

Architectural heritage of the state is the most important aspect of the Tamil culture. Therefore, Tamilnadu is also called the cradle of south Indian temple architecture. It represents a living museum of architectural styles that originated in the 7th century and culminated in the huge temple complexes studded with towering gateways called “Gopurams”. Brihadeshwara temple at Thanjavur is the finest example of Sikhara and Gopuram architecture. A few of the pilgrim centers of Tamilnadu are Chidambaram, Kumbakonam, Rameswaram, Palani, Srirangam, Tiruttani, Mahabalipuram, Kanchipuram, and Kanyakumari and of course, Madurai, the Temple City.

ABOUT THE CITY MADURAI:

Madurai is the seventh largest city in Tamil Nadu; it is situated in the banks of river Vaigai. Bestowed with an affluent cultural heritage and glorious tradition, Madurai is grouped among the antique cities of the India. The history of Madurai dates back to 6th century B.C. during which, the city was the much-acclaimed capital of the Pandya kings. Then, it functioned as a key commercial center of South India. Madurai is firmly described in Tamil literature and tradition. It is the abode of many poets and artisans and houses a profusion of literary wealth of both classical and modern Tamil. It was the seat of the Tamil Academy in the past. The three Tamil Sangams evolved and flourished here.

Table 1: Tourist Arrival in Tamilnadu

<i>Destination</i>	<i>2003</i>			<i>2007</i>		
	<i>Domestic</i>	<i>Foreign</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Domestic</i>	<i>Foreign</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Chennai</i>	4972191	361422	5333613	8750587	651623	9402210
<i>Chidambaram</i>	241673	7884	249557	432473	13872	446345
<i>Kancheepuram</i>	855247	41648	896895	1486774	79162	1565936
<i>Madurai</i>	2622512	66959	2689471	4707275	268191	4975466
<i>Mamallapuram</i>	859768	79224	938992	1420740	161906	1582646
<i>Palani</i>	1639060	4985	1644045	4733617	10530	4744147
<i>Rameswaram</i>	1721377	5766	1727143	2988553	9871	2998424
<i>Thanjavur</i>	747277	28230	775507	1405341	51720	1457061
<i>Thiruchendur</i>	1487784	6878	1494662	2201413	12714	2214127
<i>Thiruvannamalai</i>	795833	4949	800782	2196654	12984	2209638

Total Arrival in Tamilnadu for the year 2003: Domestic: 27059002; Foreign: 901504; Total: 27960506

Total Arrival in Tamilnadu for the year 2007: Domestic: 50647188; Foreign: 1753103; Total: 52400291

Source: Dept of Tourism, Tamilnadu

Hence, when a cultural tourist centre, like Madurai, receives the tourists at an increasing numbers, the preservation and maintenance of the “cream” of the product attracts our attention. Madurai is the second highest tourist receiver in Tamilnadu after Chennai (*Table - 1*). The reason of this might be that Madurai is the hub for the southern Tamilnadu for various tourist centres such as Kodaikanal, Palani, Kanyakumari and Rameswaram, Madurai usually becomes a part of itinerary of the tourists. The tables given below also proves that among the aesthetical, historical, mythological and architectural important centres of Tamilnadu,

Madurai keeps hosting the foreign tourists in high number in the year 2007, irrespective of the facts of international threats such as terrorism, global warming, earth quake and Tsunami (more than double of the year 2003). Furthermore, considerable decrease in domestic tourism must attract the attention of the tourism planners (*Table - 1 & 2*).

