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THE COLLEGE OF TOURISM
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29, ONASAGOROU STREET
P.O.Box 21115, 1502 Nicosia, Cyprus

www.cothm.ac.cy

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

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 the 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*, nor the College of Tourism and Hotel Management.

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NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Another year has come and gone and we are happy to present the 2023 edition of *Tourism Today*. When *Tourism Today* was launched in 1999, Antonis Charalambides and I created a journal that would provide opportunities for researchers from around the world to publish in. Our hard work and the continuous support from Savvas Adamides, Director of the College of Tourism and Hotel Management, has enabled the journal to continue to serve as an outlet to assist people to publish on topics that are of interest to many people in the research community.

This year's issue is about as diverse in topics and methodologies as a person could expect. Suosheng Wang's investigation of tourists and their perceptions of risk in travelling in a post-covid world gives us insight into how tourists process risk in a post-pandemic situation. Kir Kuščer and his co-authors discuss issues related to tourism in Europe following the conflict in Ukraine. Pandelis Mitsis analyses the Cyprus sea view and its valuation for tourism. Kamarun Muhsina discusses the evolution of travel agencies in Bangladesh and discusses their role in tourism development in the country. Venet Shala and his co-authors discuss the current practices of dark tourism in Japan, the USA, and Kosovo, discussing the opportunities for Kosovo in the future. Ganesh K S and Ganapati B Sinnor perform a rigorous scientometric analysis exploring the social media and tourist behaviour nexus. Luca Antonellini explores the expansion of cruise tourism in the Adriatic. Ioana Irina Gudea makes an analysis of the ways that archaeotourism can serve in ways to assist in economic development in Romania. Finally, Ariana Paspalide explores green marketing and its impact upon tourism. The journal continues to as planned, giving researchers from around the world opportunities to publish. Since its inception, *Tourism Today* has been an outlet for scholars from around the world and is a very welcoming environment for diverse views on tourism and diversity in methodologies. Although Antonis Charalambides is no longer with us, his spirit lives on in *Tourism Today* and I am grateful that he had the foresight to create such an outlet for researchers.

I am grateful to the Editorial Board that has been supportive over the years.

As has been the case since the first time Tourism Today was published, comments that assist us in improving the journal are welcome. We encourage all our readers to support us by submitting original research, volunteering to join the Editorial Board, and telling friends and colleagues about the journal.

We wish you an enjoyable read.

Craig Webster

Editor-in-Chief, Tourism Today

Perceptions of Risks and Intended Travel Avoidance amidst the Covid-19 Outbreak

*Suosheng Wang*¹

ABSTRACT

The global tourism and hospitality sector has been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. As the industry grapples to overcome this crisis, it becomes essential for destination management organizations to gain a deeper understanding of how COVID-19 has affected people's travel behaviors. This understanding can prove invaluable in reshaping tourism and hospitality offerings and adapting marketing strategies. A survey utilizing a questionnaire was administered to the American populace. The survey aimed to capture their travel patterns, perceived risks associated with travel during the pandemic, intentions to avoid travel, and the influence of vaccination and travel restrictions. Remarkably, this research reveals that despite the escalating cases, hospitalizations, and fatalities linked to the virus, Americans hold a moderately cautious view of the threat posed by COVID-19. Furthermore, their willingness to travel is on the rise amidst the pandemic. The implications of the research are discussed.

Keywords: Covid-19, travel behaviors, perceived threat, travel avoidance, vaccines

INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry has consistently faced various crises over time due to its susceptibility to external factors. Since late 2019, the COVID-19 pandemic has affected all sectors, with the travel and tourism industry experiencing particularly severe repercussions (Glossing et al., 2020). The global impact of COVID-19 has been profound on the tourism sector, as is the case with any regional or global crisis. This pandemic has highlighted how a health crisis of global proportions can severely disrupt international tourism and travel.

Substantial measures used to be taken by governments to counter the spread of the virus, including lockdowns, closures of public and tourist facilities, mask mandates, social distancing, and travel restrictions. These measures have presented significant challenges for businesses in the tourism sector. Moreover, such crises can have adverse psychological effects

¹ suwang@iu.edu



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on travelers, influencing their choices regarding travel plans and destinations. This, in turn, leads to travel cancellations and income instability within the tourism industry (Ritchie and Jiang, 2019). The decline in tourism activities also triggers workforce reductions through furloughs and layoffs. In the United States, consulting firm McKinsey and Company (2020) reported that more than 20% of jobs in the accommodation and food services sector were highly vulnerable, encompassing positions prone to furloughs, layoffs, or inability to work due to social distancing measures.

In 2020, a report from the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) revealed that travel restrictions had been implemented by 96% of global destinations (UNWTO, 2020). Given the concerning situation, the UNWTO estimated that global tourist arrivals could potentially decline by around 20-30% in 2020. This decline could lead to a substantial loss of international tourism earnings, ranging from US\$30 to 50 billion (UNWTO, 2020). A subsequent report from the UNWTO in late 2021 highlighted that even as Covid-19 continued to cause new waves of impact on international tourism, approximately one out of every five destinations maintained complete border closures. Moreover, as of that time, roughly 98% of all destinations globally still had various forms of travel restrictions in place (UNWTO, 2021). The hospitality and tourism sector is presently highly susceptible to various crises such as natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and pandemics. Given this vulnerability, it becomes imperative to delve into the potential recovery of the tourism industry from the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic (Rahman et al., 2021). Gaining insights into the shifts and adjustments in travelers' behavior is of utmost importance. This understanding can empower destination management organizations to revamp their offerings within the tourism and hospitality realm and adapt their marketing strategies to effectively confront the challenges both during and post the Covid-19 era. With a forward-looking approach to the tourism landscape, it becomes indispensable to probe into the repercussions of Covid-19 on travelers. In particular, this research aims to scrutinize the travel patterns of the American populace, their perceived risks, emotional attitudes towards travel, intentions to avoid travel, as well as the impacts of vaccines and Covid-19 related regulations on their travel decisions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Although consumption is often a matter of habit, it is also heavily influenced by the surrounding circumstances. Several significant contexts can either shape or disrupt consumer behaviors, including social environments, technological advancements, regulations, and unexpected events such as natural disasters (Sheth, 2020). These ad hoc natural disasters encompass occurrences like earthquakes, hurricanes, and global pandemics, such as the Covid-19 pandemic. In today's business landscape, a multitude of external factors, including financial conditions, sociocultural dynamics, global trends, political situations, and technological advancements, exert direct or indirect impacts (Wen et al., 2020). While many of these factors can be influenced to some extent by societal structures and individuals themselves (Wen et al., 2020), natural disasters like pandemics fall largely beyond control, emerging suddenly and affecting widespread areas.

Perceived threat stands out as a significant independent factor that shapes one's risk-averse actions in response to pandemics (Brug et al., 2009). The field of tourism is intricately intertwined with the notion of security (Hall et al., 2003). Williams and Baláz (2013) underscored the substantial influence of safety perceptions on travel choices, particularly during instances of public health crises. According to Kim et al. (2017), the apprehension of disease transmission holds the potential to impact residents' travel behaviors. Crises have the capacity to alter tourists' cognitive perspectives towards travel (Wen, Huimin, & Kavanaugh, 2005). The way tourists perceive risks plays a pivotal role in predicting their inclination to avoid traveling to destinations with infections (Cooper, 2008). Furthermore, tourists' perceptions of travel risks and management strategies can shape their psychological approach to travel destinations (Neuburger & Egger, 2020; Elizabeth et al., 2021). Despite the undeniable connection between tourism and public health emergencies, health-related risk perceptions have been comparatively underexplored in the realm of travel research (Yang & Nair, 2014).

A fundamental aspect of threat management involves initially grasping how tourists perceive potential threats and identifying the tourist characteristics that shape their perception of these threats. According to Rogers (1975), the perception of threat comprises two dimensions: the severity of harm associated with a depicted event and the likelihood of that event occurring. Research on risk management has demonstrated that perceived risks exert a negative impact on visitors' perceptions of destinations (Khan et al., 2017; Loureiro & Jesus, 2019).

Prior investigations have indicated that pandemics such as SARS, influenza, Ebola, and MERS have led to travel restrictions and exhibited an adverse relationship with tourism demand (Pine & McKercher, 2004; Wilder-Smith, 2006; Haque & Haque, 2018; Kongoley-Mih, 2014; Joo et al., 2019). Notably, numerous studies concerning pandemics and their impact on tourism have focused on specific destinations. Examples include research on tourism in the Gambia following the Ebola outbreak (Novelli et al., 2018), the effects of Swine flu on UK tourism (Page et al., 2011), and the repercussions of SARS on affected countries (Kuo et al., 2008). For instance, Page et al. (2011) assessed how the global economic crisis and the Swine flu influenced the demand for inbound tourism in the UK, while Kuo et al. (2008) discovered that international tourism demand was adversely affected in SARS-affected nations but not in countries affected by avian flu.

Since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, a significant amount of research has concentrated on comprehending its impact. Özdemir & Yildiz (2020), for instance, conducted a study in Turkey and observed that Covid-19 has had adverse economic and psychological effects on tourists. Their findings highlighted that the outbreak of Covid-19 led to a negative shift in tourists' travel inclinations, driven by emotions of insecurity, fear, anticipation of negative consequences, perceived danger, lack of confidence, and discomfort. Additionally, visitors' trust in tourism establishments experienced a minor adjustment. In the realm of post-pandemic tourism, a pivotal determinant will be the destination's reputation and image, as suggested by Hoque et al. (2020), given that tourism heavily relies on perceptions. Ivanova et al. (2020) delved into the attitudes of prospective tourists in Bulgaria. Their research unveiled

that a majority of respondents were inclined to travel within the region, with a focus on domestic trips involving family members. Crucial factors in tourists' decisions were sanitation, infection control measures, and the presence of a reliable healthcare system. Interestingly, the study also revealed that respondents from the younger and male demographics had different expectations in terms of public protection compared to children and elderly participants.

While pandemics may have a finite duration, their repercussions on human lives are vast and catastrophic. Faced with the Covid-19 crisis, governments and individuals worldwide aspire to bring the virus under control through vaccination and the establishment of herd immunity. This approach aims to restore normalcy to daily life, enabling people to engage in unrestricted travel once again. Thus, the availability of vaccines has been widely recognized as a crucial tool in combating the virus and facilitating the recovery of the tourism and hospitality sectors. However, few studies have thoroughly explored the nuanced effects of vaccines in relation to people's perceptions and attitudes toward travel. To date, the existing vaccines have demonstrated both effectiveness and limitations in safeguarding individuals from the Delta variant and other new strains of the virus. Nonetheless, these vaccines have significantly diminished the threat and peril posed by the pandemic. The outcomes of such studies hold the potential to provide tourism and hospitality service providers with a better grasp of their clients' perceptions and requirements at various stages of the pandemic.

Specifically, this research endeavor aims to delve into how people perceive the pandemic's threat and how the evolution of the Covid-19 situation, alongside the availability of vaccines, is anticipated to influence individuals' travel attitudes and behaviors, both prior to and following the introduction of vaccines.

METHOD

The United States has been severely impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, making it a primary focus of this study to examine the perceptions of individuals residing in the US. The country experienced a considerable surge in Covid-19 cases and fatalities. As of February 2022, the US had reported more than 78 million confirmed cases of the virus and tragically recorded over 930,000 deaths, with every state in the nation affected by the pandemic's consequences. Notably, even within individual states, such as Indiana, the toll has been significant. For instance, Indiana has reported over 1.6 million confirmed cases and more than 21,000 deaths, positioning it among the states with the highest rates of infection and fatalities (Worldometers, 2022). The research for this study was facilitated by college students who are enrolled at a university situated in Indianapolis, the capital city of Indiana.

To address the research inquiries, a questionnaire survey was conducted as the means of data collection. The questionnaire was meticulously crafted to encompass a range of variables pertinent to travel behaviors throughout the pandemic. These variables encompassed aspects like perceived threat, emotional attitudes towards travel, potential avoidance of future travel

amidst the pandemic, as well as the significance attributed to travel conditions and the role of vaccines. Additionally, demographic factors such as gender, age, race, household income, and education level were incorporated into the survey.

The assessment of travel behaviors during the pandemic was carried out using a set of five questions. These questions are “if traveling, what transportation would you use when traveling during the Covid-19 pandemic?” “If traveling, would you travel alone or with others during the pandemic?”, “If traveling, where would you go during the pandemic?” “If traveling, what would be the main purpose of travel?” and “If traveling, what accommodation would you use during the pandemic?”

In order to gauge the perceived risks associated with the Covid-19 pandemic, the study drew upon the perceived risk metrics outlined in the extended parallel process model (Witte, 1992; Witte & Morrison, 2000). Four questions measuring perceived severity dimension and susceptibility, or vulnerability dimension of the Covid-19 virus were adopted. The four questions are “The new coronavirus disease is extremely dangerous to one’s health,” “The new coronavirus disease has a high mortality rate,” “I myself am at risk of contracting the new coronavirus disease,” and “It is highly likely that my loved ones may fall sick with the new coronavirus disease.” The perceived threat variables were measured on a 5-point Likert scale from ‘strongly disagree’ to ‘strongly agree’. Four bipolar variables are used to measure respondents’ affective attitudes toward traveling amid the pandemic. These variables are: Traveling during the Covid-19 is foolish - fun, boring - exciting, unpleasant - pleasant, and unfavorable – favorable. The semantic scaling items were measured on a 5-point scale.

The study gauged participants' intentions to avoid travel in the future by evaluating the degree to which they indicated a planned inclination to abstain from travel during the pandemic and in the presence of travel restrictions. Three variables are employed to measure people’s intentions to avoid travel during the pandemic. These variables are “Covid-19 greatly reduced my travel plans for the next 12 month,” “I will be avoiding travelling for at least a year,” and “If travelling, I will avoid public transportation.” The travel avoidance variables were measured on a 5-point Likert scale from ‘strongly disagree’ to ‘strongly agree’.

Subsequent to the development and accessibility of Covid-19 vaccines, alterations were introduced to restriction policies and measures in numerous locations, particularly for individuals who had been fully vaccinated. In order to quantify the impact of Covid-19 vaccine availability and the resultant modifications in restriction regulations on individuals' intended travel avoidance, four supplementary variables were introduced and integrated into the 2021 survey. These variables encompassed “Rules and regulations related to Covid-19 (e.g., face mask requirement, quarantine policy),” “Convenience or comfort of traveling during Covid-19 (e.g., well technologically equipped car),” “Getting the Covid-19 vaccine myself,” and “% of population fully vaccinated.” These items were measured on a 5-point scale from ‘not important’ to ‘very important’.

The data collection process involved a self-administered survey, which was administered online through the Qualtrics platform. This survey was carried out during two distinct time periods: firstly, in October and November of 2020, and subsequently, in March and April of 2021. These surveys were conducted in Indianapolis, USA. The initial data collection took place in 2020, a period marked by a significant surge in both the number of Covid-19 cases and fatalities across the United States. It is important to note that during this time frame, no vaccines or specific medications for Covid-19 were available. The subsequent data collection occurred in 2021, a period when vaccines approved by the American Center of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) were introduced and began to be administered to the public. This marked a transition point in the response to the pandemic, as people commenced receiving vaccine doses.

The snowball sampling technique was employed for participant recruitment, wherein student assistants reached out to individuals they had direct or indirect connections with, inviting them to participate in the online surveys conducted via Qualtrics. This approach led to the successful completion of 414 surveys in total, with 213 responses obtained from the first survey and 201 from the second survey. Of these respondents, approximately 40% identified as male and 60% as female. A significant proportion fell within the age group of 18 to 25 years, and more than 80% identified as white, while around 15% identified as black. In terms of annual household income, over half of the respondents reported an income of \$40,000 or higher. About half of the participants held a college degree or higher. Subsequently, the collected data were entered into the SPSS software for quantitative data analysis. This included a range of analytical techniques such as frequency and central tendency analyses, independent-samples t-tests, and multiple regression analysis. The findings from these analyses were then presented in the subsequent section of the study.

RESULTS

Travel patterns during the pandemic

Among those who engaged in travel during the specified period, approximately 70% opted for car travel, while around 25% chose air travel. Additionally, over 70% of travelers were accompanied by family members or friends. In terms of travel purposes, slightly over 50% traveled for leisure, over 30% for visiting friends and relatives, and 10% for business reasons. The travel behavior patterns of the respondents, including transportation mode, travel companions, and reasons for travel, remained consistent between the first and second surveys. However, there was a notable difference in the types of accommodations used by the respondents.

In the initial survey, the most common accommodation option was 'staying with friends or relatives' (38.2%), followed by 'hotel' (35.4%) and 'Airbnb' (20.8%). In contrast, the second survey indicated a shift towards 'staying in hotels' (45.3%) as the primary choice, followed

by 'Airbnb' (27.4%) and 'friends or relatives' (23.4%). A chi-square test was conducted to compare the frequencies of accommodation choices ('stay with F/Rs', 'hotel', and 'Airbnb') between the two surveys, confirming statistically significant differences in accommodation preferences (Pearson χ^2 : 11.675, df: 2, and p-value: .003).

Perceived risk of Covid-19

The average scores for the four risk-related items fall between 2.95 and 3.44, suggesting that respondents hold moderate views regarding the threat of the virus. Among these items, the only variable with a mean score lower than the midpoint value of 3.0 is 'The new coronavirus disease has a high mortality rate.' This finding underscores respondents' perceptions of the associated risks, yet it contrasts with the factual context in the country, given that the fatality rate is one of the highest globally.

Table 1 displays the outcomes of the independent samples t-test conducted to assess the Covid-19 threat perceptions. The comparison involves respondents who took part in both the 1st and 2nd surveys, corresponding to the periods before and after the availability of vaccination. Notably, no significant variations in perception are observed across the measures of "The new coronavirus disease is extremely dangerous to one's health," "The new coronavirus disease has a high mortality rate," and "It is highly likely that my loved ones may fall sick with the new coronavirus disease." Conversely, there is a noteworthy decrease in the perceived threat of "I myself am at risk of contracting the new coronavirus disease" during the timeframe of the 2nd survey.

Table 1. Perceived Covid-19 threat in Survey 1 and Survey 2

| Variables | mean | Std. Dev. | Group mean | | N | t | P |
|--|------|-----------|------------|------|-----|------|------|
| The new coronavirus disease is extremely dangerous to one's health. | 3.44 | 1.23 | 1st | 3.51 | 213 | 1.14 | .254 |
| | | | 2nd | 3.37 | 201 | | |
| The new coronavirus disease has a high mortality rate. | 2.95 | 1.25 | 1st | 2.90 | 213 | -.75 | .450 |
| | | | 2nd | 3.00 | 201 | | |
| I myself am at risk of contracting the new coronavirus disease. | 3.27 | 1.21 | 1st | 3.38 | 213 | 1.98 | .048 |
| | | | 2nd | 3.15 | 201 | | |
| It is highly likely that my loved ones may fall sick with the new coronavirus disease. | 3.36 | 1.08 | 1st | 3.41 | 213 | .94 | .348 |
| | | | 2nd | 3.31 | 201 | | |

Respondents’ affective attitudes toward traveling amid the Covid-19 pandemic

Table 2 displays the average scores for the four affective attitudinal variables: 3.08, 3.19, 2.95, and 2.81. The combined average score for all four variables is 3.0. This overall score indicates that the perceptions are generally negative; in other words, respondents are inclined to avoid the idea of traveling during the pandemic.

Upon further examination of the survey results, a comparison of attitudes before and after the availability of vaccines reveals notable shifts. The findings indicate that the mean scores of the affective attitude indicators in the 2nd survey surpass those of the 1st survey. This suggests that respondents in the 2nd survey exhibited more positive attitudes compared to those in the 1st survey. Through independent samples t-tests on these variables, it is evident that there are three items for which the mean scores between the two surveys show statistically significant differences at the 0.01 level of significance. These three items are "Traveling during Covid-19 is foolish - fun," "Traveling during Covid-19 is unpleasant - pleasant," and "Traveling during Covid-19 is unfavorable - favorable." On the other hand, the item "Traveling during Covid-19 is boring - exciting" shows no significant difference in mean scores. It is worth noting that the actual p-value for this item is 0.099. If the significance level is considered at 0.10, the difference in the two mean scores can be deemed as meaningful.

Additionally, the combined average score in the 1st survey is 2.85, signifying an overall mildly negative attitude, while the combined average score in the 2nd survey is 3.17, indicating a slightly positive attitude toward traveling during the pandemic. The t-test reveals the shifts in perceptions between these two time periods. The findings suggest that, as vaccines have become more accessible, people's attitudes toward traveling have shifted from being mildly negative to somewhat positive. This change bodes well for the travel industry, as it indicates an encouraging trend for travel-related businesses.

Table 2. Respondents’ Affective Attitudes toward Traveling during the Covid-19

| Variables | mean | Std. Dev. | Group mean | | N | t | P |
|--|------|-----------|------------|------|-----|-------|------|
| Traveling during the Covid-19 is foolish - fun | 3.08 | 1.07 | 1st | 2.89 | 200 | -3.63 | .000 |
| | | | 2nd | 3.27 | 197 | | |
| Traveling during the Covid-19 is boring - exciting | 3.19 | .945 | 1st | 3.12 | 197 | -1.65 | .099 |
| | | | 2nd | 3.27 | 193 | | |
| Traveling during the Covid-19 is unpleasant - pleasant | 2.95 | 1.145 | 1st | 2.78 | 204 | -3.03 | .003 |
| | | | 2nd | 3.13 | 194 | | |
| Traveling during the Covid-19 is unfavorable - favorable | 2.81 | 1.15 | 1st | 2.62 | 202 | -3.36 | .001 |
| | | | 2nd | 3.01 | 194 | | |

Travel avoidance

Table 3 displays the average scores for the three travel avoidance measures: 3.05, 2.03, and 3.07. The combined average score for all three variables is 2.72. This overall score suggests that, on the whole, respondents held a somewhat negative attitude towards travel avoidance during the pandemic.

As indicated in Table 3, a comparison of the mean scores between the two surveys shows a pattern that the three travel avoidance variables' mean scores of the 2nd survey are all smaller than their mean scores in the 1st survey (all the tests are significant at the significance level of 0.01); besides, all the mean scores in the 2nd survey are below the mid-point 3 (i.e., 2.65, 1.78 and 2.83), indicating the pandemic is having less impact on people's travel plans. Besides, the significant results of the independent samples t-tests further affirm the significant change of people's perceptions, from positive attitudes toward travel avoidance to negative attitudes, or from negative to even more negative attitudes.

Table 3. Respondents' intended travel avoidance during the pandemic

| Variables | mean | Std. Dev. | Group mean | | N | t | P |
|---|------|-----------|------------|------|-----|------|------|
| Covid-19 greatly reduced my travel plans for the next 12 month. | 3.05 | 1.27 | 1st | 3.43 | 213 | 6.57 | .000 |
| | | | 2nd | 2.65 | | | |
| I will be avoiding travelling for at least a year. | 2.03 | 1.05 | 1st | 2.26 | 213 | 4.78 | .000 |
| | | | 2nd | 1.78 | | | |
| If travelling, I will avoid public transportation. | 3.07 | 1.29 | 1st | 3.30 | 213 | 3.80 | .000 |
| | | | 2nd | 2.83 | | | |

Factors influencing people's travel avoidance intentions

To predict respondents' travel avoidance intention during the pandemic based on Covid-19 related factors, a multiple regression analysis was conducted. The dependent variable utilized was the "Travel avoidance intention during the pandemic," which is formed by combining the three travel avoidance items. The internal consistency of this construct, assessed by Cronbach's alpha, is found to be .803, and the combined mean score is 2.75. In the multiple regression analysis, several independent variables were included: "Affective attitude to travel amid Covid-19," "Danger of Covid-19," "Concern for loved ones' health," "Concern for one's own health," and "mortality rate of Covid-19." All these variables, except for "affective attitude to travel amid Covid-19," are single-item variables. The construct "affective attitude to travel amid Covid-19" is composed of four bipolar scale items, specifically: "Traveling during the

Covid-19 is foolish - fun," "boring - exciting," "unpleasant - pleasant," and "unfavorable - favorable." The internal consistency of this construct, as measured by Cronbach's alpha, is found to be .889.