Table - 2: Percentage Share of Individual Tourist Destination Vis-A- Vis Total Tourist Arrival in Tamilnadu

<i>Destination</i>	<i>2003</i>			<i>2007</i>		
	<i>Domestic</i>	<i>Foreign</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Domestic</i>	<i>Foreign</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Chennai</i>	18.38	40.09	19.08	17.28	37.17	17.94
<i>Chidambaram</i>	0.89	0.87	0.89	0.85	0.79	0.85
<i>Kancheepuram</i>	3.16	4.62	3.21	2.94	4.52	2.99
<i>Madurai</i>	9.69	7.43	9.62	9.29	15.30	9.50
<i>Mamallapuram</i>	3.18	8.79	3.36	2.81	9.24	3.02
<i>Palani</i>	6.06	0.55	5.88	9.35	0.60	9.05
<i>Rameswaram</i>	6.36	0.64	6.18	5.90	0.56	5.72
<i>Thanjavur</i>	2.76	3.13	2.77	2.77	2.95	2.78
<i>Thiruchendur</i>	5.50	0.76	5.35	4.35	0.73	4.23
<i>Thiruvannamalai</i>	2.94	0.55	2.86	4.34	0.74	4.22

Reference Year: 2003 and 2007

Source: Dept of Tourism, Tamilnadu

From the above *table 2* it can be concluded that within four years period, the foreign tourist arrival has doubled in Madurai, whereas, the domestic arrival struggles for sustainability. Throwing light on the above, sustainability of domestic tourism in Madurai in particular and foreign tourism arrival as well has been chosen for research. Meenakshi Temple, the cream of Madurai, gains importance in the light of the above. This work attempts to focus attention on preservation of culture of Madurai in general, and of Meenakshi Temple in particular.

Madurai is also called 'The Athens of the East'. Madurai's Meenakshi Sundaeswarar Temple was built by Pandya King 'Kulasekara' and reconstructed afterward by Ruler Thirumalai Nayak. The temple patronized literature, art, music and dance ever since its inception. The Meenakshi temple attracts around six thousand visitors a day and gets an annual revenue of rupees sixty million approximately.

Due to the fact that Madurai consists of no. of temples such as *Meenakshi Temple, Mariamman Tank, Thirumohur, Thiruvathavur, Thiruparankundram, Chellathamman Temple,*

Madapuram Kali Amman Temple, Alagar Kovil, Pazhamuthircholai, Madhanagopalaswami Temple, Prasanna Venkatajalapathy Thirukovil, Krishnan Kovil and Immayil Nanmai Tharuvar Kovil, the city is also known as Temple City. In Madurai, almost in all the lanes and streets at least a statue dedicated to a divine figure could be witnessed. No day of a calendar year would be left without any festival in Madurai. The following table - 3 would make the people of Madurai proud for the same.

Table - 3: List of Festivals Celebrated at Madurai

Month	Name Of Festival	No. Of Days Of Celebration
Chittirai (April-May)	Chittirai Festival	12 days
Vaikasi (May-June)	Spring Festival	10 days
Aani (June-July)	Unjal Festival	10 days
Aadi ((July – August)	Mulai Kottu Thiruvizha	10 days
Aavani (August – September)	Puttu Festival	1 day
Aavani (August – September)	Moola Festival	12 days
Purattasi (September-October)	Navaratri Festival	10 days
Ippasi (October – November)	Kollatta Thiruvizha	6 days
Karthigai (November – December)	Deepa Thiruvizha	10 days
Margali (December – January)	Oil Bathing Festival	9 days
Thai (January – February)	Float Festival	12 days
Maasi (February – March)	Maha Vizha	48 days
Maasi (February – March)	Panja Moorthy Festival	10 days
Panguni (March – April)	Summer – Spring Festival	9 days

MEENAKSHI TEMPLE, MADURAI – AT A GLANCE:

Meenakshi Temple comprises of the following Mandaps (pavilions):

Ashtashakti Mandap(Pavilion), having the sculptural images of eight powers of Shakti and representations depicting the scene of Goddess Meenakshi's marriage and the images of God Ganesh and Subramanya, *Meenakshi Nayak Mandap (Pavilion)*, having 110 pillars elevated to 220 ft, with 160 ft long and 110 ft broad, alongwith the bas-relief sculptures of mythological figures, *Mudalipillai Mandap (Pavilion)* with the sculptures of the consorts of sages of Dharukavan and the figures of Bhikshadana, Manmada and Rati, the God and Goddess of Love, *Unjal Mandap(Pavilion)* with the beautiful paintings at ceilings, depicting the figures of Rani Mangammal and six famous abodes of Lord Subramanya, *Killi Kootu Mandap (Parrot Cage Hall)* with the chiseled figures of Panch Pandav and wedding of Goddess Meenak-

shi and with mural paintings, *Kambathadi Mandap(Pavilion)* with a treasure of sculptures, *Veera Vasantha Rayar Mandap (Pavilion)* with a statue of Nandi (bull) and Lord Siva, and with the incarnations of Lord Siva and Vishnu, Mangayarkarasi Mandap(Pavilion) consisting of the statues of historical and mythological figures, *Thirukalyana Mandap (Pavilion)* for wedding ceremony of Goddess Meenakshi with Lord Sundareswara, *Hundred Pillar Hall* with a stone statue of Lord Nataraja, *Thousand Pillar Hall* with a government museum and art gallery maintained by Department of Archaeology, *Pudhu Mandap (Pavilion)* outside the Swami Shrine meant for conducting summer festival, and *Nagara Mandap(Pavilion)* outside the Amman Shrine meant for conducting a play on Nagara, a musical instrument daily in the evening.

The literature of the pre Christian period speaks of Madurai. The devotional hymns of the venerate The Mahatmyam or the Puranam speak of the various legends associated with Shiva, which still form a part of the festival traditions of this temple. The most incredible attribute of this temple is the fact that it is a living legend, absorbing traditions for over two millennia. Sundareswarar and Meenakshi are regarded as the Royal Pandya rulers of Madurai; Meenakshi's father, is said to be Malayadwaja Pandyan, who was preceded by Kulasekhara Pandyan - the legendary builder of the city of Madurai. This might have been the reason why, the figure of Meenkashi is said not to be having eye lashes – inferring that she has been ruling and protecting over the world, without lashing the eyes even once! Of course, Meenakshi may be divided into two words such as “*Meen*” meaning “Fish” in English and “*Atchi*” meaning “Ruling” in English. We should wonder at the incidental fact that “Fish” also has no eye lashes, like Goddess Meenakshi.

The living legend the temple is complimented with architectural and sculptural splendour thanks to the vision and patronage of the Madurai Nayak rulers - successors to the Vijayana-gar empire. There are 14 towers (Gopurams) in this Temple; each of these towers (gopurams) are filled with myriad stucco images reflecting legends from the puranas (sacrad book); the temple complex in itself is a lavish art gallery, what with the grandeur of sculptures in the 1000 pillared hall, the millions of stucco images adorning the towering gopurams (tower) of the temple the murals, the depiction of the Tiruvilayadal puranam - only to name a few.

The festival traditions here represent a congruence of the Ganabadiya (principles of Lord Ganpati), Gaumara (principles of Lord Subramanya), Saiva (principles of Lord Siva), Shakta (principles of Sakti) and Vaishnava (principles of Lord Vishnu) and Saurashtram (Principles of Sun) streams of the Hindu religion - thanks to the adept repositioning of the Maasi Tiruvizha in the month of Chittirai, to coincide with the annual festival at the Kallazhagar temple, when all of Madurai is transformed into one huge space of celebration.

MAJOR ISSUES INFLUENCING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF MEENAKSHI TEMPLE:

The following issues have attracted the attention of the researcher:

1. ***Veera Vasantha Rayar mandap (Pavilion)*** of this temple has been occupied or given on auction for shop keepers, bringing down the aesthetic, devotional and architectural value.
2. Pudhu Mandapam (***Pavilion***) and Nagara mandapam (***Pavilion***) outside the Swami Shrine and Amman Shrine respectively across the road have also been occupied by book-shops and other shops, hiding the architectural and sculptural importance of these two halls.
3. When the tourists (Devotees) visit the shrines for having *darshan* (to see) of Goddess Meenakshi and Lord Sundareshwar, they are unable to see the figure of Goddess meenakshi and Lord Sundareshwar placed in the sanctum sanctorum without any disturbance. The priests of the temple have only one entry to enter into and offer the *poojas* (worship) of devotees at sanctum sanctorum. Being a single and small entrance, the devotees, waiting for having *darshan* (to see), outside the sanctum-sanctorum, get disturbed. Their devotional concentration often gets diverted. They of course are able to see only the back of the priests offering *poojas* (worship).
4. When the main *Aarti* (Prayer) goes on at the temple, only the devotees standing outside the sanctum sanctorum become lucky enough to see the *Aarti* (Prayer).
5. Most of the details regarding temple are given only in Tamil language. Hence, the tourists / devotees from North India and outside India are unable to enjoy the aesthetic cultural and historical background of temple.
6. Absence of directional boards to have a detailed visit of the temple makes the tourists feel unsatisfied.
7. The tourists / devotees are, as a matter of fact, able to find over Parrot Cage Hall only human beings; but not any parrot.
8. The Ghee (Clarified Butter)-lamp shops before Goddess Badrakali and before Nav-Graha (Nine Planets) shrine, and Prashad Stall (Sacred-Food of the temple) in the Nandi Mandapam brings down the aesthetic sense of the devotees.
9. Because of the international threats such as terrorism etc., some part of the temple such as the backside of the second circumambulatory passage of Lord Sundareshwar Shrine (Leftside from Mukkuruni Vinayahar when entering from Goddess Shrine) is at times kept closed from visiting and enjoying the architectural background of the temple.
10. The visit to the golden tower at Amman Shrine has been denied for the tourists / devotees.
11. The guide facility for domestic tourists outside Tamilnadu and international tourists is quite poor.

SUGGESTIONS FOR MAKING MEENAKSHI TEMPLE MORE SUSTAINABLE:

Shops occupied in the land of the temple, mainly on Pudhu Mandapam, Nagara Mandapam, Veera Vasantha Rayar Mandapam and the halls adjacent to Mangayarkarasi Mandapam should be given place only outside the temple, and that space may be utilized for conducting cultural activities, such as coaching classes by the Temple Administration for classical dance, Music and Veda Classes. Pudhu Mandapam and Nagara Mandapam may be renovated and the former may be opened for tourists, as it provides architectural and sculptural feasts to the eyes, and, may be used to be conducting the spring festival as well. The true purpose of construction of the latter may be recalled and Nagara, the musical instrument, may be arranged to be played by the Temple administration, so as to represent the true culture to the tourists / devotees.

Controlling measures may be taken for quality of the items and for fixing the rates of the items to be offered at the temple for performing *poojas* (*worship*), so as to maintain ecology within the temple and to avoid cheat by the shop keepers.

Directional boards and signs should be placed at various corners of the temple so that FIT (Free Individual Tourists) tourists may avoid facing problems in proceeding further by guiding themselves. Furthermore, at all the entrances the detailed map of the temple in a huge size should be placed so that devotees / tourists without any help can guide themselves. The mythological and historical events attached to the temple should be, not only in Tamil (Vernacular language of Tamilnadu), but also in Hindi (National language of India) and in English (International Language)

Helpline windows and counters may also be commenced at the various corners of the temple so as to ensure the immediate assistance for the tourists.

The Rates for the guide facilities authorized by the temple administration may be fixed, and the tourists may be asked to be in touch directly with the temple administration for availing such facilities, so that the compromise between tourists and guides can be at ease.

Separate entrances should be made for the priests to enter into the sanctum sanctorum of the Amman Shrine and Swami Shrine for offering *poojas*, so as to confirm that the darshan (to see) of the deities placed inside the sanctum sanctorum is not disturbed for the public standing outside.

Prior advance reservation should be made available through website and internet for visit, darshan (to see), offering *poojas* (*worship*) and prayer, and for availing other facilities of the temple.

With proper safety measurements, steps may be taken to open the door for having darshan (to see) of golden tower of Goddess Meenakshi Shrine at least on Full Moon and No-Moon Days. This might provide a unique, immemorable and wonderful experience to the tourists.

Watching Parrot is desirable by the human being irrespective of the age. So, steps should be taken to grow Parrot at Parrot Cage Hall. Or else, Parrot Cage Hall without parrot does not feed feast to the eyes of the tourists / devotees.