The results of the regression analysis (see Table 4) indicate a good adjusted R² of 0.422, meaning 42.2% of the dependent variable's variations are explainable by the predicting variables in the proposed model. The F-ratio of 57.89 is significant (Prob.< 0.001), indicating the result of the equation model could hardly occur by chance. The degree of variable collinearity is considered acceptable with the variance inflation (VIF) less than 10, and the condition indices less than 30 (Belsley, 1991). The t-test was used for testing whether the independent variables contribute meaningful information to the predictions of the dependent variable; the t-value of an independent variable is found to be significant at the level of 0.01, then the variable is to be included in the regression model.

Table 4. Determinants of Respondents' Travel Avoidance Intent Amid the Pandemic

R = .656, R² = .430, Adjusted R² = .422

| Model | Unstandardize Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|--|----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| (Constant) | 2.861 | .241 | | 11.856 | .000 |
| Affective attitude to travel amid Covid-19 | -.427 | .044 | -.409 | -9.666 | .000 |
| Danger of Covid-19 | .187 | .042 | .233 | 4.420 | .000 |
| Concern for one's health | .177 | .036 | .221 | 4.918 | .000 |

Dependent variable: Travel avoidance intent

As shown in the table, three variables demonstrated significance – ‘Affective attitude to travel amid Covid-19’, ‘Danger of Covid-19’ (“The new coronavirus disease is extremely dangerous to one’s health”), and ‘Concern for one’s health’ (“I myself am at risk of contracting the new coronavirus disease”) (see Table 4). Excluded from the equation model are the variables of ‘The new coronavirus disease has a high mortality rate’ and ‘It is highly likely that my loved ones may fall sick with the new coronavirus disease’. The standardized regression coefficient ‘Beta’ indicates the rank order of the importance of each predictor variable; the variable with the most explanatory power in predicting the dependent variable is ‘Affective attitude to travel amid Covid-19’ (Beta=-.409), followed by ‘Danger of Covid-19’ (Beta=.233), and ‘Concern for one’s health’ (Beta=.221). The negative beta of ‘Affective attitude to travel amid Covid-19’ means that the more positive attitude a respondent expressed, the less likely they tend to avoid travel during the Covid-19. The betas of the other two predictors are non-negative, meaning more concerns of these aspects will make it more likely that the respondents tend to avoid travel during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Importance of Covid-19 related travel influencers

During the spring of 2021, when the survey was conducted, notable developments had taken place in the fight against the pandemic. Vaccines like Pfizer and Moderna had been developed and obtained Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) from the American CDC. This led to an increasing number of individuals being eligible to receive vaccine doses. Furthermore, the government's efforts intensified as they emphasized preventive measures such as wearing face masks and promoting vaccine uptake in response to the virus. In the second survey, four covid-related factors were added to assess people's perceptions of the importance of these factors in affecting their travel decisions. These factors are "Rules and regulations related to Covid-19 (e.g., face mask requirement, quarantine policy)," "Convenience or comfort of traveling during Covid-19 (e.g., well technologically equipped car)," "Getting the Covid-19 vaccine myself," and "% of population fully vaccinated."

The average scores of these factors are displayed in Table 5. As shown in the table, all the mean scores are slightly above the mid-point '3', ranging from 3.19 to 3.50, indicating the roles of these factors are mild in affecting the respondents' travel decisions amid the pandemic of the Covid-19. Among these factors, the "Rules and regulations related to Covid-19" is considered the most important (mean score = 3.50) among the four factors.

Table 5. Perceived importance of covid-related factors in affecting people's travel decisions

| Factors | N | Mean | Std. Dev. |
|--|-----|------|-----------|
| Rules and regulations related to Covid-19 (e.g., face mask requirement, quarantine policy) | 201 | 3.50 | 1.33 |
| Convenience or comfort of traveling during Covid-19 | 201 | 3.26 | 1.18 |
| Getting the Covid-19 vaccine myself | 201 | 3.19 | 1.51 |
| % of population fully vaccinated | 201 | 3.20 | 1.38 |

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The findings from the study suggest that, during the initial stages of the pandemic, Americans exhibited a sense of caution when considering travel amidst the pandemic as perceived risk negatively affects visitors' destination perceptions (Khan et al., 2017; Loureiro and Jesus, 2019). For instance, Luo and Lam (2020) investigated the risk attitude and travel anxiety towards "travel bubble" destinations in Hong Kong and found that travel anxiety has a negative impact on ones' travel intention. As time progressed, however, people's willingness to adapt their travel behaviors and intentions became evident. This study indicates that an illustrative instance of this adjustment in travel behavior is the noticeable change in accommodation preferences during the Covid-19 period. Throughout the pandemic, individuals

have expressed concerns regarding the risks associated with Covid-19, as well as the health of their loved ones. Simultaneously, travel advisories and restrictions discouraged people from utilizing public facilities like hotels. Despite these factors, many individuals found the pandemic to be an opportune time to spend more quality time with their family and friends. This discovery mirrors the outcomes observed in studies carried out in other nations. According to Wen et al. (2020), tourists travelling in the post-COVID-19 era will be unwilling to participate in mass tourism and instead prefer more deliberate trips with an emphasis on extended experiences and holidays. Ivanova et al. (2020) examined future tourists of Bulgaria and found that most respondents are ready to travel within two months of travel in the region. Individuals will make domestic trips with family.

The study reveals a trend where individuals are showing increased resilience and greater confidence in navigating the challenges posed by both the threat of the virus and the restrictions associated with travel avoidance. Notably, this shift in attitude appears to be influenced by the availability of vaccines, which have played a significant role in reducing people's perceived level of threat. This change in perception suggests that individuals are becoming less apprehensive about the immediate risk of encountering the virus or contracting Covid-19, even in the face of ongoing increases in the number of cases. The moderate overall rating of the perceived threat of Covid-19 can lead to mixed messages. While on one hand, the increasing number of Covid-19 cases and high fatalities in the country highlight the significant risk posed by the virus, on the other hand, individuals seem to display a degree of indifference or a lack of seriousness towards both the risks associated with the pandemic and the enforced restriction policies and measures. This is in contrast to other countries, such as China, where the pandemic is treated with a much greater level of seriousness. As Reisinger and Mavondo (2005) suggested, travel anxiety and risk perception are a function of socio-cultural orientation. A significant difference exists amongst the travelers from different countries in terms of their degree of perceived risk (Kozak et al., 2007) and travel anxiety (Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005).

Regarding people's emotional attitudes toward traveling amid the Covid-19 pandemic, it's noteworthy that negative attitudes have shifted to become positive, in line with the availability of vaccines and the relaxation of public restrictions. During times of a pandemic, there's a general inclination among people to postpone spending on discretionary goods or services. This tendency often leads to pent-up demand, a phenomenon observed when access to certain markets is temporarily restricted, such as for services like recreation, movies, and entertainment (Sheth, 2020). While individuals navigate the challenges posed by the pandemic, their travel attitudes tend to become more cautious and reserved. However, as the situation improves, this pent-up demand can transition into actual demand. Destinations and tourism businesses should proactively prepare for the eventual surge in demand, which can begin even before the pandemic has fully subsided. Anticipating and catering to this evolving demand is crucial for these entities to be well-prepared for the resurgence in travel interest and activity. This study suggests that the travel avoidance triggered by the unexpected pandemic might not be a long-lasting phenomenon. While the initial impact of the pandemic rapidly

curtailed travel behaviors, the availability of vaccines, medications, and effective protective measures can swiftly alleviate safety concerns. This, in turn, can unlock the pent-up demand within the tourism and hospitality sectors.

In the face of the pandemic and the subsequent business downturn, it's essential for destinations and tourism/hospitality companies not to lose hope. Temporary declines in business shouldn't lead to business closures or employee layoffs, but rather should prompt preparations for eventual business recovery. During the pandemic, tourists are likely to shy away from mass tourism, opting instead for individualized trips that focus on extended experiences and holidays. Just as tourists have adapted to new circumstances, destinations and tourism companies need to embrace adaptability and resilience during the crisis. The ability to improvise and pivot strategies will be critical for weathering the challenges posed by the pandemic and ensuring long-term viability in the tourism industry. Before the vaccines are available, people held high expectations for vaccination hoping that the pandemic will be gone once vaccination is available. But the pandemic lingers and even spreads faster with the appearance of new variants.

While vaccination has enabled the re-opening of businesses and public facilities, the results of this study indicate that it may not be the most important elements in affecting people's travel decisions. Measures being taken to control the virus and protect people's health in destinations is considered more important than vaccination; the convenience and comfort in traveling also show more important than vaccination in affecting people's travel decisions. Destinations and tourism companies should provide travel convenience to tourists in the context of the pandemic with assurance of safety and security. The importance of measures taken by tourism service suppliers are also emphasized in the other countries. In the case study of Bulgaria by Ivanova et al. (2020), sanitation, infection control and a reliable health-care system is considered a significant determinant in the choices of passengers. Quintal et al. (2022) pointed out that anxiety towards Australian cruise travel can reduce travel desire and intention, however, trust in government and cruise companies can help alleviate such anxiety and consequently heighten the travel desire and intention. For Chinese tourists, food is a key driver behind tourists' travel and destination choices; as such, restaurants' cleanliness and food quality standards are imperative to reassuring tourists after COVID-19 (Wen et al., 2020).

To conclude, existing research anticipates significant and enduring changes in tourists' travel behaviors due to COVID-19. However, this study diverges from that notion, suggesting that the negative impacts on tourists are more likely to be temporary in nature. The pent-up demand among people can be swiftly unleashed once the pandemic threat is effectively mitigated, particularly in countries like the US. While the pandemic will eventually subside, it has brought to light the susceptibility of the tourism and hospitality industry to such crises. Nevertheless, this exposure also presents a valuable opportunity for the industry to learn how to navigate through pandemics and adapt tour offerings to better cater to the needs of post-pandemic travelers.

Given the limitations of the sampling method employed, caution should be exercised in generalizing the results of this study, which may require further empirical validation. The research was conducted exclusively in the US, which could potentially limit the broader applicability of its findings to other countries with distinct cultural and value systems. The manner in which people perceive and respond to travel restrictions, as well as their intended travel behaviors, can be significantly influenced by their unique cultural norms and values. To address this gap, it is recommended that additional studies of a similar nature be conducted across various cultural contexts. Such comparative investigations could shed light on the commonalities and differences in people's perceptions and attitudes towards the pandemic, as well as their subsequent travel behaviors. This broader perspective would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics at play and enable a more nuanced interpretation of the findings.

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Challenges, Goals and Policies for Tourism in Europe considering Post Covid-19 and the War in Ukraine

Kir Kuščer¹, Daniella Marie Pedersen², Despoina Arvaniti³, Duje Tomaš⁴, Shradha Agarwal⁵, Tahmeena Tariq⁶, Junanto⁷, Cindy Claudia⁸, Mahsa Sanoubar⁹, Enrico Corselli¹⁰, Alessia Giambartolomei¹¹, Huiling Li¹², Laura Schill¹³, Kimberly Maté Kramer¹⁴, Alina Galiullina¹⁵, Petra Prelog¹⁶, Pablo González Barahona¹⁷, Lucía Sánchez Manzano¹⁸, Pitchakorn Punpornmatee¹⁹, Yun-Jhong Ho²⁰, Hui-Ying Tsai²¹ and Mai Phuong Tran²²

ABSTRACT

This paper researches the multidimensional challenges faced by the European tourism industry in times of two major crises, the Covid-19 pandemic, and the Ukraine-Russian war. It studies the impacts of these crises on the tourism sector's recovery and explores the diverse regional responses within Europe. The paper shows that some European regions were more resilient, either due to their lower dependence on tourism or their adaptability to changing

¹ Kir Kuščer, kir.kuscer@ef.uni-lj.si

² Daniella Marie Pedersen, daniella.pedersen@gmail.com

³ Despoina Arvaniti, despoina.arvaniti.97@gmail.com

⁴ Duje Tomaš, dujetom98dt@gmail.com

⁵ Shradha Agarwal, shradha.agarwal7@gmail.com

⁶ Tahmeena Tariq, tariq tahmeena@gmail.com

⁷ Junanto, junantoxu@gmail.com

⁸ Cindy Claudia, cinclau_me@yahoo.com

⁹ Mahsa Sanoubar, mahsa.sanoubar@gmail.com

¹⁰ Enrico Corselli, corselli.enrico@gmail.com

¹¹ Alessia Giambartolomei, ale.giamba.97@gmail.com

¹² Huiling Li, monylin@163.com

¹³ Laura Schill, laura.schill96@gmail.com

¹⁴ Kimberly Maté Kramer, kimberlymatekramer@gmail.com

¹⁵ Alina Galiullina, galiullina1105@gmail.com

¹⁶ Petra Prelog, prelog.petra@gmail.com

¹⁷ Pablo González Barahona, pablogbarahona@gmail.com

¹⁸ Lucía Sánchez Manzano, lusanchezm@hotmail.es

¹⁹ Pitchakorn Punpornmatee, p.punpornmatee@gmail.com

²⁰ Yun-Jhong Ho, 860917hoharry@gmail.com

²¹ Hui-Ying Tsai, a2993241@gmail.com

²² Mai Phuong Tran, phuongmai872@gmail.com



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conditions. Policy priorities vary across regions, but key challenges identified include labor shortages, rising energy costs, inflation, and a lack of preparedness for crises. The study also identifies critical goals, such as improving regional economies, promoting sustainable tourism, enhancing local quality of life, and attracting the right visitor segments.

The paper provides valuable information for policymakers and tourism practitioners looking to improving Europe's tourism sector's resilience and crisis management.

Keywords: Tourism policy, challenges, goals, resilience, Covid-19 pandemic, Ukraine-Russian war

INTRODUCTION

European tourism is still being influenced by the Covid-19 crisis, but is also facing a new, unprecedented crisis with the war in Ukraine. European countries have been differently successful in managing the impacts of both crises, some having a better starting point in terms of the health of the economy, geographic location and being attractive to European visitors and slowly returning international visitors. Our research will try to shed some light on the unfavourable situation that Europe has found itself in, by identifying the current state of challenges different regions in Europe are facing and the policies they are implementing to minimize the negative impacts of both crises and to come out more sustainable and resilient. The year 2020 seems to have marked the beginning of an era comprised of crises, which started with the Covid-19 pandemic, then before long landed into the Ukraine war and of course, the persisting climate crisis which cannot be forgotten. Despite the positive socio-cultural and economic impacts of tourism, it is extremely "sensitive" to factors like conflicts, terrorism, natural disasters and catastrophes, and the spread of numerous diseases, which can undermine tourists' travel (Dzambazovski & Metodievski, 2020). The entire economic system has been affected due to the impact of the Covid-19 crisis on tourism, but also other socio-cultural, and political areas (Wren-Lewis, 2020). The Russian-Ukraine crisis impacted the travel industry, especially the segments related to tourist mobility. At the EU level, all Russian owned, registered, or controlled aircraft no longer has access to the European airspace (European Union, 2022). The European Union (2022) has also applied entry bans on Russian-flagged vessels to EU ports (exceptions apply for medical, food, energy, and humanitarian purposes). The EU has suspended visa-free travel for diplomats and visa facilitation for service and passport holders (European Union, 2022). These sanctions could cause Europe to lose over 3 million tourists in 2022 and generate ripple effects on all EU member states (Schengen Visa, 2022).

Previous research is incomplete regarding the current developments. This is why our paper explores the challenges, goals, and policies for tourism in Europe considering post Covid-19 and the war in Ukraine. Both negatively impacted the tourism and travel sector, calling for governments to comply with new policies and strategies for the recovery and renewal of

tourism. Gössling et al. (2020), Ioannides and Gyimóthy (2020) and Brouder (2020) point out that since tourism’s near-term prospects are dubious, several transformative tourism strategies can change the international, national, and local tourism system of each country. Support for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and public grants play an important role in the process of tourism recovery (European Commission, 2022). The purpose of this research is to investigate the tourism policy implications in Europe during times of crisis. The goals of our research include identifying the current state of tourism in different regions of Europe, exploring the challenges that tourism is facing during the Covid-19 and war in Ukraine crises, identifying diverse tourism policies that can improve tourism management and help achieve the proposed goals of tourism development.

EUROPEAN TOURISM: THE CURRENT SITUATION

For the purpose of the research, Europe is divided in the following regions according to Jordan, 2005, STAGN, 2007 and UNGEGN, 2006 (Table 1 and Figure 1):

Table 1: European regions and countries

| Region | Countries |
|-------------------------|---|
| North Europe | Denmark (dk), Finland (fi), Norway (no), Sweden (se), Iceland (is). |
| West Europe | the Netherlands (nl), Belgium (be), France (fr), Andorra (ad), Monaco (mc), Republic of Ireland (ie), the United Kingdom (uk). |
| Central Europe | Austria (at), Switzerland (ch), Liechtenstein (li), Germany (de), Luxembourg (lu), The Czech Republic (cz), Hungary (hu), Poland (pl), Croatia (hr), Slovenia (sj), Slovakia (sk), Estonia (ee), Lithuania (lt), Latvia (lv). |
| South Europe | Spain (es), Italy (it), and Portugal (pt), Malta (mt), Vatican (va), San Marino (sm) |
| Southeast Europe | Greece (gr), Bulgaria (bg), Cyprus (cy), Romania (ro), Bosnia and Herzegovina (ba), North Macedonia (mk), Serbia (rs), Montenegro (me), Albania (al), Moldova (md). |
| East Europe | Belarus (by), Russia (ru), and Ukraine (ua), was not included in the research due to the war in Ukraine. |

Source: STAGN, 2007.

Figure 1: Europe’s principal regions by cultural criteria and countries



Source: STAGN, 2007.

North European countries have been quite resilient to the pandemic and the tourism industry is expected to recover faster than in other countries (Tveteraas, S. L., & Xie, J., 2021). Despite lots of similarities between countries in North Europe, each country responded to the Covid-19 crisis differently. In the first wave of the pandemic, Sweden took less strict approaches while Denmark and Norway imposed serious restrictions towards closing borders and lockdown (Tveteraas, S. L., & Xie, J., 2021). The possibility of flight cancellations and

the risk of incidents not covered by travel insurance diminished the consumer motivation to travel and induced “Staycation” in 2020. This caused a lot of losses because many tourism products were targeted to an international market (Tveteraas, S. L., & Xie, J., 2021). Governments in North Europe allocated funds, provided credit guarantees, loans, grants, postponed taxes and developed compensation schemes and even travel vouchers were provided in Ireland to decrease the negative impact of Covid-19 on domestic tourism industry. With the war in Ukraine, North Europe is heavily impacted again due to a lack of Russian visitors and safety concerns especially for Finland and Sweden due to their proximity to Russia.

Countries in West Europe Region have had similar tourism policies for coping with the Covid-19 crisis. Almost all countries in West Europe implemented a colour system to define the risk level for travelling abroad during the Covid-19 pandemic (Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, n.d; Walsh, 2020; CNN Staff, 2022; Belgian Government, 2022). They are active in achieving a long-term target to return the tourism market back to pre-Covid-19 levels (European Commission, 2021). West European countries have implemented policies to actively support businesses and restart the tourism sector through marketing stimuli, VAT cuts, vouchers, information sharing and education. The final aim of the policies is to build back a more innovative and resilient industry, able to use technology to enhance the visitor experience, to contribute to the conservation of the national heritage and to minimize the damage to the environment. (Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, 2021).

From the perspective of West Europe, only the Netherlands imposed stricter sanctions by stopping issuing visas to all Russian passport holders as a consequence of the expulsion of Dutch diplomats (Schengen Visa Info News, 2022). Further data from Travelsat (2022) and Forwardkeys (2022) suggest that West Europe is less heavily impacted both in travel sentiment and air travel compared to Eastern Europe as it is geographically further from Ukraine. This could be the reason, aside from visa and travel restrictions, there are no major travel and tourism policies implemented in response to this crisis.

The transition towards sustainable and responsible tourism plays an essential if not even the main role in all West European countries’ tourism strategy plans (Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, 2021; European Commission, 2021; MEAE, 2021; MGTCa, 2020; MOEJ, 2020; Visit Britain & Visit England, 2021).

Countries in West Europe introduced tools to reduce the ecological footprint, support innovation, investments in the energy-efficient renovation of buildings, sustainable mobility, “notably by improving railway infrastructure, financing green public buses, deploying electric charging stations, developing urban public transport, and creating or refurbishing cycling pathways” (European Commission, 2022). Moreover, the strategies of West European countries mostly emphasize collaboration effects to create a common base for long-term improvements and give more visibility to sustainable tourism projects.

While some Central European countries have successfully implemented policies to achieve

their desired goals, some have not been as efficient as others. For instance, the Federal Government Centre of Excellence for Tourism in Germany, created "an information webpage for the tourism industry dedicated to the Covid-19 impact on the sector" (OECD, 2022). According to Willi et al., (2020), the federal policy responses to Covid-19 in Switzerland were numerous and were based on different criteria around privacy, political rights, raising awareness, economy, collaboration, and others. Many countries focused on subsidizing the tourism sector and promoting public-private partnerships through funding in the tourism sector. Marketing and joint promotion, digitalization, support for sustainably oriented infrastructure, reduction of VAT on accommodation and other hospitality services, measures protecting employment in tourism, developing domestic tourism and tourism vouchers were introduced alongside the protection of consumers during Covid-19 crisis. Some countries focused on support for and development of MICE sector, which was one of the hardest sectors hit during the Covid-19 crisis.

South European countries saw a lesser boost from domestic travellers, which benefitted several developed economies, such is an example of Portugal (Santos & Oliveira Moreira, 2021). Their focus is on new digital systems and technologies to alter the character of their workforce and qualifications requirements, and the pandemic's influence on customer expectations, behaviour, and consumption. Spain has focused on addressing unemployment, especially among the younger population and long-standing structural challenges, where the EU funds could be the key to building a lasting recovery, focusing on digital and green investments, and creating a more resilient, more inclusive economy (OECD, 2021). Malta's tourism suffered from loss of airline routes and skilled personnel. Their strategy focuses on sustainability, while maintaining tourism's share of GDP, updating tourism market segments, and focusing on domestic tourism. Italy imposed quite strict border and health restrictions to combat the pandemic, Hence, the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) granted €191.5 billion to Italy's tourism sector to become more sustainable, resilient, and prepared for the challenges and possibilities that the green and digital transitions will bring (European Commission, n.d.).

As far as the Covid-19 pandemic is concerned, many countries of Southeast Europe have adopted measures to bolster the tourism industry. Bulgaria implemented tourism policies to target to support the tour operators, provide liquidity support to the beneficiaries and to help and refund customers for travels that had to be cancelled due to the outbreak of the pandemic. Cyprus, Greece, and Romania offered direct grants, public and private loans, and the general support of businesses (European Commission, 2022). The Republic of North Macedonia issued vouchers to low-income employees to support domestic tourism (Ministry of Economy, 2019). Albania worked towards increasing the purchasing power and mobility of Albanian citizens to stimulate domestic tourism (Polo, 2020). Serbia concentrated on domestic tourism (Ivanova et al, 2020). For Montenegro, collaboration between the stakeholders is crucial (Calleja et al., 2022). Southeast European countries are active in helping to overcome the crisis stemming from the Ukrainian war (Atanasov, 2022), despite being dependent on Russian tourists.

Table 2 contains the basic tourism indicators for all analysed European regions. Each region's area and population are shown, in addition to the total contribution of travel & tourism to GDP and its change, total contribution of travel & tourism to employment (In Millions of Jobs) and its change, impacts of international and domestic visitors and its change.