Camera and T.V. facilities must also be made available for having darshan (to see) of, atleast, the main deities (Goddess Meenakshi and Lord Sundareshwar) so as to avoid rush outside the sanctum sanctorum particularly at the time of offering poojas at six times (Early Morning, Morning, After Noon, Evening, Night, and Late-Night).

No doubt, safety and security of the temple and of the tourists and devotees must also be considered. Hence, safety and security measures including installing the vigilance camera at the different corners of the temple must be undertaken.

Of course, finally but definitely not least, this would not be beyond the limit, if suggested, that temple administration may be privatized for making it a devotee-friendly temple.

CONCLUSIONS:

Preserving and developing the tourist product, while tourists keep consuming, is essential for stability and sustainability. For it might deteriorate the cream of the product itself. Hence, the suggestions made above might attract the attention of the tourism policy planners of Madurai Meenkashi Temple. Of course, *the goose giving golden egg should not be killed*.

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2nd Philoxenia International Symposium on Tourism

The second International Symposium on Gastronomy and Wine Tourism took place in Thessaloniki from 1st – 4th November, 2007. The symposium opened with an assembled audience of academics, gastronomy experts, tourism practitioners and students. This mix of delegates is ideal as it brings together opinions and perspectives from a wide range of interested parties – with an opportunity to share knowledge and learn from each other.

The sessions were broken down into specific gastronomy-related themes: historic evolution; new trends; marketing issues; food, locality and identity; cultural issues; marketing wine tourism; globalization and shared experiences.

On the first day we heard about the history and development of gastronomy from both a Greek and a world perspective – and how often the two actually interrelate. This helped the delegates gain an overview of gastronomy which helped put the later sessions into context.

The second day consisted of nine presentations which covered aspects of marketing, identity and cultural issues. The first group of three concerned how web 2.0 could help disseminate information on gastronomy, how we are marketing the consumption of ‘experiences’ rather than products, and tools which may be utilized in the development and promotion of gastronomic tourism. A case study of a food festival from Ludlow (UK) showed us how the evaluation of events can keep them fresh and interesting in the long term – delivering a sustainable food festival.

The second group of three consisted of an historic evaluation of wine tourism in Greece, regional culinary heritage, and the importance of gastronomy in the promotion of rural tourism. This was a most interesting session as it started with history but then went on to describe how matters are currently developing and the increasing importance of gastronomy and how it is utilized as part of the tourism experience.

The third group of three focused on cultural issues. In essence, the relationship between cultural tourism and gastronomy, and the cultural significance of food as a whole as an aspect of the tourist experience. The issue of what tourists eat is of increasing concern for many different reasons, but here the focus was on mainly the cultural aspects of tourist food consumption.

The third day started with a session involving the marketing of wine tourism. Visitors to Greece enjoy wine as part of the experience but frequently can’t source Greek wines in any significant range once back in their home country. A presentation was followed by a panel discussion on how this could be changed in the future.

The final session addressed issues of globalization and shared experiences. Many foods may be similar across regions/countries but different interpretations deliver distinct identities, giving different flavours and taste experiences in different geographical regions. Both Turkish and Malaysian food interpretations were used as vehicles to illustrate the points being made.

As well as the academic and intellectual constituents of the symposium, delegates were treated to more practical elements of gastronomy, in the form of two taste workshops and a demonstration of Malaysian cuisine.

The taste workshops were organised jointly by the Hellenic Club of Gastronomy and the Slow Food Thessalonica Convivium. The first workshop, on the first night, introduced us to traditional pasta dishes of Greece. Each of the four courses was introduced and explained, as were the Greek wines chosen to complement each course. The second workshop, on the second night, was based upon Greek wild mushrooms, again the food and wine was introduced and explained, enhancing the experience for all delegates.

The symposium was brought to a close with a demonstration and tasting of Malaysian cuisine prepared and delivered by Chef Wan. A combination of technical skill, learning, and humorous delivery made this an entertaining and hugely enjoyable session and an ideal way to bring the symposium to a close.

In summary, too often groups of experts meet in isolation of each other and different opinions and perspectives which should foster the holistic development of knowledge never combine to deliver the increased body of knowledge that they should. Helexpo should be congratulated for developing a format which brings together experts from both academia and industry, facilitating an exchange of knowledge and ideas to the benefit of both. If just one thing has been agreed upon by both parties it is that the development of gastronomy led to a globalizing of food and the development of international diets; but the way forward for the future is to develop and promote, indeed celebrate, local cuisines via the promotion of gastronomy to tourists.

A special thank you should go to Dr Thomas Mavrodontis and his team for his efforts in bringing together the speakers and organizing such a wonderful event.

It would be unfair to finish without also mentioning Mr Anestis Babatzimopoulos, who hosted a wonderful day out at his winery the day after the symposium ended.

Kevin Fields
University of Gloucestershire
November 2007

Maccannell reconsidered: A new interpretation of leisure class

*Reviewed Korstanje Maximiliano
University of Moron Argentina.*

A piece like *The Tourist* of D. Maccannell still is in an interesting invitation to debate in regards to the existent relationship between tourism and leisure class a term originally coined by the American economist T. Veblen. However, this scholar was not certainly interested in analyzing tourism related issues. The term “leisure class” is recognized as a neologism coined by Veblen but borrowed by Dean Maccannell in his book *The Tourist*. Of course, in recent years, many scholars devote considerable attention in examining the encounter between hosts and guests as well the role played by authenticity and staged destination in the process of touristification. Inspired by an Iranian student who declared “we all are tourists” in a classroom, Maccannell repeatedly examined how the globalization and mass-consumption converge. This means that current consumers are a product of a previous digital revolution that changed the references of what can be called authenticity. In fact, this book seems to be dedicated to the influences of Frank Young whose contributions were aimed at delving into the interrelation between untangled macro social networks and cultural issues.

On an introductory chapter, Maccannell argues that tourism stems from the process of evolution that circumstantially shaped the Western civilization. This observation immediately raises a question hard to respond ¿what is a tourist?. The conceptualization of what a tourist is can be detached in two different perspectives: the tourist as a physical person or as an abstract macro-social concept. The former refers to a psychical people who travel beyond their humdrum routine to sparsely populated areas or remote places. The latter one can be considered a macro-sociological definition enrooted into the thesis of modernization. Both definitions combine previous beliefs of displacement with consumption. This means no other thing than, nowadays, the travel re-signifies our own ways of perceiving the displacement and leisure as a new mode of entertainment.

With basis on the influences of Claude Lévi-Strauss and Emile Durkheim’s contributions, Maccannell intends to create a bridge between symbolism and structuralism to define first what is tourism and how it operates in the world of consumption. In other words, the attractiveness that characterizes the tourist-destinations should be examined in comparison with the tribal totemism of aborigines. Starting from the premises that aborigines identify themselves with a certain Totem, Maccannell argues that modern citizens have certainly made of consumerism a symbolic pattern of cultural identification. However, these types of consumptions are far away of being authentic. Of course, an idea of this magnitude has been proposed by many others scholars before than Maccannell but he had the ability to combine different previous works into a coherent frame. One can realize that a feeling of immense gratitude is owed to Maccannell due to his critical contributions in the research of social fragmenta-

tion as well as alienation issues. As a previously mentioned, some credits are on Maccannell because in a moment whenever almost all studies have been drawn attention in outlining the economical benefits of tourism, he emphasized on the problems of many residents in accessing to wealth distribution and poverty relief. Hints to such effect prompted this scholar to affirm that tourism replicates the preexistent imbalances in developing countries which embrace tourism as a first economical option. Nonetheless, the thesis of Maccannell rests on shaky foundations.

One of the first problems of Maccannell's development is that the structuralist method initially created by Levi-Strauss was inadequate to be applied in modern societies. Thus, once and once again throughout this book Maccannell needs to make distance from Levi Strauss. The limitations of structuralism led him towards the phenomenology of E. Goffman. This latter scholar considered the day-to-day social life can be comprehended as a theatre; for one hand, we have a front-stage where people interact and play while in a back-stage where they preserve their real emotions and sentiment about the events. Maccannell re-elaborates the contribution of Goffman arguing that the late capitalism has been created two opposed realms: Archaism vs. modernism. Whereas aborigines maintain their customs and tradition proper of archaism, our modern societies debate in a substantial ongoing social change. For readers who wishing have this more clear, let us remind that structuralism sets forward a model for what two or more complex structures can be analogically compared. Like the languages which encompass binomial constructions as black/white, woman/man, high/low, the culture is based on the interpretation of contrasting meanings. For example, tribe A and B situated in the same county differentiates their traditions in opposition. As the previous argument given, the cultures in the world are formed by two half parts that upends the other side but at the same time complement each other. For Maccannell the same happens with the relationship between leisure and work.