Table 2: Basic Indicators for Regions in Europe

| Indicator | North Europe | | West Europe* | | Central Europe** | | South Europe | | Southeast Europe | |
|--|--------------|------|--------------|-------|------------------|-------|--------------|-------|------------------|-------|
| | 2019 | 2020 | 2019 | 2020 | 2019 | 2020 | 2019 | 2020 | 2019 | 2020 |
| Area (km2) | 1,217,167 | | 922,327 | | 1,271,043 | | 900,572 | | 732,300 | |
| Population (in Millions) | 27.3 | 27.5 | 167.9 | 168.6 | 177.2 | 177.5 | 117.6 | 117.7 | 56.7 | 56.4 |
| Total contribution of Travel & Tourism to GDP (in Millions of Euros) | 109.4 | 65.1 | 640.5 | 299.2 | 602.0 | 323.9 | 490 | 215 | 82.1 | 32.9 |
| Total contribution of Travel & Tourism to GDP (% of Total Economy) | 7.5% | 4.6% | 9.0% | 4.5% | 9.0% | 5.1% | 10.8% | 6.4% | 11.9% | 5.1% |
| Change in Travel & Tourism GDP (% change 2020/2019) | -40.5% | | -53.3% | | -46.2% | | -56.1% | | -59.9% | |
| Total contribution of Travel & Tourism to Employment (In Millions of Jobs) | 1.2 | 1.0 | 8.8 | 8.2 | 10.1 | 9.3 | 7.4 | 6.6 | 2.5 | 2.2 |
| Total contribution of Travel & Tourism to Employment (% of Total Employment) | 8.5% | 7.8% | 11.2% | 10.5% | 10.4% | 9.7% | 12.4% | 11.2% | 11.3% | 10.3% |
| Change in Travel & Tourism Jobs (% change 2020/2019) | -9.6% | | -6.8% | | -8.0% | | -10.9% | | -10.6% | |
| Visitor Impact International (Visitor Spend in Millions of Euros) | 33.2 | 12.6 | 151.7 | 61.8 | 161.5 | 69.4 | 161 | 47 | 43.5 | 11.6 |
| Visitor Impact International (% of Total Exports) | 4.5% | 2.1% | 4.6% | 2.1% | 4.4% | 2.2% | 6.5% | 3.9% | 14.1% | 4.6% |
| Change in International Visitor Spend: (% Change 2020/2019) | -62.1% | | -59.3% | | -57.0% | | -70.9% | | -73.4% | |
| Visitor Impact Domestic (Visitor Spend in Millions of Euros) | 58.1 | 39.4 | 393.9 | 181.1 | 397.2 | 218.5 | 232 | 116 | 20.8 | 11.3 |
| Change in Domestic Visitor Spend: (% Change 2020/2019) | -32.3% | | -54.0% | | -45.0% | | -49.9% | | -45.5% | |

Source: WTTC, 2022.

*Note: Andorra and Monaco were not included in the statistics.

**Liechtenstein was not included in the statistics.

METHODS AND OBJECTIVES

Chapter on regions in Europe outlined the basic issues that tourism in Europe is facing. Based on an extensive literature review on challenges, objectives, and policies for tourism in crisis, research to apply these findings in Europe has been designed. The survey instrument was designed through literature review, considering the papers which deal with disease outbreaks wars and the corresponding challenges, goals, and policies. The variables were collected and compared, the redundant were deleted to keep the questionnaire as short as possible. The questionnaire was then checked by 3 academics and 3 representatives from the industry for the completeness, understandability, and adequacy. This ensured face and content validity. We used stratified sampling since our population was divided based on the regions of Europe; we selected a sample from each stratum. The survey was done through questionpro.com, the respondents from destination management organizations (DMOs) were contacted by telephone and then sent the survey. Around 700 DMOs were contacted, which generated 172 complete responses.

This chapter presents the main aspects of the research in terms of purpose and goals, research questions and the research methodology to answer these questions.

The purpose of this research is to identify tourism policy implications across Europe in times of tourism crises. The research will identify the current state of tourism in different regions of Europe. It will explore the challenges that tourism is facing during the war in Ukraine and post Covid-19 pandemic. It will identify tourism policies that contribute to improve tourism management, to deal with war and pandemic crisis and achieve the proposed objectives of tourism development.

Goals:

- Identify the current state and main tourism challenges that European regions are facing due to the Covid-19 pandemic and war in Ukraine.
- Identify important tourism policies in European regions that concern the sociocultural, natural, economic, communication and digitalization environment.
- Identify the goals of European regions through realizing important tourism policies to develop improved tourism management for the future.

A reliability analysis was conducted based on the results of a survey sent out to about 700 DMOs across the analysed European regions. The results of the survey and analysis allowed us to identify the relevant challenges, goals, and policies in tourism during crisis and answer the following research questions:

- What are the most and the least important challenges that tourism destinations in Europe are facing?
- What are the most and the least important goals tourism destinations in Europe want to

achieve with implementing tourism policies?

- Which are the most and the least important tourism policies that will achieve the identified objectives in tourism destinations in Europe?

To search for the differences between the variables between Europe and specific regions, one-sample t-tests were used. The values of the analysed region with the average values for the entire Europe were compared. One sample t-test allows a comparison of the mean of a sample to a predetermined value (Gerald, 2018). This allows us to answer the following research question:

- How do the variables differ in the European regions compared to European average in terms of the challenges, goals, and policies?

Results and Discussion Regarding Tourism in European Regions

The total sample for our research consists of 172 completed questionnaires from analysed European regions: 34.3% from Central Europe, 18.6% from Southeast Europe, 18.0% from West Europe, 17.4% from South Europe, and 11.6% from North Europe (Table 3).

Table 3: Demographics

| Region | Country | Percentage |
|----------------|----------------|------------|
| North Europe | Sweden | 35.0 |
| | Finland | 25.0 |
| | Norway | 20.0 |
| | Iceland | 15.0 |
| | Denmark | 5.0 |
| West Europe | Ireland | 38.7 |
| | United Kingdom | 35.5 |
| | France | 22.6 |
| | Belgium | 3.2 |
| Central Europe | Austria | 13.6 |
| | Latvia | 13.6 |
| | Croatia | 10.2 |
| | Lithuania | 10.2 |
| | Estonia | 8.5 |
| | Slovakia | 8.5 |
| | Slovenia | 8.5 |

| | | |
|------------------|------------------------|------|
| | Czech Republic | 6.8 |
| | Germany | 5.1 |
| | Hungary | 5.1 |
| | Luxembourg | 3.4 |
| | Poland | 3.4 |
| | Switzerland | 3.4 |
| South Europe | Italy | 33.3 |
| | Spain | 30.0 |
| | Portugal | 23.3 |
| | Malta | 13.3 |
| Southeast Europe | Serbia | 18.8 |
| | Bosnia and Herzegovina | 15.6 |
| | Greece | 15.6 |
| | Bulgaria | 12.5 |
| | North Macedonia | 12.5 |
| | Romania | 12.5 |
| | Albania | 3.1 |
| | Cyprus | 3.1 |
| | Moldova | 3.1 |
| | Montenegro | 3.1 |

Overall, most of the DMOs come from a municipal/local level (61.1%), followed by regional/provincial (27.9%), and national (10.5%). Regarding work position, most of the respondents hold managerial and directorial positions (38.2%), followed by operational and front-office (33.1%), administrative and back-office (26.4%), and internship roles (2.2%).

The DMOs were asked to give an evaluation on a 7-point Likert scale on 15 challenges that tourism sector is currently facing in their destination, as well as to rate 21 goals and 38 policies needed to achieve them. (Tables 4, 5, 6). Cronbach's alpha for all three sets of variables exceeded 0.8, which implies very good scale reliability. Furthermore, Cronbach's alpha would not improve by eliminating any of the variables.

Table 4: Challenges

| Variable | Mean |
|---|------|
| Tourism suffered because of Covid-19 restrictions | 6,34 |
| Tourism suffered because of Covid-19 infections | 5,98 |
| Tourism faces a shortage of skilled labour | 5,54 |
| Increasing energy costs are hindering tourism mobility | 5,23 |
| Increasing inflation is hindering tourism | 5,21 |
| Lack of preparedness for tourism crises | 5,11 |
| Tourism is still influenced by the Covid-19 pandemic | 4,94 |
| Effects of tourism on the environment are a concern | 4,75 |
| Tourism is affected by the war in Ukraine | 4,73 |
| It is difficult to get funding for tourism investment | 4,66 |
| Weak tourism destination marketing strategies | 4,52 |
| Tourism is influenced by the climate crisis | 4,43 |
| Domestic tourism generates less income than international tourism | 4,37 |
| Tourism faces a lack of digitalization | 4,28 |
| The benefits of developing domestic tourism are lower than those of international tourism | 4,01 |

Table 5: Goals

| Variable | Mean |
|--|------|
| Improve regional/local economy | 6,34 |
| Contribute to more sustainable tourism | 6,30 |
| Improve quality of life of local population | 6,13 |
| Attract the right market segment of visitors | 6,10 |
| Improve quality of tourism employment | 6,03 |
| Create awareness about the country | 6,03 |
| Enhance the efficiency of tourism | 5,99 |
| Strengthen the resilience of tourism | 5,98 |
| Environmental conservation | 5,95 |
| Contribute to infrastructural development | 5,93 |

| | |
|--|------|
| Attract more foreign visitors | 5,90 |
| Recover from the Covid-19 crisis | 5,90 |
| Generate revenues | 5,85 |
| Be better prepared for crises | 5,84 |
| Attract more domestic visitors | 5,77 |
| Implement actions to restore tourists' confidence after/during pandemic and war crisis | 5,73 |
| Provide employment in tourism | 5,72 |
| Generate higher expenditure per visitor | 5,66 |
| Provide an effective health and safety protocols for employees in tourism | 5,42 |
| Provide an effective health and safety protocols for tourists | 5,33 |
| Assist balance of payments | 5,16 |

Table 6: Policies

| Variable | Mean |
|---|------|
| Support for accessible tourism | 6,26 |
| Cultural heritage preservation | 6,26 |
| Off-season promotion | 6,25 |
| Protecting natural resources | 6,23 |
| Prolonging the length of stay | 6,21 |
| Using social media for destination marketing and management | 6,18 |
| Promoting international tourism | 6,14 |
| Supporting tourism businesses in sustainability attempts | 6,12 |
| Promotion of environmentally friendly mobility | 6,12 |
| Promoting domestic tourism | 6,05 |
| Raise attractiveness of careers in tourism | 6,03 |
| Residents' and communities' well-being | 6,02 |
| Governmental financial aid to preserve jobs during crisis | 6,02 |
| Developing new forms of tourism | 5,99 |
| Financial incentives for tourism development | 5,99 |

| | |
|---|------|
| Recycling measures | 5,98 |
| Measures for improving the quality of employment | 5,97 |
| Emissions reduction | 5,96 |
| Waste reduction regulations | 5,95 |
| Measures for preserving employment | 5,95 |
| Energy management | 5,93 |
| Support for low carbon emission tourism | 5,92 |
| Implementation of crisis recovery marketing strategies | 5,91 |
| Involvement of all stakeholders in policymaking | 5,89 |
| Promotion of public-private collaboration | 5,87 |
| Supporting sustainability awareness campaigns | 5,85 |
| Promoting digital networking platforms | 5,84 |
| Water management regulations | 5,81 |
| Supporting human resource management in tourism | 5,77 |
| Regulations for improved working conditions in tourism | 5,76 |
| Financial support for the creation of jobs in tourism | 5,73 |
| Promotion of technology and innovations | 5,66 |
| Development of sustainability monitoring tools | 5,62 |
| Efficient taxation related to environmental protection | 5,60 |
| Promoting gender equality | 5,55 |
| Improvement of risk management | 5,53 |
| Technologies to decrease contact (contactless check-in, etc.) | 5,30 |
| Provision of vouchers for domestic tourists | 4,95 |

To determine whether there is a significant difference between the European mean and the means of different European regions, t-tests were used, sample distribution is normal.

CHALLENGES

The most important challenges according to the respondents were “Tourism suffered because of Covid-19 restrictions” (6.34), “Tourism suffered because of Covid-19 infections” (5.98), “Tourism faces a shortage of skilled labour” (5.54), and “Increasing energy costs are hindering tourism mobility” (5.23). On the other hand, the least important challenges perceived

were “The benefits of developing domestic tourism are lower than those of international tourism” (4.01), “Tourism faces a lack of digitalization” (4.28), “Domestic tourism generates less income than international tourism” (4.37), and “Tourism is influenced by the climate crisis” (4.43). These identified the most and the least important challenges that tourism destinations in Europe are facing and answer our challenges-related research question. Whereas differences between regions and Europe as a whole regarding challenges are presented below, which address our last research question.

North Europe

Compared to Europe as a whole, North Europe had statistically significant differences regarding three challenges. Compared to the European mean for “Tourism suffered because of Covid-19 infections” (5.98), North Europe had a lower mean (5.30). Compared to the European mean for “Tourism is affected by the war in Ukraine” (4.73), North Europe had a lower mean (4.00). Compared to the European mean for “Weak tourism destination marketing strategies” (4.52), North Europe also had a lower mean (3.95).

Regarding the war in Ukraine, in the survey it is shown that northern countries are significantly less affected than other European countries. This could be due to the distance and that it is not necessary for many countries to pass through Russia or Ukraine to reach them. Further, the resources in northern countries like Norway and Denmark are abundant. There are some key factors for the success of destinations during and after the pandemic: communication, borders opening, clear entry rules and vaccination, and more specifically northern countries took a great effort on marketing their strategies to show that the destinations are safe and open to tourism (Rodrigues et al., 2021). The survey also shows that North Europe has been less affected by Covid-19.

West Europe

Compared to Europe as a whole, West Europe had statistically significant differences regarding six challenges. Compared to the European mean for “Tourism is affected by the war in Ukraine” (4.73), West Europe had a lower mean (4.19). On the other hand, compared to the European mean for “Tourism suffered because of Covid-19 restrictions” (6.34), West Europe had a higher mean (6.68). Compared to the European mean for “Tourism suffered because of Covid-19 infections” (5.98), West Europe had a higher mean (6.42). Compared to the European mean for “Tourism faces a shortage of skilled labour” (5.54), West Europe had a higher mean (6.23). Compared to the European mean for “Effects of tourism on the environment are a concern” (4.75), West Europe had a higher mean (5.48). Compared to the European mean for “Tourism is influenced by the climate crisis” (4.43), West Europe again had a higher mean (5.10).

“Tourism is affected by the war in Ukraine” is a statistically lower ranked challenge in West Europe while the high scores for “Increasing energy costs are hindering tourism mobility”

and “Increasing inflation is hindering tourism” remain similar. On the one hand, these results show that the data from Travelsat and Forwardkeys are consistent, suggesting that West Europe is less heavily impacted compared to other European countries due to its geographical position. On the other hand, the high scoring of indirect war impacts, such as costs and prices, confirm that the conflict poses high level of uncertainty on the economy and mobility in West Europe (Anayi, 2022; Pandey & Kumar, 2022). Looking at the feedback from the DMOs, the uncertainty of future development, as well as mobility and rising costs appear as main concerns, with 13 out of 24 comments mentioning at least one of them. Uncertainty and inflation issues match the findings of Hall (2010) that when one region or destination has been affected by a crisis, the impacts can resonate through the entire system.

West Europe gave significantly higher ratings to “Tourism suffered because of Covid-19 restrictions” and “Tourism suffered because of Covid-19 infections”, but not to “Tourism is still influenced by the Covid-19 pandemic”, which implies that, according to Pauchant and Mitroff (1992) crisis management theory, West Europe is currently in the reactive stage during/after the pandemic, focusing mainly to contain the damage and quickly restore the status quo. Regarding the shortage of skilled labour, the big concern of labour scarcity in West Europe becomes evident looking at the feedback from the DMOs in the survey: from 24 comments, 8 respondents (1/3 of respondents) found that it is worth mentioning the problems in recruiting qualified workforce. Significantly higher means for “Effects of tourism on the environment are a concern” and “Tourism is influenced by the climate crisis” (4.43) imply that West Europe is very much aware of the environmental challenges they are facing.

Central Europe

Compared to Europe as a whole, Central Europe had statistically significant differences regarding two challenges. Compared to the European mean for “Tourism is affected by the war in Ukraine” (4.73), Central Europe had a higher mean (5.12). On the other hand, compared to the European mean for “The benefits of developing domestic tourism are lower than those of international tourism” (4.01), Central Europe had a lower mean (3.51).

DMOs in this region perceive the current Ukrainian crisis not only as a major concern, but also a great influence on its tourism in a different degree than other regions in Europe. For instance, by the geographical location of Central Europe, 6 out of the 14 nations have a direct physical border with either Russia or Ukraine. Furthermore, according to the refugee flow, Poland itself has received 3 million Ukrainian fleeing to the country (UNHCR, 2022). TCI researcher Henry-Biabaud (2022) has also mentioned in a seminar of the European Travel Commission, that the destination image and reputation of Central Europe were greatly affected by their geographic relationship with Eastern Europe, especially among the external tourist markets outside the European continent. These factors all together could have created a substantial challenge for Central Europe. As aforementioned, Central European nations are fortunately implementing policies such as promoting and subsidizing domestic tourism. It is considered that these practices can serve as a substitute for the international market

decline caused by the current crisis. It also reflects how the Central European governments have acknowledged and prioritized the decline in international tourism through their policy implementation.

South Europe

Compared to Europe as a whole, South Europe had statistically significant differences regarding only one challenge. Compared to the European mean for “Tourism faces a shortage of skilled labour” (5.54), South Europe had a lower mean (4.83).

This implies that the respondents agreed that South Europe may be less affected by the skilled worker shortage than Europe as a whole. This is likely because southern European countries' national tourism strategies include skilled workforce programs. However, this does not mean that South European tourism does not suffer from the skilled labour shortage. Malta in its new tourism strategy has also identified this issue and carefully addresses it through one of its strategies focused on enhanced continuous staff training opportunities and the improvement of wage attractiveness. Simultaneously, 3 out of 13 survey respondents' comments identified a lack of skilled workforce as a major concern.

Southeast Europe

Compared to Europe as a whole, Southeast Europe had statistically significant differences regarding two challenges. Compared to the European mean for “Weak tourism destination marketing strategies” (4.52), Southeast Europe had a higher mean (5.06). On the other hand, compared to the European mean for “Tourism is influenced by the climate crisis” (4.43), Southeast Europe had a lower mean (3.88), denoting a lower concern about environmental challenges.

Regarding how the war is influencing the tourism sector in this region, it is relevant to mention the emphasis stressed on the importance of destination image, branding, and communication to recover from the crisis while they recognize the weakness of the Region in this area: “no post war advertising, weak tourism destination marketing strategies, lack of cohesive destination branding”. This is also aligned with the conclusions from Mair et al. (2016) who also identify the lack of communication and preparedness as common challenges for crises management.

GOALS

The most important goals as seen by the respondents were “Improve regional/local economy” (6.34), “Contribute to more sustainable tourism” (6.30), “Improve quality of life of local population” (6.13), and “Attract the right market segment of visitors” (6.10). On the other

hand, the least important goals were “Provide an effective health and safety protocols for employees in tourism” (5.42), “Provide an effective health and safety protocols for tourists” (5.33), and “Assist balance of payments” (5.16). These identified most and least important goals that tourism destinations in Europe strive to achieve an answer to our goals-related research question. Whereas differences between regions and the whole of Europe regarding goals are presented below, which address our last research question.

North Europe

Compared to Europe as a whole, North Europe had statistically significant differences regarding only one goal. Compared to the European mean for “Attract the right market segment of visitors” (6.10), North Europe had a higher mean (6.50).

Due to the natural environment of northern countries, it was especially important for North Europe to attract the right segment of tourists who are interested in the nature beauty and activities especially in winter, also considering people are more reluctant to travel during the time of Covid-19 and the war crisis. Therefore, they created awareness of their countries.

West Europe

Compared to Europe as a whole, West Europe had statistically significant differences regarding nine goals. Compared to the European mean for “Contribute to infrastructural development” (5.93), West Europe had a lower mean (5.48). All other goals were seen as more important than in Europe as a whole. Compared to the European mean for “Generate revenues” (5.85), West Europe had a higher mean (6.13). Compared to the European mean for “Attract more domestic visitors” (5.77), West Europe had a higher mean (6.03). Compared to the European mean for “Attract the right market segment of visitors” (6.10), West Europe had a higher mean (6.39). Compared to the European mean for “Provide an effective health and safety protocols for tourists” (5.33), West Europe had a higher mean (5.71). Compared to the European mean for “Implement actions to restore tourists' confidence after/during pandemic and war crisis” (5.73), West Europe had a higher mean (6.03). Compared to the European mean for “Environmental conservation” (5.95), West Europe had a higher mean (6.35). Compared to the European mean for “Contribute to more sustainable tourism” (6.30), West Europe had a higher mean (6.58). Compared to the European mean for “Strengthen the resilience of tourism” (5.98), West Europe had a higher mean (6.35).

As Rodríguez-Antón and Alonso-Almeida (2020) insist, health crises result in longer periods of recovery, aligning with the high scoring objectives “Strengthen the resilience of tourism”, “Provide an effective health and safety protocols for tourists”, and “Implement actions to restore tourists' confidence after/during pandemic and war crisis”. The high focus of West Europe countries on strengthening the resilience of tourism suggests new and forward-looking tourism policies during and after crises. Considering that “Attract more domestic visitors” is among the highest scoring objective of West Europe countries and considerably higher

compared to the European average proves that the regional focus in tourism is becoming more and more important along with attracting the right market segment to generate revenues from tourism.

Environmental conservation and contributing to more sustainable tourism were also significantly higher in West Europe compared to the European means, which can be partly explained by the fact that these countries have less concerns regarding the war impacts and the infrastructure readiness for example. The importance of the goal “Contribute to infrastructural development” is ranking lower in West European countries compared to the European mean. This makes sense as it is considered a strength of the region, performing already above average, leading to a lower need to act on this objective. Thus, post Covid-19, the transition towards sustainable and responsible tourism plays an essential if not even the main role in all West European countries’ tourism strategy plans.

Central Europe

Compared to Europe as a whole, Central Europe had statistically significant differences regarding six goals, all of which were seen as less important than in Europe as a whole. Compared to the European mean for “Provide an effective health and safety protocols for employees in tourism” (5.42), Central Europe had a lower mean (5.12). Compared to the European mean for “Provide employment in tourism” (5.72), Central Europe had a lower mean (5.36). Compared to the European mean for “Improve quality of tourism employment” (6.03), Central Europe had a lower mean (5.76). Compared to the European mean for “Environmental conservation” (5.95), Central Europe had a lower mean (5.66). Compared to the European mean for “Improve regional/local economy” (6.34), Central Europe had a lower mean (6.12). Compared to the European mean for “Strengthen the resilience of tourism” (5.98), Central Europe had a lower mean (5.69).

Out of all six goals, three of them are directly associated with tourism employment, namely ‘provide employment in tourism’, ‘improve quality of tourism employment’ and ‘provide an effective health and safety protocols for employees in tourism’. All these variables, suggesting the employees’ wellbeing, were reacted significantly as less priorities from Central European DMOs. The reason behind this might be highly complicated and intertwined with multiple factors, the authors have made the assumptions below: 1) As some countries in Central Europe, such as the Baltic, are considered as newly developed tourism market, their tourism policies and strategies might not always setting their employment environment as the priority 2) while the Ukrainian crisis has shown as the significant variable that affecting the region tremendously, some other potential threats such as poor employment condition might not be directly perceived as an important goal to be coped with. 3) while this survey was input by the DMOs, the employment conditions and their relative policies in tourism are perhaps not directly responsible by DMOs, therefore might cause the indifference of setting employment as tourism goals. Strengthening the resilience of tourism and improving regional/local economy have also been identified as less of a focus in Central Europe compared to Europe as a

whole. Another significant difference had been observed in the environmental issue, which is relevant and has been paid less attention in central Europe. Consequently, environmentally relevant policies also received lower notice, which is discussed in the Policies section.

South Europe

Compared to Europe as a whole, South Europe had statistically significant differences regarding two goals, both of which were seen as more important than in Europe as a whole. Compared to the European mean for “Assist balance of payments” (5.16), South Europe had a higher mean (5.70). Compared to the European mean for “Environmental conservation” (5.95), South Europe had a higher mean (6.27).

Regarding assisting balance of payments, this could imply that South European tourism stakeholders are more focused on achieving a balance of inflow and outflow of money than Europe as a whole. Due to the region's dependency on international tourism, the region suffers a 71% loss from international visitor expenditure, while the international visitor impact in terms of export plummeted by nearly half from 2019 to 2020. Therefore, international tourism is extremely important in restoring the inflow of money to pre-Covid-19 levels. Simultaneously, government and EU recovery and relief measures against Covid-19, such as the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), are required to stabilize tourism businesses, preventing the entire industry from collapsing and resulting trickle-down effects to other tourism-dependent industries.