In first chapter, entitled *the modernity and production of tourist experiences*, Maccannell argues Karl Marx was the first scholar who started with the tradition of understanding how the social structures interact with agents. Like in Durkheim, for Marx the society projects an ideal-image of everything what can produce deprivation and suffering. Daily human being desires and need unmet are sublimated as a form of religion and ideology. These types of staged-paradises are often fabricated by aristocracies to maintain the authority and legitimacy over the populace. In a similar manner, tourism serves as an onyric mechanism self-g geared to provide modern workers a lapse of happiness and relax in order for them to be reinserted in the production chains.

According to Marxian and Goffmanian contributions, Maccannell avows that tourist experience can be compounded by three stages: a) a front-stage wherein stakeholders portray a sightseeing depiction elaborated for an audience (model), subjective emotions which trigger the experience once people are at destinations (influence) and ultimately c) a third component, the agent who abridges as intermediary the synergy of the earlier two mentioned elements. The question as to whether visitors are attracted by misfortune of otherness is a matter

of the second chapter. In an all-encompassed treatment given to the relationship between poverty and attractiveness, Maccannell suggests that modern travellers did not characterize by the sensibility of suffering but curiosity and cynicism. The quest of difference became in a pivotal factor to understand modern mobility.

The problem of alienation in urban areas as well as the pervasive role played by the exhibitions in the process of work is the key-feature of third and fourth chapters. The main thesis of such a chapter is that the work and leisure seem to be inextricably intertwined. The latter paved the pathway towards the former and vice-versa. As the *Yields Tours in the beginning of XX century* that attracted thousand of visitors from all corners of the world, modern tourist destinations entertains but subordinate workers to the logic of a new type of leisure. If the leisure in Ancient times was deemed as a form of emancipation of work, the late-modernity poses in tourism a way of alienating the practices of leisure. The moot point here is aimed at demonstrating that scenification of work can reconcile these two contrasting tendencies combining pleasure with duties. Whether in former XIX century workers were inserted into the formal apparatus of production, the visual allegory proper of our own times commodify workers in good for consumption, in real attractions. Ultimately, Maccannell dwells on the influence exerted by tourism as an instrument of development for countries with limited resources in their economies. To a major or lesser degree, this industry plays a pivotal role in the revitalization of cultural and natural assets of a region. To here, we have synthesized the main contributions of Dean Maccannell in the understanding of negative effects of tourism as well as how work the process of touristification. Orchestrating previous works of classical founding parents of sociology and anthropology such as Emile Durkheim, Karl Marx, Erving Goffman and of course Theorstein Veblen, one of the credits of Maccannell lies in alternating different theses (as pieces) and framing them into a coherent body of knowledge which originally has been inspired to other scholars. However, we found serious problems in the articulation of these divergent theses that should be at least revisited. In next lines we will put under the lens of scrutiny the most polemical points of Macannell theory about leisure class, tourism and staged-authenticity.

Maccannell's account lost the sight, historically, the Darwinian revolution not only influenced the world of biology but also expanded its horizon towards other disciplines like philosophy and economy. A result of this ushered Karl Marx to surmise that the history can be defined in terms of a continuum enrooted in the division of labour wherein the degree of development of each involved society differs. These differences were evident even within each society at time of agents enter in conflict to monopolize a much more legitimacy. Oppressed people will circumstantially scramble to gain their freedom to the extent to become in oppressors at a later date. Broadly speaking, the conflict should be understood as the clash between classes for centralizing the necessary resources for surviving; in addition each point of conflict among societies triggers to winners in a new stadium of evolution. Underpinned on the belief the capitalism represented the last stadium of evolution, Marx envisaged that the classes struggle would lead humanity towards the end of conflict (history) wherein it would rule the peace and cooperation. Having seen, rural societies can be overwhelmed by capitalist

ones, in 1948 from New York Marx supported United States in war with Mexico. No need to say a prophesy of this calibre has never happened but implicitly legitimated the expansion of capitalism whose negative effects Marx has criticized in life. In prospective, Marx has been seriously criticized because his thesis had been functional to the interest of capitalism.