Environmental conservation is also one of the most important focuses in the region. This is likely due to the region's many well-known natural attractions, such as beaches, coastal areas, and mountains, which attract both domestic and international tourists year after year, making environmental protection and preservation of such natural sites critical for the region. Another point to consider is the region's large number of UNESCO world heritage sites, which could indicate the region's success in environmental and cultural conservation as well as a desire to improve it in the long run. Furthermore, as EU member states, the countries must adhere to the EU Green Deal to meet the 2050 climate-neutral goal; environmental sustainability measures must be included in each south European country's tourism strategy.

Southeast Europe

Compared to Europe as a whole, Southeast Europe did not have any statistically significant differences regarding goals.

POLICIES

The most important policies as seen by the respondents were “Cultural heritage preservation” (6.26), “Support for accessible tourism” (6.26), “Off-season promotion” (6.25), “Protecting

natural resources” (6.23), and “Prolonging the length of stay” (6.21). On the other hand, the least important policies were “Promoting gender equality” (5.55), “Improvement of risk management” (5.53), “Technologies to decrease contact (contactless check-in, etc.)” (5.30), and “Provision of vouchers for domestic tourists” (4.95). These identified most and least important policies to be implemented at tourism destinations in Europe as a whole answer our policies-related research question. Whereas differences between regions and Europe as a whole, regarding policies are presented below, which address our last research question.

North Europe

Compared to Europe as a whole, North Europe had statistically significant differences regarding three policies. Compared to the European mean for “Provision of vouchers for domestic tourists” (4.95), North Europe had a lower mean (3.90). On the other hand, compared to the European mean for “Supporting tourism businesses in sustainability attempts” (6.12), North Europe had a higher mean (6.45). Compared to the European mean for “Promoting domestic tourism” (6.05), North Europe also had a higher mean (6.45).

During the period of Covid-19 and war crisis, the economy in Northern countries were in recession and there are needs that go before traveling such as accommodation and food. For this reason, vouchers for domestic tourists were given to boost the tourism sector but according to the result of the survey this was not that significant for northern countries although promoting domestic tourism has been identified as an important factor. Some reasons for this could be that they are among the countries with the highest income (Statista, 2022) and they do not need this type of measure, or that they prefer other destinations rather than their own countries when traveling as it is shown on ENI CBC Med (2021) and Farmstay Sweden (2020).

On the other hand, there will be a greater focus on sustainability which is already in implementation before the pandemic but is now stronger. Compared to other countries, northern countries are the most concerned with sustainability development which is pointed out in the survey that it is important because travellers are giving more importance to it (Gilchrist, 2021).

West Europe

Compared to Europe as a whole, West Europe had statistically significant differences regarding four policies. Compared to the European mean for “Financial support for the creation of jobs in tourism” (5.73), West Europe had a lower mean (5.29). Compared to the European mean for “Supporting human resource management in tourism” (5.77), West Europe also had a lower mean (5.35). On the other hand, compared to the European mean for “Support for accessible tourism” (6.26), West Europe had a higher mean (6.52). Compared to the European mean for “Promoting domestic tourism” (6.05), West Europe also had a higher mean (6.42). Significantly lower scores of policies “Supporting human resource management in tourism”

and “Financial support for the creation of jobs in tourism” are somewhat surprising, since the loss of 6.75% of travel and tourism jobs in 2020 compared to 2019 suggests the necessity to concentrate on the weakness of job security and labour market by West European policy making institutions. West Europe needs to reconsider the value given to such policies and take France as an example, making employment a priority by including the conquest and reconquest of talents as a main policy in their recovery plan.

The fact that the goal of attracting more domestic visitors is considerably higher compared to the European average, is in accordance with the fact that “Promoting domestic tourism” is the highest scoring tourism policy for West Europe among all instruments mentioned in the survey. The urge to act in this area becomes obvious whilst looking at the statistics of WTTC (2022) showing the big loss in domestic visitor spend (-54%) from 2020 compared to 2019 due to the pandemic crises. The considerably higher domestic visitor impact compared to international visitor impact in 2019 and 2020 for West Europe prove the big potential opportunity lying in domestic travelling. A lot of attention is also put on the support for accessible tourism.

Central Europe

Compared to Europe as a whole, Central Europe had statistically significant differences regarding thirteen policies, all of which were seen as less important than in Europe as a whole. Compared to the European mean for “Protecting natural resources” (6.23), Central Europe had a lower mean (6.02). Compared to the European mean for “Water management regulations” (5.81), Central Europe had a lower mean (5.54). Compared to the European mean for “Recycling measures” (5.69), Central Europe had a lower mean (5.54). Compared to the European mean for “Waste reduction regulations” (5.95), Central Europe had a lower mean (5.63). Compared to the European mean for “Energy management” (5.93), Central Europe had a lower mean (5.68). Compared to the European mean for “Support for low carbon emission tourism” (5.92), Central Europe had a lower mean (5.63). Compared to the European mean for “Developing new forms of tourism” (5.99), Central Europe had a lower mean (5.69). Compared to the European mean for “Governmental financial aid to preserve jobs during crisis” (6.02), Central Europe had a lower mean (5.75). Compared to the European mean for “Cultural heritage preservation” (6.26), Central Europe had a lower mean (5.95). Compared to the European mean for “Support for accessible tourism” (6.26), Central Europe had a lower mean (6.02). Compared to the European mean for “Promoting gender equality” (5.55), Central Europe had a lower mean (5.14). Compared to the European mean for “Supporting sustainability awareness campaigns” (5.85), Central Europe had a lower mean (5.39). Compared to the European mean for “Technologies to decrease contact (contactless check-in, etc.)” (5.30), Central Europe had a lower mean (5.02).

The performance of environmental governance is already outstanding in more developed Central European countries. With the stable economic circumstance, their environmental awareness has also been raised in advance than in other regions. With years of development,

this region already has good environmental governance performance. For example, Germany is the leading country in green energy and policies. People also have higher concerns about environmental issues in Germany and Luxembourg (Eurobarometer, 2008). In Switzerland, their environmental policy also achieved many successes since the 1980s (EEA, 2015). Austria places a strong emphasis on waste management and recycling, as one of Europe's highest recycling rates (EIO, 2019). For the other countries, Slovenia was ranked as the top 3 countries which have high attention to environmental issues (Eurobarometer, 2008). In the survey, there is one comment from the Czech Republic that mentioned that "current environmental regulations are fully sufficient." The environmental topic is one of the issues that has already been discussed for many years. With this evidence, we can understand that these countries already have higher environmental management achievements and have considerable experience. As a result, for the DMOs of this region, environmental policies are relevantly not their first priority to work on. This can also be observed for social sustainability, since promoting gender equality, financial aid for jobs preservation, and heritage preservation were ranked lower, as well as developing new forms of tourism, accessible tourism, and new technologies.

South Europe

Compared to Europe as a whole, South Europe had statistically significant differences regarding only one policy. Compared to the European mean for "Promoting domestic tourism" (6.05), South Europe had a lower mean (5.47).

With a loss in international visitor spending (-71%) that is significantly greater than the loss in domestic visitor spending (-50%), this region has traditionally been reliant on international tourism, with regulations geared toward making it easier for international visitors to arrive while playing a more reactive role in domestic ones. This could be because they recognize that international visitors are their primary target audience and that they cannot exist without them. However, due to border restrictions, some survey respondents believe that domestic tourist promotion is critical in compensating for the loss of international visitors, particularly in small and remote destinations.

Southeast Europe

Compared to Europe as a whole, Southeast Europe had statistically significant differences regarding twelve policies, all of which were seen as more important than in Europe as a whole. Compared to the European mean for "Provision of vouchers for domestic tourists" (4.95), Southeast Europe had a higher mean (5.63). Compared to the European mean for "Financial support for the creation of jobs in tourism" (5.73), Southeast Europe had a higher mean (6.34). Compared to the European mean for "Raise attractivity of careers in tourism" (6.03), Southeast Europe had a higher mean (6.38). Compared to the European mean for "Supporting human resource management in tourism" (5.77), Southeast Europe had a higher mean (6.22). Compared to the European mean for "Regulations for improved working conditions in tourism" (5.76), Southeast Europe had a higher mean (6.22). Compared to the

European mean for “Cultural heritage preservation” (6.26), Southeast Europe had a higher mean (6.63). Compared to the European mean for “Promoting international tourism” (6.14), Southeast Europe had a higher mean (6.59). Compared to the European mean for “Off-season promotion” (6.25), Southeast Europe had a higher mean (6.50). Compared to the European mean for “Prolonging the length of stay” (6.21), Southeast Europe had a higher mean (6.50). Compared to the European mean for “Implementation of crisis recovery marketing strategies” (5.91), Southeast Europe had a higher mean (6.19). Compared to the European mean for “Promoting digital networking platforms” (5.84), Southeast Europe had a higher mean (6.19). Compared to the European mean for “Technologies to decrease contact (contactless check-in, etc.)” (5.30), Southeast Europe had a higher mean (5.81).

The most important policies relate to promotion in terms of off-season, length of stay and international tourism. These countries find it necessary to increase the effort in attracting international tourists to increase the tourist spendings and get other benefits from the derived cultural exchange (Meyer & Meyer, 2015). The second set of policies that were identified as more important relate to human resources management and workforce retention, which has historically been a problem of this part of Europe. Improving strategies and recovering from crises through implementing technological solutions is also one of the key policy aspects of Southeast Europe.

Conclusion, Limitations, and Recommendations

The tourism industry is very vulnerable in different crises. Right now, not only Europe but also the world is suffering from two major crises: Covid-19 and the war in Ukraine. The tourism industry started to gradually recover from Covid-19 crisis in 2022, but the war in Ukraine again intensified the disruption and generated further uncertainty. The results of this paper have provided insights on the current challenges, the corresponding tourism policies as well as the goals to be achieved by implementing them in the tourism industry in Europe as a whole and in European regions. Additionally, this study aimed to provide comparisons of different regions and the Europe overall.

Some regions suffered less from these crises than other parts of Europe because they are less reliant on tourism and/or have built resilience through the adaptability to the new situation and ability to recover fast. Due to their geographic position, some countries were less affected by the war in Ukraine. In terms of tourism challenges, European tourism is facing not only the impacts of the current temporary crises including the war and the Covid-19 pandemic but also eternal challenges such as lack of skilled labour, increasing energy costs, increasing inflation, and lack of preparedness for tourism crises. Concerning the most important goals, European regions identify improving regional/local economy, contributing to more sustainable tourism, improving quality of life of local population, and attracting the right market segment of visitors. Meanwhile, the focus of policymakers should be on the cultural heritage preservation, protecting natural resources, support for accessible tourism, off-season promotion, and prolonging the length of stay.

Comparing different regions in Europe to the European average in terms of challenges, goals and policies, t-test results show that North Europe was less affected by the spread of Covid-19 and the war in Ukraine. Consequently, they see attracting the right market segment of visitors as a more important goal and prioritise policies that will support tourism businesses in sustainability, innovation, and promoting domestic tourism. West Europe was more affected by Covid-19, but less by the war in Ukraine, and is also more concerned about shortage of skilled labour, effects of tourism on the environment, and the influence of the climate crisis on tourism. The goals that were seen as more important in West Europe, were contributing to sustainable tourism, and strengthening the resilience of tourism, attracting the right market segment of visitors, attracting more domestic visitors, generating revenues, and environmental conservation. In line with goals, support for accessible tourism and promoting domestic tourism were more important policies in West Europe. Central Europe, by contrast, was more affected by the war in Ukraine. Many goals were seen as less important, such as improving regional/local economy, improving quality of tourism employment, strengthening the resilience of tourism, environmental conservation, and providing employment in tourism. Many policies were also seen as less important, such as support for accessible tourism, cultural heritage preservation, governmental financial aid to preserve jobs during crisis, developing new forms of tourism, and most environmental policies. South Europe sees shortage of skilled labour as much less of a challenge than Europe as a whole, they see environmental conservation and assisting the balance of payments as more important goals and promoting domestic tourism as a less important policy. Southeast Europe sees weak tourism destination marketing strategies as more of a challenge, and tourism are influenced by the climate crisis as less of a challenge. They do not differ from the European mean when it comes to goals, but on the other hand, many policies were seen as more important, such as cultural heritage preservation, promoting international tourism, prolonging the length of stay, off-season promotion, creation of jobs in tourism and improving working conditions in tourism.

A limitation of this paper is the high complexity and interdependence of various variables. Data collection was complex, and the survey was quite long (about 15 minutes), which for the people working at DMOs meant they had to find extra time in their work to be able to fill it. The survey sample is not representative for individual regions, due to low participation rate (below 30% participation rate of respondents recommended by Neuman (2007) to ensure representativeness of the sample). DMO's vary in their operations and the size of the destinations, which creates asymmetries that represents limitations to the analysis. DMOs in some countries also refused to participate, therefore some countries are underrepresented in our research. Another limitation to our research is the regional and national tourism authorities having different approaches and scope in policymaking. Moreover, language barriers are also a limitation since the survey was only available in English. Finally, the distribution software of the survey was not optimal as many e-mails were sent to the spam folders of certain DMOS. As a result, we needed to call most DMOs individually, which was extremely time consuming.

The subject of Covid-19 and the Ukraine-Russian war are everchanging phenomena that

bring immense uncertainty and constantly emerging challenges. New developments could emerge at any point and change the perspective of the DMOs towards the given questionnaire. This also goes in line with the policy development from the DMOs as well as their approach toward goals and challenges. This research may therefore need constant follow-up as the landscape could greatly differ in months to come. It is necessary to systematically conduct research to better monitor the impact of crises on tourism and take appropriate measures during different periods of time, considering new emerging challenges.

Considering that the selected topics are relatively recent, there is a huge research gap connecting tourism policy, Covid-19, and the Ukraine-Russian war. There is a lack of theoretical foundation to develop variables as prior studies examining tourism policy and crises in ways that are relevant to current events are scarce.

Future research should focus on involving more DMOs from European countries so the sample would be representative at the regional level. As the research involved NTOs and DMOs, analysing the dissimilarity among these two levels could further show how tourism organizations differ in their approach to policymaking. In addition, as this research focuses on Europe, future studies can investigate the perspective of other world regions and examine both the similarities and dissimilarities in policymaking. Upcoming research could also collect data from other stakeholders such as the local population, the suppliers, accommodation sector, convention bureaus, F&B industry, and many more to see what challenges they are facing, what goals they hope to achieve, as well as what policies they expect from the public sector. The survey findings provide information that can be used to take action to stimulate the implementation of tourism policy in the EU and thus reduce the pressure of the recent crises. In further research, quantitative and qualitative methods should be used to provide better and more in-depth information. Qualitative analysis with interviews of the main tourism actors would complement and give more in-depth insight into the results shown in the paper.

The impacts of crises have created unprecedented scenarios that require not just immediate attention and action but also long-term strategic planning for destinations to prepare for such crises. The public policy implications of the paper are therefore crucial. Learning from the current situation and incorporating the knowledge in future plans can help destinations become more resilient and manage crises more effectively. The destinations further need to reassure visitors' safety and security along with directing their efforts to restore the destination's favourable image to move forward. The research serves as a foundation to dig into different perspectives of European tourism policies and tourism crisis management to provide significant recommendations for both tourism academic studies and tourism practitioners.

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Is the Sea always Bluer? A Valuation of the Cyprus Sea View

Pandelis Mitsis^{1 2}

ABSTRACT

Outside views are one of many hotels attributes which room rates are usually affected from. Hotels located along a coastline charge a different price for a room with a view than for a room without it. The current study investigates the value of the sea view in the Mediterranean island of Cyprus using a hedonic pricing model. Data are collected from a private tourist agency and linear regressions are used to estimate the model coefficients. Room rates are found to be higher around 15% for a room with a sea view than one with no such specification. Only one of the beachfront districts of the island indicates a higher sea view value, the one with the highest cost of living. No significant difference is found between hotels with different star ratings, lending support that the sea view is equally valued in different hotel categories.

Keywords: hotel room rates, sea view valuation, hedonic price model, Mediterranean Sea, Cyprus.

JEL classification: L83, Z31, R32.

“The grass is always greener (on the other side of the fence): Something you say that means that other people always seem to be in a better situation than you, although they may not be.”
~ Cambridge Dictionary

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² College of Tourism and Hotel Management, 29 Onasagorou Street, 1011 Nicosia, Cyprus; Email: pandelis.mitsis@cothm.ac.cy; Phone Number: +357-22462846; Fax Number: +357-22336295.



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INTRODUCTION

Hedonic price analysis views goods and services as bundles of characteristics that are attractive to the consumers. Therefore, the hedonic pricing model has been applied to many fields related to the pricing of products, such as automobiles, vegetables, and housing units. More importantly, it has also been applied in the economic valuation of goods and services for which a market does not exist, such as environmental quality, climate, and landscape. The present study uses a hedonic price approach to estimate the value of the Cyprus sea view as a non-market component of the prices of hotel rooms offered around the island.

Pricing is a strategic choice for practitioners in the hospitality industry. Not only it generates income for the hotel units to survive, but pricing can also be used as a communicator, as a bargaining tool and a competitive weapon. Therefore, it is essential, especially from a managerial perspective, to have a basic understanding of critical price determinants of the hotel room rates, such as offering an aesthetically appealing view. The aim of this paper is to analyse the effect from outside views on the room rates of the hotels in Cyprus, where the tourism sector accounts for a substantial percentage of the island's national income. According to the official website of the Statistical Service of Cyprus, the revenue from tourism in 2019 accounted for the equivalent of 12% of the nominal Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the country. The author hopes by this means to contribute to the academic literature on hospitality and tourism in Cyprus, and to provide understanding of issues of interest to practitioners in the specific country and elsewhere.

In general, this paper makes the following contributions. First, it examines the hypothesis posed in the existing literature that the value of sea view has a constant effect to all coastal tourist areas in the same region. Second, the paper also investigates whether outside views are differently valued in different tourist seasons or in hotels in different star categories, something that has not been investigated in the existing literature. Third, the current study advances the existing body of knowledge by contributing new empirical evidence from the island of Cyprus, a vital Mediterranean tourist destination.

The rest of this paper is organised as follows. Section 2 provides the literature review, while section 3 describes the data set used. Section 4 provides the methodological framework, section 5 presents the estimation results and concluding remarks are provided in section 6.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This paper estimates the value of the Cyprus sea view using the hedonic price model. This model has its origins in Lancaster (1966), according to which all goods and services are bundles of characteristics that can be accurately assessed by the consumers. Its theoretical framework was formally established by Rosen (1974) and the hedonic approach has been applied ever since to many fields related to the pricing of products, such as the automobile industry (Griliches, 1961), agricultural production (Jordan et al., 1985) and the housing market

(Wolverton & Senteza, 2000). Another field in which the hedonic pricing model is commonly applied is the estimation of the economic value of goods and services for which a market does not exist, such as water quality (Leggett & Bockstael, 2000), favourable climate (Madison & Bigano, 2003) and beautiful landscape (Geoghegan et al., 1997).

Pricing is one of the factors on which an efficient marketing strategy heavily depends on (Kotler & Keller, 2006). Since hospitality consists of a major component of the tourism sector, a correct evaluation of the determinants of room rates is an element which can significantly improve the marketing policy of tourist destinations. Tourism is an economic activity that is largely dependent on the discretionary decisions of consumers (Garača et al., 2018). Those consumers (i.e., the tourists) are constantly exposed to a variety of economic and non-economic factors which add to the distinct elasticity of tourism demand (Hanafiah & Harun, 2010). Prices, as an economic factor, have a significant impact on tourism demand (Crouch, 1992) since, in the one hand, a low-price strategy may attract more tourists to a specific spot and, in the other hand, a high-price policy can transform a mass tourism destination to an exclusive resort area (Forsyth & Dwyer, 2009).

The importance of pricing in destination marketing is substantially higher in the case of Cyprus, an island economy which is among the smallest EU member states, a former colony of Great Britain and a very open economy (Baldacchinoel & Wivel, 2020). As many other small island states (see, e.g., Thomas et al., 2020), Cyprus is highly dependent on its tourism industry of which the returns, no matter how seasonal those may be (e.g., foreign exchange, increased profits, and employment), contribute significantly to the wellbeing of its residents. In the present study, the existence of a flourishing hotel room market besides the Mediterranean coastline of Cyprus allows the use of a hedonic price model to evaluate its sea view as a non-market hotel amenity. Hotel rooms neighbouring the beachfront have many attributes, some of them market-induced (e.g., room facilities) and some of them non-market (e.g., outside views). The hedonic approach uses the systematic variation in the price of hotel rooms in order to impute the value of both market and non-market hotel room characteristics and attributes (Fleischer, 2012).

The determination of hotel characteristics which affect room rates consist of a field of frequent application of the hedonic price model in the tourism market. Those characteristics can, at a basic level, be thought to include type of room, facilities provided and attributes of the external environment (Papatheodorou et al., 2012). Monty and Skidmore (2003) identify location, accommodation-specific amenities and seasonality as being of particular interest, while Thrane (2007), stresses out the significance of service quality and the hotel star rating. As noted in Espinet et al. (2003), the rich variety of these factors, which Rigall-I-Torrent and Fluvià (2007) generally classify as private (e.g., services offered) and public (e.g., natural environment), render the hedonic analysis of hotel room rates a complex task. In addition, the selection of hotel attributes to be examined and the evidence from analysis differs from study to study, despite the existing guidelines for selecting factors in hedonic models (Andersson, 2000).

Studies applying the hedonic pricing method for hotels in the Mediterranean region (i.e. the touristic territory where Cyprus is traditionally designated to) include Papatheodorou (2002) and Pashardes et al. (2002). Their empirical findings suggest that the hotel rooms in Cyprus are more expensive than in other Mediterranean destinations, something that cannot be fully attributed to the quality characteristics of the Cypriot hotels. Mitsis (2021, 2022), the only other existing studies applying hedonic models to the Cypriot hospitality sector, identify hotel capacity and star rating as being amongst the attributes that determinate the price of the hotel room the most, without however investigating the effect from offering outside views.

Of the papers investigating the impact of a sea view on a hotel room price, Alegre et al. (2013) find that having a room with a view in the Mediterranean island of Mallorca increases the price of a holiday package by around 8%, while Portolan (2013) finds no such an effect in the room rates offered in the Croatian city of Dubrovnik. The seminal paper of Fleischer (2012) employs a hedonic price model to estimate the value of the sea view from hotels around the Mediterranean Sea and her empirical findings indicate that a room with a view is valued higher than a room without it. Even more importantly, no significant difference is found between regions or seasons, suggesting that the value of sea view has a constant effect to all coastal tourist areas in Mediterranean. This result is contradicted in Latinopoulos (2018) who uses a spatial hedonic model to evaluate the effect of sea view in the room rates offered in the coastal zone of Chalcidice, Greece. His findings exhibit a significant spatial variability concerning the effect of sea view, suggesting that local factors may have a substantial role in aesthetic values. The present paper allows a re-assessment of the 'constant sea view value hypothesis' using data from the Mediterranean island of Cyprus.

DATA

The study area for the present paper is Cyprus, a country where tourism occupies a dominant position in its economy, and it has significantly impacted its culture and multicultural development (Ayres, 2000). The island became an independent country in 1960, as the *Republic of Cyprus*, but in 1974 a military coup, followed by a foreign invasion, ended in the partition of the island along the UN-monitored Buffer Zone which still divides it today (Mitsis, 2013). As a result of these events, the Republic of Cyprus has lost control in about 1/3 of its territories (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2022), but it still maintains its status as a vital Mediterranean destination, and it offers a quite noteworthy number of tourist accommodations.

Most hotels in Cyprus appear on the list of more than one travel agents and price differences between agencies tend to be negligible (Chen & Rothschild, 2010). For this reason, the data set of this paper is obtained from a single operator, *Top Kinisis Travel Plc*, one of the most popular travel and tourism organisations in the country. Since the interest of the study lies in a comparison between rooms with a view and rooms without it, hotels that do not offer outside views are not selected. The geography of Cyprus is such that even its highest peaks are within 45 minutes' drive from the coastline. Therefore, hotel units from all regions of the government-controlled areas of the island (Famagusta, Larnaca, Limassol, Nicosia, Paphos

and the Troodos Mountains) are included in the sample and the final data set consists of 90 hotels with a total capacity exceeding 15,000 rooms.³ Figure 1 shows the spatial distribution of the hotels included in the sample.

Figure 1: Spatial Distribution of Hotels by Region



Notes: Figure 1 shows the spatial distribution of the hotels included in the sample. The dotted line marks the UN-monitored Buffer Zone which divides the island and its capital (Nicosia) until this day. The regions to which the hotels are assigned to are: Paphos District (west coast), Limassol District (south coast), Famagusta District (east coast), Larnaca District (south-east coast), Troodos Area (the mountain range in the centre) and the District of Nicosia (the central plain).

The study uses a pre-COVID sample in order to avoid any effects that may disturb the consistent estimation of the related long-term pricing decision coefficients. Also, in order to circumvent seasonality, the sample selection is restricted to the peak season of the year examined (June, July and August)⁴ and a total of 189 rooms are finally selected (see Table 1). The dependent variable in each case is the average room rate per month, calculated from the observed weekly prices. As of to standardise the comparisons, only the price per person for a one-night stay is collected in each establishment, but prices of rooms offering different external views (e.g., inland, pool and sea view) are treated as separate entries. On average, price information for about two rooms were collected per hotel in each month.

³ The sample size may seem small as compared to other studies performing this type of research, but the scale of the Cypriot economy renders it quite representative. The total number of hotels registered in the government-controlled areas of the Republic of Cyprus is 258, as of 2020, distributed as follows: 88 in the district of Famagusta, 32 in the district of Larnaca, 33 in the district of Limassol, 17 in the district of Nicosia, 62 in the district of Paphos and 26 in the Troodos area (Deputy Ministry of Tourism, 2022).

⁴ In Cyprus, the ‘summer tourist season’ is usually defined as the period from April to October. The months designated in the current study as the ‘peak season’ are those during which the highest number of tourist arrivals occurred in the period 2001-2020 (Statistical Service of Cyprus, 2022).

Table 1: Distribution of Number of Rooms and Average Price by Region

| Region | Number of Rooms | | | Average Price (€) | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|------------|------------|-------------------|-----------|-----------|
| | June | July | August | June | July | August |
| Famagusta District | 42 | 42 | 42 | 75 | 81 | 84 |
| Larnaca District | 29 | 29 | 27 | 57 | 64 | 69 |
| Limassol District | 36 | 36 | 36 | 80 | 85 | 90 |
| Nicosia District | 10 | 10 | 10 | 59 | 57 | 56 |
| Paphos District | 68 | 68 | 68 | 88 | 93 | 99 |
| Troodos Area | 4 | 4 | 4 | 33 | 35 | 37 |
| Total | 189 | 189 | 187 | 76 | 81 | 86 |

Source: Author's calculations from data obtained from Top Kinisis Travel Plc.

For each observation, the following attributes are recorded: official star rating, total number of rooms, location, type of room (standard, deluxe, etc.), price per person (for a one-night stay), type of view which can be observed (sea view, etc.) and an abundance of other room amenities and hotel characteristics suggested in the related literature (see, for example, Espinet et al., 2003).

In line with the theoretical guidelines for selecting independent variables in hedonic price theory (Andersson, 2000) the variables' selection is based on the previous studies (for example, Pawlicz & Napierala, 2016; Yalcin & Mert, 2018; Mandic & Jurun, 2018; and Wang et al., 2019), as confined by the contents of the travel agent's catalogues.

However, the total number of attributes recorded is too large (i.e. more than 80) to be consistently analysed and, given the well-known problem of multicollinearity in hedonic analysis (see, for example, Mangion et al., 2005), stepwise regressions are used to narrow down the number of explanatory variables to those for which the parameter estimate has a p-value less than 0.01 (see Table 2 for a detailed description of the factors selected). Additional variables used in the analysis are interaction terms between the sea view dummy and the variables for each region.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of the Variables Used

| Variable | Description | Mean | S. D. |
|-------------------|--|-------|-------|
| Price: | Room price in € | 81.08 | 41.32 |
| Location: | The district where the hotel is located: | | |
| Famagusta (#) | The hotel is located in the district of Famagusta | 0.223 | 0.417 |
| Larnaca (#) | The hotel is located in the district of Larnaca | 0.150 | 0.358 |
| Limassol (#) | The hotel is located in the district of Limassol | 0.191 | 0.394 |
| Nicosia (#) | The hotel is located in the district of Nicosia | 0.053 | 0.224 |
| Paphos (#) | The hotel is located in the district of Paphos | 0.361 | 0.481 |
| Troodos (#) | The hotel is located in the Troodos area | 0.021 | 0.144 |
| Star Rating | The official star rating of the hotel (1 to 5) | 3.966 | 0.812 |
| Capacity | The total number of rooms of the hotel | 187.6 | 81.88 |
| Room Type: | The type of hotel room: | | |
| Standard (#) | Described as standard or without any description | 0.866 | 0.408 |
| Deluxe (#) | Described as or similar to deluxe room | 0.080 | 0.271 |
| Executive (#) | Described as or similar to an executive room | 0.005 | 0.073 |
| Studio (#) | Described as or similar to a studio | 0.011 | 0.103 |
| Junior Suite (#) | Described as or similar to a junior suite | 0.027 | 0.161 |
| Queen Suite (#) | Described as or similar to a queen or a king suite | 0.011 | 0.103 |
| Outside Views: | The type of view advertised: | | |
| Garden View (#) | The room has a garden view | 0.058 | 0.235 |
| Inland View (#) | The room has an inland view | 0.227 | 0.447 |
| Mountain View (#) | The room has a mountain view | 0.085 | 0.260 |
| Pool View (#) | The room has a pool view | 0.073 | 0.260 |
| Sea View (#) | The room has a sea view | 0.313 | 0.464 |
| Side Sea View (#) | The room has a side sea view | 0.154 | 0.361 |
| Air Condition (#) | The room is air-conditioned | 0.602 | 0.490 |
| Hairdryer (#) | The room has a hairdryer | 0.536 | 0.499 |
| Movies (#) | The room offers a movie channel option | 0.074 | 0.263 |
| Satellite TV (#) | The room has a satellite TV | 0.494 | 0.500 |
| Telephone (#) | The room has a direct dial-telephone | 0.565 | 0.496 |
| Safe Box (#) | The room has a safe box | 0.250 | 0.433 |
| Disabled (#) | The hotel can accommodate disabled persons | 0.054 | 0.244 |
| Lounge (#) | The hotel amenities include a furnished lounge | 0.117 | 0.432 |
| TV Room (#) | The hotel amenities include a TV room | 0.021 | 0.144 |
| Indoor Pool (#) | The hotel amenities include an indoor pool | 0.250 | 0.433 |
| Outdoor Pool (#) | The hotel amenities include an outdoor pool | 0.520 | 0.500 |
| Pool Bar (#) | The hotel has a pool bar | 0.154 | 0.361 |
| Gym (#) | The hotel facilities include a gym | 0.425 | 0.495 |
| Jacuzzi (#) | The hotel facilities include Jacuzzi | 0.191 | 0.394 |
| Massage (#) | The hotel facilities include massage | 0.117 | 0.321 |
| Spa (#) | The hotel facilities include a spa | 0.090 | 0.287 |
| Mini Golf (#) | The hotel has access to mini golf courts | 0.053 | 0.224 |
| Playground (#) | The hotel amenities include a playground | 0.101 | 0.301 |

Note: The data refer to 90 hotels located in Cyprus, advertised in the brochures of Top Kinisis Travel, and which were offering rooms during the summer of 2017. (#) denotes a dummy variable, in which 1 indicates presence and 0 indicates absence of the specific attribute.

The additional variables (i.e., the interaction terms) described in the previous paragraph are needed to test the hypothesis that the sea view is similarly evaluated in all regions and hotel categories in the island.

EMPIRICAL METHOD

The hedonic price model is a quantitative method which has been applied for decades in the hotel room prices valuation context (see Papatheodorou et al., 2012, for a review). The hedonic method is based on Lancaster's (1966) approach to consumer theory, which considers the market value of any heterogeneous good or service as a function of the implicit prices (i.e., consumers' willingness-to-pay) of the attributes comprising the specific product.

Hedonic Regression

Let hotel attributes be denoted by $X_i = X_{i1}, X_{i2}, \dots, X_{ik}$ and the natural logarithm of the hotel room price be denoted by P_i . Then, following Freeman's (1993) analytical framework and assuming a semi-log functional form, the hedonic price model is expressed as follows:

$$P_i = \alpha + \beta X_i + \varepsilon_i, \quad (1)$$

where α is the intercept term, β a vector of coefficients and ε_i a random error. The k coefficients comprising β also consist the model's parameters of interest, with each individual coefficient β_j , $j \in [1, k]$, measuring the incremental contribution (i.e. the hedonic price) of the j^{th} attribute to the hotel room price:

$$\beta_j = \frac{\partial P_i}{X_{ij}}. \quad (2)$$

Since most, if not all, attributes in hedonic price models are expressed as binary (dummy) variables, the percentage impact of each estimated coefficient ($\check{\beta}_j$) on the room rate is interpreted according to Halvorsen and Palmquist (1980):

$$100 \cdot (e^{\check{\beta}_j} - 1), \quad (3)$$

where e is the base of the natural logarithm. However, for a small percentage impact, the value of $\check{\beta}_j$ is a good approximation of the rate of change in price (Wooldridge, 2012). To assess the hypothesis that the value of the sea view is the same in all districts of the island, interaction variables between the dummy variables for district, hotel group, month and sea view are included in the model.

Stepwise Regression

As mentioned in the previous section, the current study uses stepwise regressions in order to cut the number of explanatory variables to a level that allows a consistent analysis of the determinants of rooms rates and, also, to avoid the presence of multicollinearity. Stepwise regression is a step-by-step iterative construction of a regression model where the selection of the independent variables is carried out consistently and automatically. The procedure involves adding or removing potential explanatory variables in succession and testing for statistical significance after each iteration.

The present paper applies a backward elimination method. This means that the estimations begin with a full model loaded with several variables (i.e., equation 1). Then the procedure removes the variable with the least explanatory power (i.e., the related parameter estimate has the maximum p-value) on the variable of interest (i.e., the price of the hotel room). The next iteration involves exactly the same procedure (i.e., the variable with the least explanatory power is removed from the regression) and this is repeated until all the remaining variables in the regression model satisfy a specific criterion. In the current study this selection criterion is the related parameter estimates having a p-value less than 0.01.

RESULTS

Table 3 presents results from estimating a hedonic price model in three variations: with no interaction terms (Model 1), with interactions between the sea view and the district variables (Model 2) and with interactions between the sea view, the district, month and official star rating variables, separately (Model 3). The estimations also include dummy variables for the room types and all the other attributes listed in Table 2. The estimated coefficients of those additional control variables are presented in Table A.1 of the Appendix, for parsimony.

The explanatory power of all three models is strong (as measured by the adjusted R-squared), explaining over 90% of the variation in hotel room prices, while the p-values of the F-test suggests that the regressors are significant (as a group), in explaining the variable of interest. In addition, diagnostic tests confirm that multicollinearity is not a problem in the models, since the average values of the variance inflation factor (VIF) for each model, are well below the threshold value of 10.⁵ Furthermore, the test results for heteroscedasticity (Breusch-Pagan tests) indicate that no such problem exists.

⁵ Furthermore, the VIF values for all variables (reported in Table A.2 of the Appendix, due to space restrictions), indicate that the model data do not suffer from multicollinearity. The only exception is in the case of some of the interaction terms introduced in Models 2 and 3, which is expected due to the manner that those variables are defined.

The effect of external views on the hotel room price

In Model 1 the coefficient of the dummy variable ‘sea view’ is significantly different from zero. The estimate suggests that the price of a room with a sea view is higher by approximately 15% than that of a room without a view. In order to obtain the effect of the sea view on room rates separately for each district in the island, Model 2 includes interactions of the ‘sea view’ dummy variable with the district variables.

The coefficient of each of those interactions is interpreted as the additional value for a room with a sea view in the specific region, in addition to the general effect approximated by the ‘sea view’ coefficient (for further discussion of interactions in a regression model see Gujarati et al., 2017, pp. 288-290). In the same manner, Model 3 examines whether the value of the sea view varies by time and by hotel category, by including interactions of the ‘sea view’ dummy variable with the month and official star rating variables.

The coefficients of the interaction variables between ‘sea view’ and districts in Models 2 and 3 are used in order to assess the hypothesis that the value attached to the sea view is the same in all districts around the same country. Those coefficients represent the difference in price change between a room with a view in the district of Larnaca and a room with a view in each of all other districts with a direct access to the coastline (Famagusta, Limassol and Paphos). Of these variables, only the interaction with the district of Limassol is significantly different from zero. In other words, with the exception of Limassol, there is no significant additional value to the sea view in any other region in the country than Limassol. It is important to note that the specific region is generally accepted as the one with the highest cost of living in the country.

Table 3: Estimations of the Hedonic Price Models

| Variable | Model 1: Basic Model | Model 2: District Interactions | Model 3: More Interactions |
|-------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Location: | | | |
| Famagusta | -0.166*** | -0.220*** | -0.213*** |
| Larnaca | -0.350*** | -0.339*** | -0.318*** |
| Limassol | -0.175*** | -0.256*** | -0.248*** |
| Paphos | -0.075** | -0.100** | -0.098** |
| Troodos | -0.465*** | -0.466*** | -0.486*** |
| Month: | | | |
| July | 0.078*** | 0.078*** | 0.079*** |
| August | 0.129*** | 0.129*** | 0.125*** |
| Star Rating | 0.272*** | 0.275*** | 0.286*** |

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Outside Views: | | | |
| Garden View | 0.016 | 0.059 | 0.059 |
| Inland View | -0.015 | 0.021 | 0.014 |
| Mountain View | -0.082** | -0.078 | 0.105 |
| Pool View | 0.074** | -0.038 | -0.038 |
| Sea View | 0.141*** | 0.138*** | 0.203** |
| Side Sea View | 0.046 | -0.018 | 0.083 |
| District Interactions: | | | |
| Sea View * Famagusta | | 0.036 | 0.055 |
| Sea View * Limassol | | 0.090** | 0.011** |
| Sea View * Paphos | | 0.009 | 0.034 |
| Month Interactions: | | | |
| Sea View * July | | | -0.003 |
| Sea View * August | | | 0.011 |
| Star Category Interaction: | | | |
| Sea View * Star Rating | | | -0.023 |
| Intercept | 2.442*** | 2.372*** | 2.351*** |
| Number of Observations: | 556 | 556 | 556 |
| Adjusted R-squared: | 0.901 | 0.905 | 0.903 |
| F-Test (p-value): | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| Breusch-Pagan Test (p-value): | 0.135 | 0.169 | 0.131 |
| Variance Inflation Factor (VIF): | 2.91 | 3.22 | 4.79 |

Notes: Table 3 presents results from estimating hedonic price models for hotels in Cyprus. The estimated coefficients express the effects of various attributes on the hotel room price, as compared with the reference group (i.e. standard type hotel room offered by an economy-class establishment in the district of Nicosia during June 2017). (***) denotes statistical significance at 1%, (**) at 5%, and (*) at 10%. Due to space restrictions, the results for the remaining variables described in Table 2 are reported in Table A.1 of the Appendix.

In Model 3, the coefficients of the additional interaction terms are used to assess the existence of any variation of the sea view value across the months included in the sample and, also, whether outside views are valued differently in hotels in different star categories. As shown in Table 3, the related coefficients are not significantly different from zero, therefore no such variations of the sea view value are evident in the specific country.

In regard to other outside views, in Cyprus a mountain view is considered less desirable than no view at all. The related coefficient is negative and significant, implying that a room with a mountain view is around 8% less in price than the price of a room with no view specification. The price of a room with either inland, side sea or garden view is not significantly different from that of a room with no advertised views at all. The price of a room with a pool view appears around 7% higher than a room with no view at all, but the related coefficient is rendered insignificant when interaction terms are added to the model.

Other factors which affect the hotel room price

The additional control variables (described in detail in Table 2) provide a rich set of results in and of themselves. The star rating variable has a positive and pronounced effect on overall hotel room rates, suggesting that one extra star in the hotel's official rating is associated with around 30% increase in the hotel room price. The official star rating has previously been proved as a regular hotel price determinant, among others, by Thrane (2007), who indicates that hotel star category mediates the effects of other variables, and by Schamel (2012), who finds that star rating accounts for about 30% of the overall hotel price. As in White and Mulligan (2002), hotel capacity (number of rooms) has a moderate positive effect on room rates, since a 100% increase in hotel capacity induces approximately a 16% increase in the price of an overnight stay. The present study also finds significant differences between types of rooms.⁶ The price of rooms categorized as executive, deluxe, studio, junior suite and queen suite is higher by about 16%, 21%, 34%, 41% and 106%, respectively, than that of a standard room.

Turning to the room amenities, the prices of rooms which include a telephone device are around 10% higher than rooms where the presence of direct-dial telephone is not advertised in the travel agent's catalogue. The calculations also suggest that hotels who advertise the fact that their rooms are air-conditioned are approximately 18% cheaper than hotels where such an amenity is not included in the travel agent's descriptions. This is consistent with the argument that hotels of high standards anticipated to provide such basic comforts anyway, therefore the travel agent advertises this feature only for hotels of a lower standard.

In regarding to the hotel attributes, the fact that a hotel has accessibility to disabled persons has a hotel room price impact of around 21%. As in Pashardes et al. (2002), the effect of certain hotel attributes, such as a TV room, can be seen to be negative, and not to limited extent (-45%). In regard to the hotels' leisure and entertainment options, while having an outdoor swimming pool increases the room rate by approximately 17%, having an indoor pool lowers the room rate by about 23%. The author returns to these question-raising topic below. Besides it, the variables that positively affect the room rate include the existence of spa facilities (ca 15%), the availability of massage services (ca 12%) and the existence of mini golf fields (ca 26%).

The results in Table A.1 also indicate some leisure activities that have a negative effect on room rates. For example, hotels who advertise the fact that their premises include a gym or fitness centre are about 12% cheaper than hotels where such an amenity is not included in the travel agent's descriptions. This is consistent with the argument that hotels of high standard are anticipated to provide such basic amenities anyway, therefore the travel agent advertises

⁶ Due to space restrictions the estimates of the incremental contribution on the room rate from the type of room (and the remaining other attributes described in detail in Table 2) are reported in Table A.1 of the Appendix.

this feature only for hotels of a lower standard. Also, the existence of a playground in the premises reduces the room rate by around 22%. This finding is consistent with Haroutunian et al. (2005), where it is concluded that amenities such as playgrounds are not considered as an attractive feature for a hotel of high standard, as it may be for a hotel of a lower standard (and price), with a clientele consisting mainly of families with children.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper employs a hedonic pricing model in order to estimate the value of a sea view from hotels located around the coastline of Cyprus. The estimated results indicate that a room with a sea view is valued higher than a room with no such specification. However, a side sea view (i.e., a view of the sea from only the side of the balcony) is not enough as to increase the room value. Moreover, no significant difference, in terms of percent change, is found between hotels with different official star ratings or within the months of the same season. These findings lend support to the hypothesis that the view of the Mediterranean Sea is equally valued in different hotel categories. In terms of regional variation, only one of the beachfront districts of the island indicates a higher sea view value, the one that has also the highest cost of living. Other views from hotel rooms, such as a mountain view, are considered inferior in this country and are valued significantly less than rooms with no specification of a view. This result probably reflects the notion that in a Mediterranean tourist destination any other outside view than to the Mediterranean Sea itself may be considered as less attractive from the travellers (i.e., a signal of lower quality), and this aesthetic inferiority may be reflected in the lower prices of rooms. This way of thinking may also explain the evidence from the present study that the prices of rooms with an inland, pool or a garden view are not significantly different from the prices of rooms with no advertised view at all.

Implication of Findings

The findings provide scientific implications for policymaking and hospitality management. On the one hand, tourism operators should acknowledge which external views are significant in determining room rates and adopt their marketing strategies to reflect this crucial piece of information. On the other hand, it is important for local governments to understand what attributes matter most to hotel prices in order to improve and to promote their tourist product accordingly. The findings may be also useful for hotel managers in forming the pricing strategy of their rooms. The estimates of the present paper suggest that attempts to make hotel units more appealing in their brochures, by attaching to the rooms not offering a sea view, specifications such as 'inland view', 'pool view', 'garden view' or even 'side sea view', does not work in making those rooms looking more attractive to their intended clienteles. Also, investors in the hotel industry may derive from these results information needed in their business plan development with regards to hotel design. Due to the difference in pricing of rooms with a sea view and rooms without, the structure of the hotel itself can determine its profitability.

Limitations and Future Research

This paper has certain limitations that should be addressed in future studies. One of those limitations is the reliance on catalogue data. Travel agents' catalogues consist of a reliable and consistent source of information. However, they do not always address the continuous changes in the marketplace, especially in the context of room rates and hotel renovations. Therefore, in future research it is suggested to collect real-time data from online travel agents, such as Booking.com or Agoda. The second limitation of the present study is related to the size of the market being analysed. A larger sample size containing hotels in more than one country would clearly raise the precision and enhance the generalizability of the related results. Thus, further research on this topic should investigate the effect of sea views on room rates using data from a larger-sized hotel market, preferably in different geographical locations or even in different countries. Another limitation of the current paper is that the three months included in the sample can reflect the high tourist season but cannot fully represent tourism seasonality or describe the seasonal changes in hotel prices. Therefore, further studies are recommended to expand the investigations in terms of including both high and low season periods.

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Appendix

Table A.1: Additional Results from Estimations of the Hedonic Price Models

| Variable | Model 1: Basic Model | Model 2: District Interactions | Model 3: More Interactions |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Star Rating | 0.272*** | 0.275*** | 0.286*** |
| Capacity | 0.150*** | 0.163*** | 0.160*** |
| Room Type: | | | |
| Deluxe | 0.194*** | 0.204*** | 0.199*** |
| Executive | 0.152* | 0.133 | 0.154* |
| Studio | 0.290*** | 0.327*** | 0.330*** |
| Junior Suite | 0.343*** | 0.394*** | 0.377*** |
| Queen Suite | 0.723*** | 0.743*** | 0.740*** |
| Air Condition | -0.199*** | -0.199*** | -0.189*** |
| Hairdryer | 0.157*** | 0.165*** | 0.169*** |
| Movies | -0.225*** | -0.239*** | -0.206*** |
| Satellite TV | -0.187*** | -0.203*** | -0.231*** |
| Telephone | 0.091*** | 0.100*** | 0.093*** |
| Safe Box | 0.068*** | 0.060*** | 0.056*** |
| Disabled | 0.189*** | 0.195*** | 0.198*** |
| Lounge | 0.117*** | 0.099*** | 0.097*** |
| TV Room | -0.608*** | -0.605*** | -0.577*** |
| Outdoor Pool | 0.161*** | 0.144*** | 0.136*** |
| Indoor Pool | -0.263*** | -0.258*** | -0.251*** |
| Pool Bar | -0.213*** | -0.204*** | -0.200*** |
| Gym | -0.131*** | -0.127*** | -0.121*** |
| Jacuzzi | 0.086*** | 0.098*** | 0.095*** |
| Massage | 0.110*** | 0.102*** | 0.101*** |
| Spa | 0.136*** | 0.117*** | 0.095*** |
| Mini Golf | 0.228*** | 0.219*** | 0.220*** |
| Playground | -0.243*** | -0.237*** | -0.231*** |
| Intercept | 2.442*** | 2.372*** | 2.351*** |
| Number of Observations: | 556 | 556 | 556 |
| Adjusted R-squared: | 0.901 | 0.905 | 0.903 |
| F-Test (p-value): | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| Breusch-Pagan Test (p-value): | 0.135 | 0.169 | 0.131 |
| Variance Inflation Factor (VIF): | 2.91 | 3.22 | 4.79 |

Notes: Table A.1 presents results from estimating hedonic price models for the hotels in Cyprus for variables not reported in Table 3, due to parsimony. As in Table 3, the estimated coefficients express the effects of various attributes on the hotel room price, as compared with the reference group (i.e. standard type hotel room offered by an economy-class establishment in the district of Nicosia during June 2017). (***) denotes statistical significance at 1%, (**) at 5%, and (*) at 10%.