A similar concept along with of Marx criticism can be found in Durkheim. Like Marx and other scholar else, Durkheim deemed that nationalism might be seen as a residual institution proper of an archaic religion found in Australia (Totemism). As societies have been evolved, European countries shared with Melanesian tribes a same roots but the former have substantially evolved to higher forms of organization while the later ones have been petrified in past. By understanding the Melanesian religion, scholars would have insight of other much broader and complex institutions as nationalism and democracy. Since Durkheim never took appearance in Australia, his thesis was invalidated by several scholars in anthropology and ethnology. Even, Durkheim was recently accused to manipulate in his favour an amount of 42 over 100 original quotations in Spencer and Gillen in the study of Melanesian tribes (Serrano, 2000).

To be honest, the cases of Goffman and Levi Strauss are less polemical than utopian Marx or the obsessive Durkheim. It is safe to say that Goffman's participation and contact with G. Mead played an important role to the inception of dramaturgical wave. As previously explained, Goffman realized that society was not a homogeneous conceptualization. Centered on the idea human interaction was unauthentic because they are prone to liars and deception, Goffman leads us in a dilemma. For one hand, he suggests that human beings deploy their strategies moved by egoism and self-interests while for the other, this exaggerated observation is present in Maccannell whenever he outlines generally that the encounter between guests and hosts is based on the competitiveness, alienation, humiliation and falseness.

The case of Levi-Strauss was pretty different. The father of structuralism dedicated an important part of his life in understanding how tribes create their own culture in opposition to their observation of nature. The myths, for instance, are forms of intellectualizing the discrepancies between nature and culture. In Oedipus and Percival myths, Levi Strauss contends the functions of mythical structures are aimed at alleviating the tension between life and death. Levi Strauss realized that not only Marx, Malinowski but Durkheim misjudged the roots of totemism in the study of religion (Levi-Strauss, 2003). A clear example will help us to better understand this matter, one of the deeper concerns of humanity has been the death and the problem of immortality. The most troubling question humans ask are: ¿why should I die?, and if this is inevitable ¿for what I live?. The Cult of fertility or a ritual of baptism reminds participants that death is a feasible reality even for children. With this background in mind, Levi-Strauss would argue that this ritual immunizes the baby for long time reinforcing the preexistent political order (Peirano, 2000) (Leach, 1954, 1965).

Nonetheless, Mary Douglas –a confessed durkheimian supporter- criticised to Levi-Strauss because his thesis seem to be in error and incomplete. For one hand, the myths are only observable through the eyes of social practices that can legitimate them. It is fruitless to

compare structures in abstract. For another hand, tribes A and B can be alike or similar in the way they organize themselves. This applies for the colour skins, traditions, rituals, cult and customs, but this resemblance does not correspond with an ethnic liaison but only similar pattern in the process of adaptation. In sum, similarities between to objects do not connote with scientific correlation (Douglas, 1996).

Our main thesis here is that Maccannell has been taken the more polemic side of each one of the theories he focused not only by avoiding the discussion along with their limitations but also tergiversating their meaning per his own convenience. The present review explored throughout the main limitations of D. Maccannell and his interpretation of previous works of Durkheim, Marx, Goffman and Levi-Strauss. For some reason, the book *The tourist, a new theory of leisure class* has been broadly cited by scholars of the four corners of the world in tourism and hospitality fields, his contributions have never been re-examined in the line of a critique perspective. For that reason, we strongly believe the present review reopen a question that has been covered, the theoretical inconsistencies in the definition of what a staged-authenticity mean.

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