Table A.2: Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) Values for All Variables

| Variable | Model 1: Basic Model | Model 2: District Interactions | Model 3: More Interactions |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| Location: | | | |
| Famagusta | 7.06 | 7.37 | 7.38 |
| Larnaca | 4.52 | 4.93 | 4.94 |
| Limassol | 5.34 | 5.75 | 5.77 |
| Paphos | 8.46 | 8.81 | 8.88 |
| Troodos | 1.82 | 1.83 | 1.84 |
| Month: | | | |
| July | 1.33 | 1.33 | 1.93 |
| August | 1.33 | 1.33 | 1.94 |
| Star Rating | 2.49 | 2.50 | 2.96 |
| Capacity | 3.03 | 3.04 | 3.06 |
| Room Type: | | | |
| Deluxe | 1.54 | 1.55 | 1.56 |
| Executive | 1.18 | 1.18 | 1.19 |
| Studio | 1.21 | 1.23 | 1.24 |
| Junior Suite | 1.55 | 1.57 | 1.57 |
| Queen Suite | 1.16 | 1.19 | 1.19 |
| Outside Views: | | | |
| Garden View | 2.17 | 2.20 | 2.21 |
| Inland View | 4.75 | 5.01 | 5.01 |
| Mountain View | 2.44 | 2.46 | 2.47 |
| Pool View | 1.94 | 1.95 | 1.97 |
| Sea View | 4.71 | 11.78 | 48.80 |
| Side Sea View | 3.45 | 3.50 | 3.50 |
| Air Condition | 4.21 | 4.22 | 4.22 |
| Hairdryer | 4.35 | 4.41 | 4.41 |
| Movies | 1.55 | 1.59 | 1.59 |
| Satellite TV | 4.81 | 4.85 | 4.88 |
| Telephone | 5.61 | 5.62 | 5.63 |
| Safe Box | 2.11 | 2.12 | 2.12 |
| Disabled | 1.41 | 1.42 | 1.42 |
| Lounge | 1.97 | 1.99 | 1.99 |
| TV Room | 1.50 | 1.60 | 1.52 |
| Outdoor Pool | 2.85 | 3.11 | 2.86 |
| Indoor Pool | 3.22 | 3.41 | 3.22 |
| Pool Bar | 1.85 | 1.51 | 1.87 |

| | | | |
|------------|------|------|------|
| Gym | 3.80 | 3.83 | 3.84 |
| Jacuzzi | 2.53 | 2.53 | 2.54 |
| Massage | 2.18 | 2.18 | 2.28 |
| Spa | 2.00 | 2.02 | 2.02 |
| Mini Golf | 2.09 | 2.09 | 2.09 |
| Playground | 1.64 | 1.65 | 1.65 |

Table A.2: Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) Values for All Variables (continued)

| Variable | Model 1: Basic Model | Model 2: District Interactions | Model 3: More Interactions |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| District Interactions: | | | |
| Sea View * Famagusta | | 5.12 | 3.74 |
| Sea View * Limassol | | 4.68 | 3.90 |
| Sea View * Paphos | | 7.80 | 5.70 |
| Month Interactions: | | | |
| Sea View * July | | | 2.61 |
| Sea View * August | | | 2.60 |
| Star Category Interaction: | | | |
| Sea View * Star Rating | | | 40.31 |
| Variance Inflation Factor (VIF): | 2.91 | 3.22 | 4.79 |

Notes: Table A.2 presents variance inflation factor (VIF) values for all variables employed in the estimation of Models 1, 2 and 3, in order to examine whether any of these models suffer from multicollinearity.

Evolution of Tourism through Travel Agencies: A Case Study on Bangladesh

Kamarun Muhsina¹

ABSTRACT

The aim of this research paper is to examine the role of travel agencies in the advancement of tourism in Bangladesh. Travel agents are currently assuming a significant role in facilitating this relationship. The aforementioned entities engage in the production of various package tours, distribution of these packaged products, and promotion of tourism in Bangladesh to potential tourist clientele. However, the travel agents in Bangladesh are limited in their ability to fulfil their job to its fullest degree. This is mostly due to the small size of their organizations, insufficient money, a shortage of skilled professionals, a lack of government policy support, and several other restraints that they encounter. It is imperative to address these issues and promptly implement appropriate measures to enhance the performance of travel agencies and facilitate the desired growth of the tourism sector in Bangladesh.)

Keywords: Travel agency, tour Package, agent, Govt Policy, skilled professionals, Capital

INTRODUCTION

Numerous tourism enterprises operating within a given host country play a significant role in promoting and enhancing the tourism industry within that particular nation. Nevertheless, the travel agents that operate within the designated country play a pivotal role. The involvement of travel agencies plays a crucial role in influencing and affecting various dimensions of tourism, encompassing the total volume of tourists, the assortment of tourist destinations, and the accessibility of tourism facilities (Khairi & Darmawan, 2021). A travel agency is considered an entity, whether it be an individual or a corporation, which provides end products directly to the general public. Hence, travel agents fulfil the dual role of producing and distributing package tour programmes.

A traditional package holiday typically consists of three main elements: transportation, accommodation, and airport-to-accommodation transfer service. According to a study conducted by Yale University in 1998, it is necessary for a travel arrangement to meet certain criteria

¹ Tahmina Lecturer, European University of Bangladesh, Daffodil Institute of IT, email: muhsinakatha@gmail.com



in order to be categorised as a package holiday. Specifically, all three elements of the holiday, namely transportation, accommodation, and additional services, must be provided as a unified package and offered at a consolidated price. In the specific context of Bangladesh, travel firms operating in the private sector are actively incorporating diverse tourism services and packaging these comprehensive programmes for marketing to prospective visitors. The duration of the package programmes varies and includes multiple locations to meet the specific demands of different tourist sectors. These entities are involved in the production and dissemination of packaged goods, which are distributed either directly or through retail travel trade channels (Sarkar et al., 1995). Furthermore, they utilise diverse promotional tactics in an endeavour to attain success for their respective businesses.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study are as follows:

- i) To examine the role of private sector travel agencies in the advancement of tourism.
- ii) To explore the challenges encountered by private sector travel agencies in carrying out their operations.
- iii) To propose appropriate policy interventions aimed at resolving the issues faced by private sector travel agencies and facilitating their seamless functioning to contribute to the growth of tourism in Bangladesh.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

So far, there has not been a lot of academic research done on how travel agencies help boost tourism in Bangladesh. However, there is a lack of knowledge in the current literature. The purpose of this study is to investigate how private travel agencies have helped the tourism industry in Bangladesh grow and improve (Parveen, 2013). A descriptive analysis will be used to conceptualise the critical issues in order to understand the connection between the travel agency's role and its effect on promoting and developing tourism in Bangladesh. The point of this study is to help policymakers and academics understand the important part that the right agency plays in developing tourism in a country like Bangladesh (Karim, 2014). This article also talks about the problems that private travel agencies in Bangladesh face. In the end, this study gives a list of suggestions that might help private sector travel agencies deal with the problems they face and make their contributions to the growth of tourism in Bangladesh more effective.

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

The research has employed a combination of primary and secondary data sources. The collection of primary data was conducted by distributing a concise questionnaire. The questionnaire

encompassed a combination of organised and unstructured question formats (Unger et al., 2014). Therefore, the questionnaire utilised in this study was of a semi-structured nature. A desk-based research approach was employed to investigate pertinent secondary data. In order to achieve this objective, the writers employed pieces that had been published in various newspapers, periodicals, and academic publications. In addition, various printed materials such as pamphlets, folders, guides, brochures, and other pertinent information produced by private sector travel organisations have been employed for this purpose (Pennington-Gray et al., 2005).

THE EXPANSION OF THE TRAVEL AGENCY SECTOR IN THE PRIVATE SPHERE OF BANGLADESH

Over the past forty years, travel agents have played a substantial role in the promotion and progress of tourism within the country of Bangladesh. During the historical period of Pakistan, a department focused on the promotion and development of tourism, subsequently referred to as the Tourism Cell, was established, with its primary administrative centre situated in West Pakistan. A number of private sectors commenced their commercial activities in the latter part of the 1970s. During the nascent phase of liberation, travel agencies encounter unfavourable economic and political conditions. Therefore, it became imperative for the government to implement proactive strategies aimed at promoting and nurturing the development of tourism in Bangladesh. Acknowledging the importance of tourism in both economic and social domains, the government expeditiously decided to implement a restructuring of the tourism sector (Singh et al., 2021).

Nevertheless, due to the insufficient focus from successive administrations, the Bangladesh Power Corporation (BPC) has encountered challenges in achieving its original objectives. In the absence of private sector travel firms within the country, the circumstances would have been characterised by increased uncertainty and potential risks (Mazzucato, 2011). Private sector travel agencies have maintained a positive outlook in the tourism industry, particularly in the absence of significant government support.

The tourism industry in Bangladesh witnessed the emergence of private travel companies starting in the late 1970s, signifying the commencement of private endeavours within this sector. The growth rate of travel agencies has been sluggish, and they have encountered ongoing challenges in sustaining their viability.

Currently, there exists a total of 89 privately-owned travel agencies that are actively engaged in facilitating tourist operations within the country of Bangladesh. There are travel operators that focus exclusively on domestic or inbound tours, while others offer services for both domestic and outbound tours.

FACILITIES AND SERVICES OFFERED BY AGENCIES IN BANGLADESH

Travel agencies play a crucial part in the tourist industry. The travel agency assumes responsibility for managing the tourist, guiding them to various destinations, providing explanations, and presenting a comprehensive overview of the country to the tourists (Morrison, 2013). Consequently, the tourists have the potential to bring back several positive recollections to their own nation. The primary function of a travel agency is to integrate various elements of tours and travel in order to curate a comprehensive package trip.

The proliferation of Internet and other electronic communication platforms has presented considerable prospects for travel agencies in emerging nations to market and distribute their package offerings. The ability to directly engage with potential travellers worldwide has been achieved. The travel agencies in Bangladesh mostly focus on a narrow range of operations, such as organising guided tours, sightseeing tours, and leisure excursions. There exists a considerable number of private travel agencies that provide a wide range of package tours in Bangladesh, encompassing destinations such as Bandarban, Sundarban, Cox's Bazar, St. Martin's, Kuakata, and even river-based excursions. A limited number of agencies exclusively specialise in domestic trips, whereas most agencies provide both national and international travel services.

In Bangladesh, the number of registered private travel agencies is around 89. The private travel agencies in Bangladesh have established an organisation called the Travel Agencies group of Bangladesh (TOAB) in order to enhance the effectiveness of their operations (Ananya et al., 2019). This group serves as a platform for these firms to advocate for their legitimate rights with both the Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC) and the government. Additionally, TOAB organises tourist fairs and collaboratively promotes the country's tourism industry.

THE PUBLIC SECTOR AND TOURISM AGENCIES

The involvement of private travel companies is vital to the tourism industry. In recent years, private travel companies have attracted considerable interest on account of their considerable capacity to influence development outcomes.

A travel agency that operates within a nation-state, such as Bangladesh, acts as an intermediary to enable individuals to realise their desires of visiting diverse locations. A diverse selection of package programmes, comprising a multitude of amenities and lasting lengths, are made available to tourists. McIntosh, Goeldner, and Ritchie (1995) assert that these providers provide a wide array of tours to retailers and customers, encompassing various destinations, specific departure dates, fee variations, durations, and seasonal availability. Furthermore, they engage in the provision of a comprehensive package that includes resort amenities, restaurant reservations, hotel accommodations, and entertainment options. These individuals serve as intermediaries between the producers and, at times, operate as direct providers

(Yarcan & Çetin, 2021). Therefore, the importance of their endeavours resides in their capacity to furnish visitors with direction and aid, in addition to facilitating the procurement of necessary services as part of a comprehensive package. Travellers possess the capacity to recollect a multitude of favourable recollections in their country of origin.

A travel agency functions as an entity or organisation that promotes a destination in a positive light and highlights its advantageous features to the global community. The travel industry adeptly communicates the notable attractions of Bangladesh, thereby aiding in the increasing acknowledgement of the nation as an appealing tourist locale. The primary factor behind Bangladesh's endeavours to draw in international tourists is the presence and operations of a restricted number of travel enterprises domestically (Roy & Roy, 2015). In an effort to captivate a substantial audience, the organisation has taken on the responsibility of executing promotional activities.

TOUR OPERATORS AND TOUR GUIDES

The importance of the role of a tour guide is of utmost significance within the operational structure of a travel enterprise. A tour guide is an individual who assumes the responsibility of guiding groups or individual tourists during excursions to different landmarks, sites, and museums located within a specific city or geographical region. The primary responsibility of individuals in this position is to offer interpretation services in the language of choice for visitors, with the objective of imparting knowledge and fostering an understanding of the cultural and natural heritage and environment (Smith, 2015). In a broader context, they furthermore serve as representatives of the local communities in the respective travel destinations. Tour guides have been acknowledged for their diverse range of responsibilities, with a specific focus on their function as mediators. The responsibilities of this position involve the facilitation of communication and negotiation between tourists and multiple entities operating within the tourism industry, including travel agencies, hotels, and other suppliers (Law et al., 2015). Furthermore, tour guides fulfil the role of intermediaries, facilitating communication and engagement between tourists and the local community and environment, thereby facilitating interactions, and fostering a deeper level of understanding.

TRAVEL AGENCY ADVANTAGES

Travel agents play a crucial role in facilitating advantages for both travellers and the broader tourism sector through various means. The company provides customised excursions that are designed to accommodate the specific interests and needs of individual guests. A travel agency engages in negotiations with hotels, transportation companies, and other providers in order to get various vacation components. These components are then integrated into a comprehensive package tour, which is then marketed and sold to the end customer.

Travel agencies are responsible for ensuring the health and safety of their clients. Practitioners also offer guidance and relevant knowledge to their clientele, with the aim of aligning their outcomes with their desired objectives (Massingham & Massingham, 2014). All of the travel agencies that were questioned had a common practise of offering advice and information to their clients. Travel firms have seen that providing valuable guidance to their clients on appropriate behaviour during their vacations is beneficial for fostering positive relationships with the local communities in which they operate.

Travel agencies play a crucial role as intermediaries in facilitating the exchange of tourism and hospitality services between providers and end customers. Furthermore, the primary function of a travel agency is to serve as an intermediary, effectively minimising both the information and transportation expenses incurred by travellers, while also reducing promotional costs for suppliers. Hence, the operations undertaken by these entities hold significant marketing consequences for suppliers, retail travel agencies, and travel customers (Christodoulidou et al., 2010).

TRAVEL AGENCY DEVELOPMENT IN BANGLADESH

Travel companies commonly hold the belief that the primary duty for ensuring suitable destination development lies with host governments. It is widely held that the government will undertake the task of formulating regulations, developing infrastructure, promoting the market, ensuring safety measures, and protecting the environment (Zhang & Wen, 2008). Travel agencies engage in their operations with the primary objective of generating profits and expanding their financial resources. The majority of travel agencies in Bangladesh has a similar disposition. They bear no duty in relation to the development of tourism infrastructure and facilities. According to their perspective, the responsibility of securing the required investment to enhance the fundamental tourist infrastructure and facilities lies with the government rather than domestic travel businesses.

A lack of market expertise, financial resources, and experience sometimes constrain travel businesses, leading them to provide trips with high prices and limited volume. Travel agencies in Bangladesh are not exempt from this phenomenon. The travel agencies in Bangladesh are characterised by their very small scale and little financial investment.

In Bangladesh, travel agencies are characterised as small-scale enterprises with minimal capacity for market promotion. Travel agencies are unable to allocate funds towards television commercials on foreign networks in order to promote the country's tourism or their package programmes, due to limitations in available resources. The organisation engages in the production and dissemination of various printed materials, including posters, folders, brochures, and trip guides.

Proficiency in relevant skills is a fundamental requirement for the advancement of tourism

inside a nation. Tour operating enterprises are complex and dynamic commercial organisations that need the expertise of professionally certified individuals to effectively manage their operations (Buhalis, 1998). The lack of adequately skilled CEOs and proficient staff has resulted in a dearth of professionalism within the sector. Once again, this issue is posing significant limitations on the advancement of tourism in Bangladesh.

FUTURE PROSPECTS

Government policy should be designed to provide support and encouragement to travel agencies, since these organisations play a pioneering role in fostering the growth and promotion of tourist activities in Bangladesh.

The involvement of public bodies plays a crucial part in the facilitation and advancement of tourism inside a nation. The Regional Tourist Board (RTB) plays a crucial role in facilitating collaboration among stakeholders and in the establishment and development of tourism offerings. The implementation of well-organized and clearly defined activities by Regional Tourism Boards (RTBs) has been found to lead to increased success in achieving desired outcomes through destination management policies and activities (Dounavi et al., 2022). Therefore, the regional tourism boards play a crucial role as facilitators in the implementation of development programmes.

A travel agency must possess a forward-thinking and innovative mindset. In order to effectively engage with the local community, it is important to possess a comprehensive understanding of the local culture and the perspectives of the host population towards their own cultural practises. A travel agency should possess comprehensive knowledge of the products, it is offering in the market. A comprehensive understanding of the product is really vital. It is vital for the travel firm to possess knowledge on the behavioural patterns of visitors, as individuals from different nations exhibit distinct attitudes, dietary preferences, purchasing tendencies, and other relevant factors.

Formal training programmes have been identified as reliable means of enhancing guiding practises. Consequently, tour guides have been compelled to enhance their professionalism and acquire extensive training. This training encompasses not only a comprehensive understanding of the geographical and historical aspects of the locations they guide, but also encompasses sociological and psychological knowledge pertaining to group dynamics, motivation, and cultural and ethnic backgrounds (Smith & Richards, 2013).

The necessity for private sector travel businesses to own well-designed and regularly maintained web pages is evident. It is important to ensure that the Web pages are designed in a manner that facilitates easy accessibility and enhances user-friendliness. The website should provide comprehensive information on the destinations, specific itineraries offered by various travel firms, and the pricing details for different package programmes.

CONCLUSION

It is imperative for travel companies to actively contribute to the advancement of the tourism sector in Bangladesh by exerting their uttermost endeavours. In the realm of tourism development, the collaboration between government entities and private sector stakeholders in formulating strategies and policies geared towards fostering a thriving and sustainable tourism industry is seldom observed. It is not viable for the public sector of a developing nation such as Bangladesh to fulfil all of its requirements. It is often more logical for private firms to utilise their knowledge and resources in order to tackle a multitude of pressing concerns inside the nation. The emergence of contemporary tourism is predicated upon a symbiotic alliance between the commercial sector and state agencies. Therefore, it is imperative to recognise that the challenges inherent in the intricate tourism sector cannot be resolved by any individual participant in isolation. Instead, it is essential for all stakeholders to actively engage and fulfil their respective roles in addressing these issues. The responsibility for the current and future development of tourism in Bangladesh is collectively shared among all stakeholders concerned. If travel agencies in Bangladesh fulfil their developmental role effectively and receive adequate policy support from the government, the tourism sector in Bangladesh has the potential to generate positive outcomes in terms of foreign currency earnings, employment opportunities, and social and cultural development. The problem lies in the imperative for both governmental and private sector entities to proactively engage in the formulation and implementation of programmes. Therefore, enhanced collaboration between the public and commercial sectors would serve as a catalyst for the advancement of tourist efforts and the overall development of Bangladesh. The Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC), the National Tourism Organisation (NTO), and the leading public sector travel agency in Bangladesh, have a crucial responsibility to effectively fulfil their role in the development of tourism infrastructure nationwide and in the promotion of Bangladesh as an attractive tourist destination. If this were to be accomplished, it is anticipated that the industry would see significant growth and subsequently achieve its goals. The establishment of a novel regulatory entity called the 'Bangladesh tourist Board' by the government, together with the implementation of a tourist legislation, has taken place in recent times. The aforementioned development has instilled a sense of optimism within the tour running companies in Bangladesh, perhaps leading to favourable outcomes in the future. It is advisable to use caution in ensuring that the board operates with functional efficiency by maintaining independence from government oversight.

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Dark Tourism: An Overview of Dark Tourism in Japan, America and Kosovo

Venet Shala¹, Halil Bajrami², and Fjolla Kaçamaku³

ABSTRACT

The focus of this study is to make an overview of "dark tourism". In the first part, a summary of the definitions of dark tourism by different authors and a summary of the dark tourism places that are most visited in the world are made. In the second part, a slightly broader description of dark tourism in Japan, America and Kosovo is made. Dark tourism means visiting places that have a history of death, disaster or horror, such as a place where there has been war, genocide, murder, a natural disaster, etc. The design of the study based on the data that has been analyzed is a case study and the research method is the qualitative method. The results of this study show that dark tourism in world literature is known by terms such as "dark tourism", "thana tourism", "war tourism", "morbid tourism", "fright tourism" and "grief tourism". Additionally, the most visited dark tourism sites in the world are: Auschwitz concentration and extermination camp, 9/11 Memorial in New York, Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, Paris Catacombs in Paris, Jumping Castle in Ireland, Chernobyl in Ukraine, Island of the Dolls in Mexico, Peace Memorial Park in Hiroshima, Pompeii in Italy, etc. Considering the history of our people, it is suggested that in the future an empirical research on dark tourism in Kosovo be done and, in this way, the international literature will be completed.

Keywords: Case study, dark tourism, Japan, America, Kosovo

INTRODUCTION

If people are asked what they understand by the word tourism, of course most of them will give answers such as relaxation, rest, spending free time, entertainment, walking, etc. However, man by his selfish nature is never satisfied and always demands more. The demands of the people have caused other alternatives in tourism to be presented, different from the usual ones. According to the authors Öztürk and Yazıcıoğlu (2002) some tourism alternatives for

¹ Prof. Ass. Dr. Venet SHALA, Universiteti "Ukshin Hoti", Fakulteti Ekonomik Rr. Shkronjave, Nr.1, 20000, Prizren, Kosove.email: venet.shala@uni-prizren.com, www.uni-prizren.com

² Corresponding author, Faculty of Economics, University of Mitrovica "Isa Boletini", Mitrovica, Kosovo

³ Faculty of Economics, University of Prizren "Ukshin Hoti", Kosovo



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developing countries are: golf tourism, thermal tourism, cultural tourism, eco-tourism, youth tourism, etc. Taking into account that every people has a history of sadness, dark tourism is also a good tourist alternative, which started appearing three decades ago and is developing every day. Dark tourism means visiting places that have a history of death, disaster or horror, such as a place where there has been war, genocide, murder, a natural disaster, etc. Dark tourism allows people to reflect on the darker aspects of history and immerse themselves in its past and culture. Although it can carry a scary stigma, it's a way to honor the victims of horrific atrocities, and people can also educate themselves on that people's cultural past and connect on an empathetic level with them.

The purpose of the research

The purpose of this research is to make a summary of the definitions of dark tourism by different authors and a summary of the dark tourism places that are most visited in the world. Also, as a case study to study dark tourism in Japan, America and Kosovo.

Research questions:

1. What is dark tourism?
2. What are the most visited dark tourism sites in the world?
3. How developed is dark tourism in Japan, America and Kosovo?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourist and tourism concept

In the second half of the 20th century, tourism has become one of the largest and fastest growing sectors in the world economy, where the main elements that shape it are consumers, suppliers and government agencies (Eadington & Redman, 1991). "By tourism we mean the movement of people for the purpose of rest, recreation, entertainment, healing and expansion of cultural knowledge" (Pushka & Krasniqi, 2007, p. 76). "Tourist" is a widely used term, and as public narratives about tourists have been created along with its development, it is well known in industry, academia, media and social life (Leiper, 1983).

Dark tourism

The moment we hear the word "tourism" we imagine free time and relaxation. However, there is a type of tourism that is contrary to people's imagination. Places associated with death and disaster can be tourist destinations in their own way (Selmi, Tur, & Dornier, 2012). For the first time, the term "dark tourism" was used by the authors Foley and Lennon (1996) in the mid-1990s to describe tourist activity related to death. Dark tourism or dark tourism also has meanings such as "thana tourism" (Seaton, 1996), "war tourism" (Smith, 1998),

"morbid tourism", (Blom, 2000)"fright tourism" (Bristow & Newman, 2004)and "grief tourism" (Slayton, 2006)and is a type of tourism of special interest that has to do with emotions such as pain, sorrow, (Akyurt Kurnaz, Çeken, & Kılıç, 2013)etc. Dark tourism is the main concept that connects the war with tourism (Driessen, 2018).

Table 1. Concepts Related to Dark Tourism

| Concept | Definition according to author(s). |
|---|---|
| Dark Tourism (Dark Tourism) | It is defined by the authors Foley and Lennon (1996) as the type of tourism related to the consumption of places and elements related to death and destruction, whether real or commercial |
| Morbid Tourism (Death Tourism) | It is defined by the author Blom (2000) as tourist movements that take place in places where deaths have occurred that have affected a large number of people and in areas where the phenomenon of death has been elaborated. |
| Thana Tourism (Tourism of death/ of the dead) | It is defined by the author Seaton (1996) as a type of tourism related to dark tourism, but mainly focused on brutal deaths and derived from an ancient Greek word "thanatos" which means "to personalize death". |
| Fright Tourism (Fear Tourism) | It is defined by the authors Bristoë and Neëman (2004) as tourism that occurs when a region or place is believed to be ominous and that destination is visited for pleasure. |
| Grief Tourism (Grief Tourism) | It is defined by the author Slayton (2006) as "sorrow" rather than "darkness" because death and sad events awaken inner pain in people. |

Note:(Çelik, 2017)

According to the authors Stone and Sharpley, (2008)the first types of dark tourism are considered to be Roman gladiator games, pilgrimages, and participation in public executions that occurred in the Middle Ages. Also, visits to battlefields, cemeteries, tombs, former homes of famous people who no longer live, and places of mass deaths represent dark tourism (Farkmaki, 2013). Even in recent years, tourist destinations such as battlefields, prisons, places of genocide, regions where natural disasters have occurred, which cause tourists to revive feelings such as pain, sorrow and the feeling of death have become very popular. This is also because emotions such as grief, fear, and death affect people a lot (Akyurt et al, 2013).

According to the author Seaton, (1999)dark tourism can be categorized into five groups. The first group includes trips to witness acts of death, open to the public. Although it is now morally forbidden in modern Western societies, it was common in the past such as gladiator fights to the death in Roman times, political executions and public hangings in Britain

which were legal until 1868 etc. Also, this group includes travelers who run to watch plane crashes, shipwrecks, terrorist explosions, and those who slow down their vehicles to see the accident or road collapse. The second group includes trips to see places where mass or individual deaths have occurred, which are the most common form of dark tourism. So, this group includes trips to places where atrocities have occurred, such as the holocaust camp of Auschwitz, trips to disaster sites such as trips to Pompeii, which was destroyed by a volcanic eruption in 79 BC, and was discovered and excavated in 1748, after which it became a major tourist destination, trips to places where famous people have died such as the Dallas Book Depository where Kennedy was killed, Graceland where Elvis Presley died and visits to battlefields. The third group includes trips to the places of exile and to the memorials of the dead. This includes visits to cemeteries, catacombs, crypts, war memorials and cenotaphs. The fourth group includes trips to see material evidence, or symbolic representations, of particular deaths, in places unrelated to their occurrence. This includes museums that display weapons of death, clothing of murder victims and other artifacts such as The Museum of the Revolution in Cuba, which displays the bloody and bullet-riddled clothes of the heroes of the revolution, Madame Tussauds in London, which includes wax statues of famous assassins. The fifth group includes trips to holy places that are believed to have religious traces, as well as trips to places where death is reenacted or simulated, such as places that re-enact the death of Christ, especially at Easter.

According to author Shetty (2020) the seven basics of dark tourism are as follows:

1. **Dark Entertainment Factories:** These are places that according to commercial and financial ethics provide entertainment revolving around superficial deaths. They have good tourist infrastructure, as an example of this can be mentioned the Dracula Park in Romania.
2. **Dark exhibitions:** This concept, although it gives tourists attractive attractions related to death, has only an educational and educational purpose. They are exhibits and places that portray death and suffering.
3. **Dark prisons:** These are the places that involve criminal history and injustice. These are also places that simply educate tourists on the history of the destination, such as prisons.
4. **Dark Shrines:** These are not very popular places. Shrines are located around places of death and misery. They look very brutal and are not attractive at all, but are visited only to honor and respect the deceased person.
5. **Dark permanent resting places:** These are cemeteries, which are most often visited with the reason of honoring lost loved ones.
6. **Dark surfaces of conflict:** These are places where great battles have been fought in the past. These places have gained popularity because they are associated with history, such as Battle of Jhansi
7. **Dark places of mass murder:** There are places that are categorized as darker and brighter places, in which suffering, death and atrocities have been experienced.

Below is a table that includes the most visited dark tourism places in the world according to the authors Fonseca, Seabra and Silva (2016).

Table 2: Most Visited Dark Tourism Sites in the World According to Authors Fonseca, Seabra and Silva (2016)

| Country or destination | location | The definition |
|---|--------------------------|--|
| Concentration and Extermination Camp in Auschwitz | Auschwitz (Poland) | From June 1941 to January 1945, one million men, women and children died in the 3 Auschwitz concentration camps. The entire death camp complex was a death prison for about 150,000 prisoners who were either killed outright or starved and worked to death. Recently, the concentration camps have been transformed into a memorial museum, which is visited by 1,400,000 people every year. |
| Ground Zero - The National September 11 Memorial | New York (USA) | A memorial and tribute to the approximately 3,000 people killed in the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center. According to the 9/11 website, this memorial receives approximately 1,000,000 visitors each year. |
| Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park | Hiroshima (Japan) | It tells the story of Hiroshima and the arrival of the nuclear bomb on August 6, 1945. The personal details displayed in the museum are quite disturbing and are there to remind visitors that we should not take peace for granted. Since its opening, the museum has been visited by 53 million people. |
| The Dracula's Castle - Bran Castle | Wallachia (Transylvania) | It is the most visited tourist destination in Romania. Located in Transylvania, it has 500,000 visitors a year and receives a profit of 1 million euros every year. |
| Alcatraz Federal Penitentiary | San Francisco Bay (USA) | It was a high security prison located on Alcatraz Island. This prison was designed to hold inmates who repeatedly caused trouble in other federal prisons. One of the most famous prisons in the world, Alcatraz housed some of America's most vicious criminals. Today the prison is a museum and one of San Francisco's main tourist attractions, attracting 1.5 million visitors each year. |

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| Pompeii | Naples (Italy) | It was an ancient Roman city near Naples, Italy, destroyed during the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in AD 79. The explosion destroyed the entire city, killing all its inhabitants and burying it under tons of ash. Nowadays, the city has received World Heritage status from UNESCO and is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Italy, with around 2.5 million visitors a year. |
| Leap Castle | Coolderry County Offaly (Ireland) | Ireland was considered the most haunted country in the world. According to a popular legend, the castle is haunted by a supernatural entity called the Elemental, who died there of leprosy and whose spirit lingered over the years. The castle has been used as a backdrop for some of the popular American television series. Massively known for its television exposure, this castle attracts 800,000 visitors every year. |
| Père-Lachaise | Paris (France) | It is the largest cemetery in Paris and with 3.5 million visitors a year it is the most visited cemetery in the world. Distinguished personalities of the music scene (Jim Morrison, Édith Piaf, Frédéric Chopin), poets (Honoré de Balzac, Oscar Wilde, Marcel Proust), sculpture and painting artists (Eugène Delacroix, Max Ernst) and many people are buried in this cemetery. Other famous people who contributed to the enrichment of Parisian culture. |
| Squatter Camp Soweto | Soweto (South Africa) | Steeped in the history of the struggle against apartheid and filled with the energy of the city of gold, Soweto is South Africa's most visited destination. |
| Tuol Sleng Museum | Phnom Penh (Cambodia) | Where the tragic Cambodian past is portrayed (former extermination camp where thousands of Cambodians were killed). |
| Dharavi Slum | Mumbai (India) | In Mumbai / India, this slum gained great projection after the release of the movie Slumdog Millionaire and is one of the most visited slums worldwide. |
| Latvian Prison Hotel and Museum | Liepāja (Latvia) | Karosta Prison was a prison that operated for most of the 20th century, but now serves as a museum, destination and hotel. The prison offers tours, accommodation and special activities (re-creating the reality of history). |

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| Alma Bridge | Paris (France) | Princess Diana's Death Tunnel. On August 31, 1997, Princess Diana died in this tunnel. She was the victim of a car accident. 10 years after the accident the tunnel was opened to the public and since then, it receives millions of visitors every year. |
| Arlington National Cemetery | Virginia (USA) | It is a United States military cemetery in Arlington County, Virginia, with an area of 624 hectares in which the dead from the conflicts that took place in the country during the time of the American Civil War are buried, as well as the dead are reburied in previous wars. This destination has approximately 4 million visitors per year. |
| Paris Catacombs | Paris (France) | It is an underground cemetery of bones in Paris, France. This cemetery holds the remains of around six million people and fills some of the renovated caves and tunnels that are the remains of historic stone mining, giving it the reputation of "The World's Largest Cemetery". These underground cemeteries are visited by about 300,000 visitors a year. |
| Titanic Belfast | Belfast (Northern Ireland) | It is a visitor attraction and a monument to Belfast's maritime heritage. It is a must-see on a trip to Belfast and the most popular tourist destination in Northern Ireland. |
| Sledec Ossuary | Sledec (Czech Republic) | It is a small Roman Catholic church, located under the All Saints Cemetery Church in Sledec. The church is believed to contain the skeletons of 40,000 to 70,000 people, whose bones are in most cases artistically arranged to form decorations and furnishings for its chapel. This church is among the most visited tourist destinations of the Czech Republic, attracting over 200,000 visitors each year. |
| Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum | Oklahoma (USA) | It is a memorial in the United States that honors the victims, survivors, rescuers and all those affected by the bombing in Oklahoma City on April 19, 1995. The memorial averages 350,000 visitors a year. |
| Museum of Genocide Victims | Vilnius (Lithuania) | The museum is located in the former KGB building (in Vilnius), where the crimes of the Soviet regime were planned and executed for fifty years. This museum is visited by millions of people every year. |

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|---------------------|----------------------|--|
| Hoia Lo Prison | Hanoi (Vietnam) | It was a prison used by French colonists in Vietnam for political prisoners, and later by North Vietnam for prisoners during the Vietnam War and known by American POWs as the "Hanoi Hilton". Although its gate remains as a museum, the prison was demolished during the 1990s. It welcomes around 35,000 to 40,000 people to visit it every year. |
| Chapel of Bones | Évora (Portugal) | It is one of the most popular landmarks in Évora, Portugal. It is a small indoor church located near the entrance of St. Francis Church. The church takes its name from the interior walls that are covered and decorated with human skulls and bones. It is one of the most visited destinations in Évora. |
| Island of the Dolls | Mexico City (Mexico) | This island located in Mexico is dedicated to the lost soul of a poor girl who met her fate very early and under strange circumstances. This island is home to hundreds of terrifying dolls. Their severed limbs, severed heads and empty eyes adorn the trees. It is one of the creepiest and most visited places in the world. |
| The Suicide Forest | Mount Fuji (Japan) | It is a forest of 35 square kilometers that lies in the northwestern part of Mount Fuji in Japan. The forest contains a number of rock and ice caves, some of which are popular tourist destinations. The Aokigahara Forest is dense and nothing can be heard except the natural sounds of the forest itself. The forest has a historical connection with demons from Japanese mythology and is a popular place for suicide. |
| The London Dungeon | London (UK) | It is a London tourist destination that recreates various gruesome and macabre historical events in a humorous style aimed at a younger audience. It uses a mixture of live actors, special effects and travel. This destination receives approximately 750,000 visitors per year. |
| Chernobyl Disaster | Pripyat (Ukraine) | After the nuclear accident that happened in Chernobyl on April 26, 1986, the place is visited more than ever. Some tour operators organize excursions to this area and to some abandoned villages around Pripyat as one of the most visited places. Every year, Chernobyl counts more than 10,000 tourists. |

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Gallipoli Campaign | Gallipoli (Turkey) | The Canakkale Campaign (April 25, 1915 – January 9, 1916) was a World War I campaign that took place on the Gallipoli peninsula. Gelibolus is one of the most sacred destinations for Turks because it represents the soldiers who lost their lives in battle. It is a historical site that offers tours around the monuments and tombs to show the incidents that happened there. Every year the peninsula of Gelibolus welcomes thousands of visitors to honor those killed during the campaign. |
| Belchite | Zaragoza (Spain) | Belchite is perhaps the most dominant reminder in Spain of the devastation that the civil war of 1936 – 1939 (Battle of Belchite) brought to that population. Since it was destroyed, it has served as a war memorial and the ghost town atmosphere attracts millions of tourists a year. |
| Jack The Ripper Tours | London | Jack the Ripper was a serial killer who brutally murdered several prostitutes on the streets of London. The media intensively promoted this story and because of this a tour was created - Jack The Ripper, for all those who wanted to "live" the story. Nowadays it seems to hold up as one of the most iconic dark tours in the world. |
| Hot Hell | Porto (Portugal) | Hot Hell is the first permanent haunted house in Porto, Portugal. It recreates the horror stories that happened in the city. Recently opened, Hot Hell has been massively sought after. |
| Anne Frank House | Prinsengracht (Amsterdam) | Anne Frank was a writer who during the holocaust wrote her experiences in a diary that became known around the world as The Diary of Anne Frank. A museum was built in her memory - the Anne Frank House, which was created as a biographical museum portraying the stories written by her. Since its opening, the number of visitors has been in creasing and in 2015 it reached 31056300 visitors. |
| Kigali Genocide Memorial Centre | Rwanda | This memorial commemorates the Rwandan genocide that took place in 1994. The site is visited by about 77,000 visitors a year. |

Note:(Fonseca, Seabra, & Silva, 2016)

Below is a table with the most popular dark tourism countries in the world, together with the number of their visitors in 2018 and the income in the dollar monetary unit that these countries brought during the year in question, according to the author Ari (2022).

Table 3: The Most Popular Dark Tourism Destinations, Number of Visitors and Revenue in 2018 According to the Ari (2022)

| The place of dark tourism | Number of visitors in 2018 | Income in dollar currency from these visitors in 2018 |
|--|----------------------------|---|
| 9/11 Memorial Park and Museum (USA) | 6600000 | \$ 84051124 |
| Auschwitz (Poland) | 2152000 | \$ 15,561 |
| Pompeii (Italy) | 3500000 | \$ 46074500 |
| Pearl Harbor Museum and Memorial (USA) | 1500000 | \$ 7725293 |
| Anne Frank House (Netherlands) | 1225000 | \$ 16086734 |
| Paris Underground Cemetery (France) | 480000 | \$ 8043840 |
| Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park (Japan) | 1522000 | \$ 2663500 |

Note: (Ari , 2022)

METHODOLOGY

The research design based on the data that has been analyzed is a case study and the research method is the qualitative method. "Case studies include either a single case or a small number of cases, but each one is explored in detail and in great depth (Matthews & Ross, 2010, p. 128). "

DARK TOURISM IN JAPAN, AMERICA AND KOSOVO

Dark tourism in Japan

Japan is an island on the west coast of the Pacific Ocean, 70% of which is surrounded by mountains. In the south it is bordered by the East China Sea, while in the west by the Inland Sea of Japan and as such is one of the most important portal countries of the Pacific Ocean. It consists of 6,852 islands and its name means "Land of the Rising Sun" in Japanese

(Bajraktar, 2018). Japan is a constitutional monarchy in terms of state regulation, while in terms of social regulation it is a state with a market economy. In the 20th century, Japan began to create the Japanese empire, which reached its greatest culmination during the Second World War, in which it entered with the bombing of the Hawaiian Islands. It also occupies many countries in East and Southeast Asia. However, with the dropping of the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, in 1945, by the USA, it signed its capitulation and remained in its current position, that is, in its four islands today (Rexha & Gashi, 2005). Dark tourism in Japan was first introduced by tourism geographer Carlon Funck in 2007 Funck (2008, cited by Jang, Sakamoto, & Funck, 2021). Dark tourism, which had not previously appeared in the Japanese tourism industry and society, emerged after the Great East Japan Earthquake of 2011, on 11.3.2011, which was classified as one of the two level events seven in world nuclear history (together with Chernobyl in 1986).

In addition, other accidents, such as the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant disaster, also played a major role. Moreover, the most important task in Japanese society after the earthquake and tsunami, including the nuclear accident, was to find ways to rebuild and revive the affected region. Revival plans were offered by all of society, including academia, and dark tourism was also emphasized. (Jang, Sakamoto, & Funck, 2021). The atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945 at 08:15 and as a result the city was destroyed over great distances and about 140,000 people died (Selmi, Tur, & Dornier, 2012). It is the first city in history to face a nuclear attack. In 1949, Hiroshima was declared the "city of peace", while in 1980 it was named as the capital that carries the local characteristics of Japan and as such has become a tourist center that attracts the attention of tourists (Bajraktar, 2018). The creation of Hiroshima's memory landscape was deeply rooted in municipal tourism development efforts. The city had high expectations of the financial impact of tourism, especially foreign visitors. Moreover, the atomic bombing formed the core of the concept of communal tourism, and tourism profoundly influenced how the bombing would be commemorated. It was the city's local officials and entrepreneurs who invested financially and worked to create a public atomic bomb memorial as part of their local tourism strategy (Schäfer, 2016). The Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park was opened on April 1, 1954 and includes the Peace Memorial Museum, the Bomb Dome and the Children's Peace Monument on an area of 122,000 m². The museum contains models and panoramic scenes of the once ruined city, has recorded testimonies of survivors and passionate messages of hope for the future. In the center of the park stands the 'Bomb Dome', which reflects the destructive force of the atomic explosion (Selmi et al, 2012). In everyday language, the museum is referred to as the "atomic bomb museum" (Schäfer, 2016).

Figure 1. Peace Memorial Park in Hiroshima (Bajraktar, 2018, p.32)



Peace Memorial Park is visited by more than one million visitors every year (Schäfer, 2016). According to the author Ari, (2022) the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum in 2018 was visited by 1,522,000 residents and brought income to the Japanese state of \$2,663,500. An empirical research conducted by the authors Selmi, Tur and Dornier (2012) with visitors to the Peace Memorial Park in Hiroshima shows that the motive of visitors to visit dark places comes mainly from their interest in historical events, as well as their desire to be enriched by cultural side and to commemorate the events experienced. Moreover, according to these authors a visitor to Hiroshima says this: The images are hard to bear, it is hard to see the suffering. But this pain is necessary. Humanity must be aware of the horror caused by this deadly device. The whole world knows that an atomic bomb exploded in Japan and as a result thousands of people died, it was terrible, but reading the testimonies and looking at the photos helps us understand the reality. While another visitor says that Hiroshima is the history of humanity.

Dark tourism in America

The continent of America is bounded to the east by the Atlantic Ocean and to the west by the Pacific Ocean. It has an area of 42000000 km² and as such is the second largest continent in the world after Asia. It consists of two large parts of land in the shape of a triangle, the Northern and the Southern. The continent of America was discovered by Christopher Columbus on 12.10.1492, while it was named after the explorer Ameriko Vespucci (Rexha & Gashi, 2005).

The term "Ground Zero" usually means the place where there is serious damage or destruction due to natural or human causes. It marks the site of one of the most shocking events in the history of the United States of America (USA) and the entire world.

On September 11, 2001, the World Trade Center (WTC) was attacked by Al-Qaeda terrorists, who hijacked two American Airlines planes and flew them into the south and north towers. This caused immediate fires and extensive damage that led to the collapse of the towers. The attack on New York City's World Trade Center left nearly 3,000 people dead and quickly became known as "Ground Zero." On 9/11/2001 at around 8:30 am, four American Airline planes were hijacked by militants of the extremist Islamic group Al-Qaeda. Two of them crashed into the World Trade Center towers and in about an hour and thirty minutes both towers collapsed and as a result the surrounding buildings collapsed as well. The third plane crashed into the Pentagon in Virginia causing the west side of the building to collapse, and the fourth crashed into a field in Pennsylvania. The World Trade Center has been plunged into deep grief after two of its towers collapsed. Since 2014, the National September 11 Memorial and Museum has offered its visitors a clear idea of what loss means after the catastrophic events of September 11 (Argyropoulou, 2017). The 9/11 National Memorial Park has an area of 10,220 m² and contains the remains of pillars from the Twin Towers, photographs and belongings of those who lost their lives in the attacks, parts of the planes that crashed into the towers and videos shot on the day of the event (Solaker, 2018). This park was built to commemorate the approximately 3,000 people killed in the 9/11 attacks in 2001 and the 6 people killed in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing. In place of the original foundations of the twin towers destroyed during the 9/11 attacks in September, a museum was built with two square-shaped pools that symbolize the water flowing into eternity (figure 2). This is the reason why the brand is also known by another name "Monument of Eternity" (Kurdoğlu, Kurt Konakoğlu, & Yeniçırak, 2018).

Figure 2 . September 11 National Memorial Park in August 2011, respectively in August 2014 (Kurdoğlu, Kurt Konakoğlu, & Yeniçırak, 2018, p. 23)



The twin towers in the World Trade Center even before their destruction had been an attraction for tourists from all over the world. Now this area attracts even more people who wish to commemorate their deceased loved ones, truly understand what happened and reflect on the events or simply out of curiosity. According to statistics, a year after the attack, the World Trade Center attracted 3.6 million visitors, and this figure represents double the number of visitors the year before the September 11 attacks on the center. The National

September 11 Memorial Park has been visited by over 30 million visitors since its opening in September 2011 and the Museum by over 8 million visitors since its opening in May 2014 (Argyropoulou, 2017). In addition, according to the author Ari (2022) the September 11 National Memorial Park in 2018 was visited by 6,600,000 residents and brought income to the US state of \$84,051,124.

Dark tourism in Kosovo

Kosovo is located in the center of the western part of the Balkan Peninsula and has an area of 10,887 km². It borders Albania, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro. Pass the roads that connect the Adriatic Sea, the Aegean Sea and the interior of the Peninsula. At its edges are high, medium and low mountains, while in the inner parts are plains, valleys and low mountains (Pushka & Krasniqi, 2007). The Kosovo War was an armed conflict in the Republic of Kosovo between the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and the Yugoslav Army (JNA), supported by the Serbian Police (MUP), which began on February 28, 1998, after the Yugoslav attack on the villages of Likoshan and Qirez in the Drenica region of Kosovo and ended with the signing of the Kumanovo Agreement on June 11, 1999. The Kosovo Liberation Army received air support from NATO (from March 24, 1999) and ground support from the Albanian Army (Wikipedia, 2023). From February 1998 onwards, the conflict between the Kosovo Liberation Army and Yugoslav forces in Kosovo had turned into a brutal war and ethnic cleansing, with the fierce Serbian offensive of the summer of 1998 leaving around 1,500 Kosovo Albanians dead. and about 300,000 Albanians had abandoned their homes to hide in the mountains and forests (Roberts, 1999).

Adem Jashari Memorial Complex

Adem Jashari, born on 28.11.1955, was one of the main founders of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). He was also the leader of the resistance against the Serbian president and his government. Serbia had Adem Jashari on the most wanted list, but even though they tried to capture him several times, they did not achieve their goal. The Jashari family was attacked by the Serbs for the first time on January 22, 1988, but none of them were killed because they were staying in the forest at that time. They were attacked again on March 5, 1988 and this time they fought the enemy. The attack lasted more than three days, where the legendary commander Adem Jashari was killed along with fifty family members. Only one member of the Jashari family survived this attack and she was only ten years old at that time. After this event, the international community began to pay attention to the conflict between Albanians and Serbs. The death of the Jashari family was seen as a sacrifice for the nation. The Albanian newspaper Koha Ditore wrote that more than 500,000 people participated in the protests against the attack on the Jashari family. In Kosovo, two days of mourning were declared and many people participated in the burial of members of the Jashari family (Krasniqi, 2016). Adem Jashari is still remembered as a "legendary commander". His and his family's sacrifice has been adopted by the Kosovar people as heroism, because they fought and died for the freedom and independence of

Figure 1. Houses of the Jashari family, photographed by Sarah Driessen on 26.4.2018(Driessen, 2018, p. 79)



The houses in which the members of the Jashari family lived were preserved after the attack in 1998 and around them is a structure of scaffolding, through which the buildings are preserved and the history of the attack and its consequences remain intact. According to guide Ilaz Halimi, the Adem Jashari Memorial Complex has had twelve million visitors since the murders took place. It is visited by visitors every day. Most of the visitors are from Albania, but there are also visitors from European countries, from the United States of America, as well as from Turkey (Driessen, 2018). The Adem Jashari Memorial Complex also contains the Museum, which according to the author Driessen (2018) makes it easier to understand that the attack really happened and many people were killed. Although it is small, as visitors it makes the attack felt more by seeing more things than just the cemetery and the memorial. The photos of the members of the Jashari family, the clothes that the family members wore, children's toys such as an orange truck, etc. are exhibited in it (Driessen, 2018).

Figure 2. Portrait of the legendary commander Adem Jashari in the Adem Jashari Memorial Complex, photographed by Sarah Driessen on 4/26/2018 (Driessen, 2018, p. 79)



Adem Jashari is an icon of freedom and independence of Kosovo. He and his family, namely their sacrifice for the freedom and independence of Kosovo will never be forgotten and will be shown from generation to generation. Adem Jashari is also known internationally. He ended this part of the paper with a quote from the French politician and physicist Bernard Kouchner.

"If the Nobel Prize for freedom existed, I would give it to Adem Jashari and his family"
– Bernard Kouchner –

Reçak village memorial

Reçaku is a village in the municipality of Shtima, in which at least 45 ethnic Albanians were killed on January 15, 1999 (Roberts, 1999). The killings were carried out by the Serbian security forces (Driessen, 2018).

Figure 7 . Reçak village memorial, photographed by Sarah Driessen on 4/17/2018 (Driessen, 2018, p. 54)



According to the taxi driver Granit Luma, the Memorial of Reçak village is mostly visited during the tourist season, in the months of June, July and August (Driessen, 2018). What impressed the author Driessen are the photos of the killed civilians, where you can see the faces of the killed women, children and men, including a 12-year-old boy. Next to the photos is a text in Albanian and English, which refers to Serbs as barbarians and beasts. The memorial of the village of Reçak on one side contains the cemeteries of the soldiers of the Kosovo Liberation Army and on the other side the cemeteries of the killed civilians. It contains the photographs of the massacred persons and the statue of William Walker (figure 8), which was discovered on the eighteenth anniversary of the Reçak massacre (Driessen, 2018). According to Frontline (1995 – 2014, cited by Driessen, 2018) William Walker is the one who caused the world to know what happened in Recak. He blamed Serbia in front of television cameras when he arrived in the village a day after the incident.

CONCLUSION

"While tourism has existed for more than a century, the growing trend of the last few decades is the popularity of a particular form of tourism, in which visitors seek authentic experiences and knowledge of the history of local culture" (Broci, 2018, p. 141). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to make a summary of the definitions of dark tourism by different authors, a summary of the dark tourism sites that are most visited in the world and to write a little more extensively about dark tourism in Japan, America and Kosovo. The results of this study show that dark tourism in world literature is defined by terms such as "dark tourism" (Foley & Lennon, 1996), "thana tourism" (Seaton, 1996), "war tourism" (Smith, 1998), "morbid tourism" (Blom, 2000), "fright tourism" (Bristow & Newman, 2004) and "grief tourism". (Slayton, 2006). Furthermore, the most visited dark tourism sites in the world according to authors Fonseca, Seabra and Silva (2016) are: Auschwitz concentration and extermination camp, 9/11 Memorial in New York, Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, Paris Catacombs in Paris, Bouncy Castle in Ireland, Chernobyl in Ukraine, Island of the Dolls in Mexico, Peace Memorial Park in Hiroshima, Pompeii in Italy, etc. Also, this study shows that dark tourism in Japan is highly developed. The Peace Memorial Park is annually visited by more than one million visitors (Schäfer, 2016) and according to the author Ari (2022) the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum in 2018 was visited by 1522000 residents and brought income to the Japanese state of \$2663500. Even in America, dark tourism is very developed. The National September 11 Memorial Park has been visited by over 30 million visitors since its opening in September 2011 and the Museum by over 8 million visitors since its opening in May 2014 (Argyropoulou, 2017). In addition, according to the author Ari (2022), the September 11 National Memorial Park in 2018 was visited by 6,600,000 residents and brought income to the US state of \$84,051,124.

However, as far as dark tourism in Kosovo is concerned, there is still a lot to do. It is not developed like in Japan and America although it has a lot of potential. In this research, the Adem Jashari Memorial Complex and the Reçak Village Memorial are mentioned, in which the key events that attracted the international opinion and caused them to take measures against the Serbian forces took place. However, Kosovo still has many places of dark tourism to visit. Even the Dutch author Driessen, (2018) in her research carried out in Kosovo, writes that the history of the Kosovo war should not be overlooked, on the contrary, it can be used in a positive way to attract more tourists. According to her, it is possible to develop dark tourism in Kosovo, and the tourist companies that organize tourist visits in Kosovo should also include tours in the places of war in Kosovo in their agenda. These places can be Prishtina, Reçaku, Gjakova, Prekazi, Meja and Glllogjani and the organized tour should focus on educating tourists about the Kosovo war. In her master's thesis, the author also emphasizes the difficulties she encountered during her visit to these countries, where, in addition to the problem of transportation, she also emphasizes the lack of notes and descriptions in English as an essential problem. Regardless of the difficulties, she says that she has seen Kosovo and during her visit to Kosovo she has learned a lot about the history of the war and how the war has affected people and has left traces to this day. Moreover, according to her, Kosovo

wants to develop as a state, but at the same time the war is still present among people and they definitely have not forgotten it. According to her, Kosovo has a long way to go, but the development of the tourism sector will be a step in the right direction.

Considering the history of our people, especially the last war in Kosovo and the research of the Dutch author Driessen, it is suggested that in the future an empirical research be carried out regarding the development of dark tourism in Kosovo and in this way the international literature will be completed.

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Social Media and Tourist Behaviour: A Scientometric Analysis

Ganesha K S¹ and Ganapati B Sinnoor²

ABSTRACT

The study has used a Scientometric analysis of publication in the Scopus database ranging from 2001 to 2020 on the subject area of Social media and Tourist behaviour. The study seeks to find the knowledge gap and trends in the area. Based on the analysis study found out the article publication pattern from 2000-2020, type of access, type of article, language-wise distribution of articles, high yield subject areas, high yield authors, high yield nations, high yield university/ institutes, high yield publication sources and top keywords analysis. This research provides guidelines to researchers, academicians, and industry operators to look upon the different trends and different conceptual areas who wish to study social media and tourist behaviour. The study provided interesting results that there is an increasing frequency trend in the number of publications and less prefer open access publications, the reasons might be the cost for publishing and so on. Also, the authors Law, R., Hall, C.M., Buhalis, D., Gretzel, U. dominates the publications as high yield authors, interestingly four countries, namely the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, China, together make more than 50% of publications. By these results we can say that social media and tourist behaviour is an emerging area of research even though many research is being carried out, the dynamic nature of these areas making the researchers to go for in-depth research on the area.

Keywords: Social media, Tourist behaviour, Tourism, Travel behaviour, Bibliometric Analysis

INTRODUCTION

Both Tourism and Social media are information-driven entities, so in the tourism industry impact of social media is more (Ganesha KS; GB Sinnor, 2019). Social media platforms have revolutionized the traditional ways of acquiring, interacting, and engaging consumers and their behaviours (Cvijikj & Michahelles, 2014). As soon as it comes to the adoption and

¹ *Assistant Professor, Department of Management Studies, Dayananda Sagar College of Engineering, India, Email: ganeshaks@gmail.com

² Associate Professor, Central University of Karnataka, India, ganapatisinnoor@cuk.ac.in

*Corresponding Author



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usage levels, social media enjoy remarkable success. Social media changed the way people connect, communicate, express, and behave with each other, and it has even become a significant source for customer knowledge. Tourism services purchase is complex and high risk as it is experiential, so it involves extensive information search (Sirakaya & Woodside, 2005). Social media usage levels among top destination marketing organizations are still mostly experimental and that strategies vary significantly (Hays et al., 2013). The usage of social media platforms with human-like characteristics positively engages consumers than any other factor (Perez-Vega et al., 2018).

Individuals usually behave as per standard economic models when they go on tour with groups (Nguyen, 2016). The nature of climate change has created a challenge among tourist decision making and tourism research (Steiger et al., 2019). There is a substantial transformation in the attitude of local communities towards tourists' presence (Gössling et al., 2020). Attitudes are always complex to measure in their conceptualization, relationships with other factors, and behavioural consequences (Passafaro, 2020). Tourists should be emotionally attached to a destination through word of mouth (Breitsohl & Garrod, 2016), and social media is an excellent platform for it. Tourism organizations should address online customer reviews, specifically negative ones (El-Said, 2020), which in turn make the destination to have negative effects. When compared to other information available, the user-generated contents on social media are more trustworthy (John Fortis; Dimitrios Buhalis; Nicos Rossides;., 2012). These are few studies which through light on the area of Social media and Tourist behaviour. These concepts and a vast number of publications aroused the need to conduct a Scientometric Analysis for Social media and Tourist behaviour. So based on these the study focuses on carrying out Scientometric analysis for Social media and Tourist behaviour. The concepts such as type of access, type of article, language-wise distribution of articles, high yield subject areas, high yield authors, high yield nations, high yield university/ institutes, high yield publication sources and top keywords analysis will be analysed based on the database with the help of index data. The rest of work follows the following aspects methodology and frameworks, statistical summary and scientometric analysis and final considerations showcasing findings and results, also the study will mention about the future scope for further research.

METHODOLOGY AND FRAMEWORK

This section provides our methodology for scientometric analysis for Social media and Tourist behaviour. In this study, we made an analysis framework to analyse Social media and Tourist behaviour research carried out from 2000 to 2020, as shown in Table 1 and Figure 1. Descriptive statistical analysis has carried out, and there were interesting findings found regarding article publication pattern from 2000-2020, type of access, type of article, language-wise distribution of articles, high yield subject areas, high yield authors, high yield nations, high yield university/ institutes, high yield publication sources and top keywords analysis.

Construction of Database

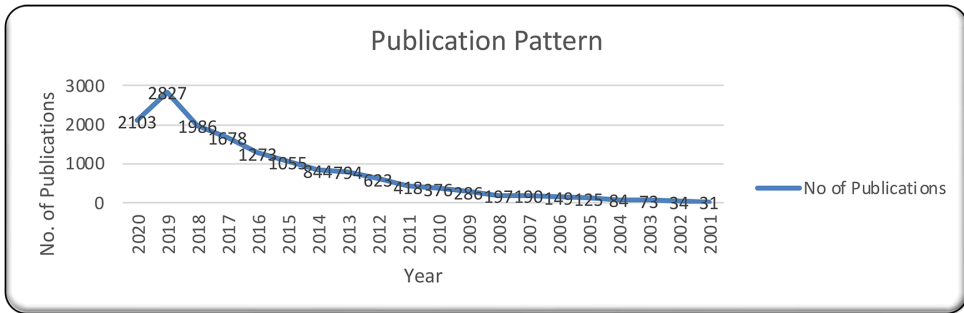
The Scopus index was the source of the collection of research articles. Scopus database, as of now, consists of 41,317 journals (source: Scopus.com) with a systematic peer review system across various fields of science, medicine, technology, social science, arts, and humanities. Eminent publishing houses like Elsevier, Emerald, etc. are part of the Scopus database with access to a high number of abstracts and citations (Kumar et al., 2019). For the data collection, a search launched in the Scopus database with title, keywords, and abstract of the articles, and then the query entered for the search using the keyword "Social Media and Tourist Behaviour." The timeline for the search was set from 2001 to 2020. The publication information downloaded in July 2020.

STATISTICAL SUMMARY AND SCIENTOMETRIC ANALYSIS*a. Publication Pattern***Table 1: Publication Pattern**

| Year | No of Publications | Percentage |
|------|--------------------|------------|
| 2020 | 2119 | 13.9 |
| 2019 | 2828 | 18.7 |
| 2018 | 1986 | 13.1 |
| 2017 | 1679 | 11.1 |
| 2016 | 1273 | 8.4 |
| 2015 | 1055 | 7.0 |
| 2014 | 844 | 5.6 |
| 2013 | 794 | 5.2 |
| 2012 | 623 | 4.1 |
| 2011 | 418 | 2.8 |
| 2010 | 376 | 2.5 |
| 2009 | 286 | 1.9 |
| 2008 | 197 | 1.3 |
| 2007 | 190 | 1.3 |
| 2006 | 149 | 1.0 |
| 2005 | 125 | 0.8 |
| 2004 | 84 | 0.6 |
| 2003 | 73 | 0.5 |
| 2002 | 34 | 0.2 |
| 2001 | 31 | 0.2 |

Source: Scopus

**Fig. 1: Year-wise Publication Pattern since 2001-2020
(based on table 3.1 sourced from Scopus)**



From the above table 1 and figure 1, it is evident that there is an increasing frequency trend in the number of publications. When we look into the data, 2019 marks a higher percentage of 18.7% and the years 2001- and 2002-mark the lowest percentage of 0.2%. The publications of the year 2020 look lower than 2019, but data collected until July only so that it may increase by the end of the year.

b. Access Type

Table 2: Access Type

| Access Type | No of Articles |
|-------------|----------------|
| Open Access | 2,163 |
| Other | 13,001 |

Source: Scopus

Table 2 depicts that there are a very smaller number of open access articles compared to other categories, which include subscribed articles. This infers that authors are less preferring towards open access publications.

*c. Publication Type***Table 3: Publication Type**

| Publication Type | No of Papers | Percentage |
|---------------------|--------------|------------|
| Article in Journals | 11360 | 74.9 |
| Book | 1387 | 9.1 |
| Book Chapter | 907 | 6.0 |
| Conference Paper | 815 | 5.4 |
| Review | 568 | 3.7 |
| Editorial | 49 | 0.3 |
| Note | 36 | 0.2 |
| Letter | 14 | 0.1 |
| Conference Review | 9 | 0.1 |
| Short Survey | 6 | 0.0 |
| Data Paper | 1 | 0.0 |
| Retracted | 1 | 0.0 |
| Undefined | 15 | 0.1 |

Source: Scopus

Table 3 shows that article in journals amount to 74.9% whereas books, book chapter, conference paper, and review contributes to 9.1, 6.0, 5.4, 3.7 respectively whereas other types have very less percentage. It is understandable from the above analysis that most of the authors prefer to publish their research as an article in Journals than other types. The reason for the above trend might be necessary for journal articles over others in academia.

*d. Language Wise Distribution of Articles***Table 4: Language Wise Distribution of Articles**

| Language | No of Articles | Percentage |
|------------|----------------|------------|
| English | 14,940 | 98.1 |
| Spanish | 122 | 0.8 |
| Chinese | 52 | 0.3 |
| French | 25 | 0.2 |
| Portuguese | 24 | 0.2 |
| Korean | 10 | 0.1 |
| Russian | 10 | 0.1 |

| | | |
|-----------|---|-----|
| Slovenian | 6 | 0.0 |
| Croatian | 4 | 0.0 |
| German | 4 | 0.0 |
| Italian | 4 | 0.0 |
| Romanian | 4 | 0.0 |
| Bosnian | 3 | 0.0 |
| Czech | 3 | 0.0 |
| Dutch | 3 | 0.0 |
| Afrikaans | 2 | 0.0 |
| Moldavian | 2 | 0.0 |
| Moldovan | 2 | 0.0 |
| Polish | 2 | 0.0 |
| Finnish | 1 | 0.0 |
| Japanese | 1 | 0.0 |
| Malay | 1 | 0.0 |
| Persian | 1 | 0.0 |
| Slovak | 1 | 0.0 |
| Ukrainian | 1 | 0.0 |
| Catalan | 1 | 0.0 |

Source: Scopus

From table 4, concerning social media and tourist behaviour, it is evident that English is the premier publishing language among the researchers. It contributes to 98% of the publications followed by Spanish, Chinese, French, and Portuguese as the main contributing languages. Whereas other languages have a meagre number of publications in the area.

Based on this, we can conclude that English is the most preferred and universally acceptable in research field mainly because of its extensive viewership and understanding by most of the people all over the globe.

*e. High Yield Subject Areas***Table 5: High Yield Subject Areas**

| Subject Areas | No of Publications | Percentage |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Business, Management and Accounting | 8020 | 52.9 |
| Social Sciences | 7218 | 47.6 |
| Computer Science | 2107 | 13.9 |
| Environmental Science | 1901 | 12.5 |
| Economics, Econometrics and Finance | 1443 | 9.5 |
| Arts and Humanities | 1167 | 7.7 |
| Engineering | 1007 | 6.6 |
| Psychology | 624 | 4.1 |
| Earth and Planetary Sciences | 609 | 4.0 |
| Agricultural and Biological Sciences | 585 | 3.9 |

Source: Scopus

When we look into Table 5, on the perspective of subject areas, Social media and Tourist behaviour is a multi-disciplinary subject mainly involving Business Management and Accounting, Social Sciences, Computer Science, and even other areas that have a good number of contributions. These results inferred the importance of Business, Management, and Accounting and Social Sciences as the main subject area for Social media and Tourist behaviour research.

*f. High Yield Authors***Table 6: High Yield Authors**

| Author | No of Papers | Percentage |
|--------------|--------------|------------|
| Law, R. | 110 | 0.7 |
| Hall, C.M. | 55 | 0.4 |
| Buhalis, D. | 47 | 0.3 |
| Gretzel, U. | 45 | 0.3 |
| Chung, N. | 36 | 0.2 |
| Okumus, F. | 33 | 0.2 |
| Gössling, S. | 30 | 0.2 |
| Lee, C.K. | 30 | 0.2 |
| Becken, S. | 27 | 0.2 |
| Pearce, P.L. | 27 | 0.2 |

Source: Scopus

Based on the number of publications, the authors in Table 6 listed as high yield authors. Their yield or productivity is presented based on the number of publications because it is one of the easiest and acceptable norms. As stated by (Kumar et al., 2019), productivity based on citation and H-index is not suitable because, for new researchers' publication details, it will be biased. As per the analysis, it can be noted that Law, R., Hall, C.M., Buhalis, D., Gretzel, U. dominates the publications with 110, 55. 47 and 45, respectively. Also, other authors contributed an equally good number of articles.

g. High Yield Publication Sources

Table 7: High Yield Publication Sources

| Journal Name | No of Articles | Percentage |
|--|----------------|------------|
| Tourism Management | 470 | 3.1 |
| Sustainability Switzerland | 385 | 2.5 |
| Journal of Travel Research | 253 | 1.7 |
| Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing | 241 | 1.6 |
| Current Issues in Tourism | 235 | 1.5 |
| International Journal of Hospitality Management | 234 | 1.5 |
| International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management | 226 | 1.5 |
| Annals of Tourism Research | 197 | 1.3 |
| Journal of Sustainable Tourism | 172 | 1.1 |
| Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research | | 1.0 |
| Journal of Destination Marketing and Management | 137 | 0.9 |
| Tourism Management Perspectives | 134 | 0.9 |
| International Journal of Tourism Research | 121 | 0.8 |
| Journal of Hospitality Marketing and Management | 120 | 0.8 |
| Tourism Review | 104 | 0.7 |
| Journal of Vacation Marketing | 93 | 0.6 |
| African Journal of Hospitality Tourism and Leisure | 91 | 0.6 |
| Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management | 86 | 0.6 |
| Plos One | 86 | 0.6 |
| Lecture Notes in Computer Science Including Subseries and Lecture Notes in Artificial Intelligence and Lecture Notes in Bioinformatics | 82 | 0.5 |

Source: Scopus

In this part, evaluations of various publication sources have carried by the authors. In table 7, it is evident that Tourism Management, Sustainability Switzerland, Journal of Travel Research, Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing, and Current Issues in Tourism are chosen by authors to publish their articles as these journals cover 470, 385, 253, 241 and 235 respectively. However, it also notable that while analysing journals, we should also look at the volume of their publications because few journals publish 12 issues per year. In contrast, some journals publish quarterly, biannually, and annually. So, we should check the solidarity of a journal through its impact factor rather than the number of publications.

h. Sources Top Keywords

Table 8: Top 25 Keywords

| Keywords | Frequency |
|----------------------------|-----------|
| Tourism | 1,444 |
| Social Media | 997 |
| Tourist Destination | 937 |
| Tourist Behaviour | 705 |
| Human | 663 |
| Perception | 577 |
| Article | 518 |
| Tourism Management | 510 |
| Social Networking (online) | 508 |
| Marketing | 499 |
| Tourism Development | 495 |
| China | 479 |
| Tourism Market | 431 |
| Internet | 416 |
| Humans | 395 |
| Sustainability | 395 |
| Travel Behaviour | 389 |
| Decision Making | 370 |
| Ecotourism | 369 |
| Female | 325 |
| Sustainable Development | 317 |
| Male | 312 |
| Destination Image | 299 |
| Adult | 297 |
| Satisfaction | 280 |

Source: Scopus

Fig. 2: Word Cloud of Top Key Words



In Table 8 and Figure 2, the analysis made using the words frequently mentioned in the titles of articles and keywords. It highlights the top 25 keywords which are used in published papers. This analysis helps to understand and identify the research trend. The keyword helps the researchers to find the most suitable articles for their study. In the table, the top 5 keywords found out are tourism, social media, tourist destination, tourist behaviour, human, and we can say that these are the most trending areas presently.

i. List of High Yield Nations

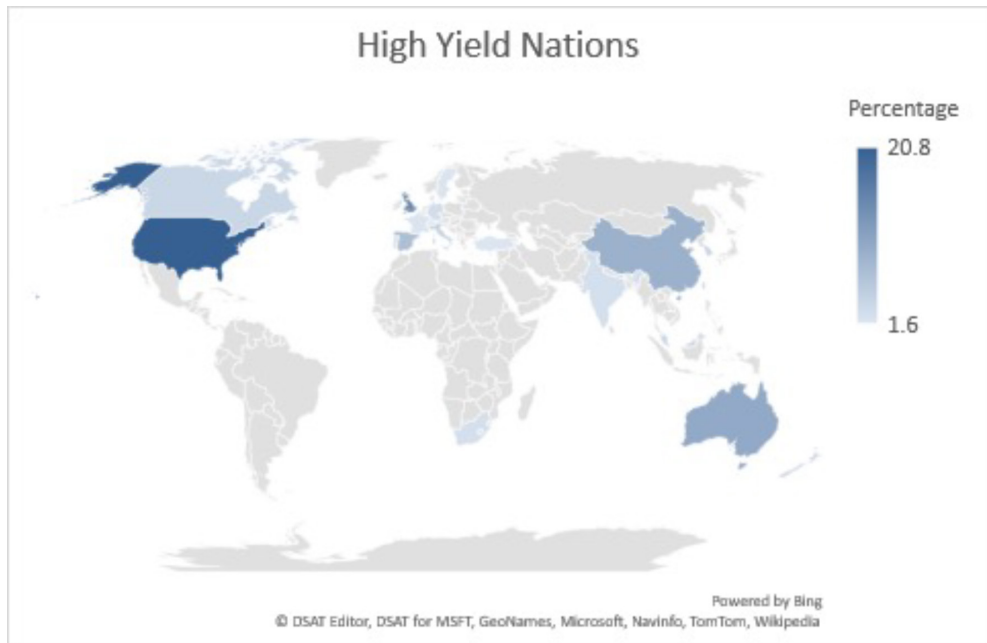
Table 9: List of High Yield Nations

| Nations | No of Articles | Percentage |
|----------------|----------------|------------|
| United States | 3155 | 20.8 |
| United Kingdom | 2198 | 14.5 |
| Australia | 1545 | 10.2 |
| China | 1383 | 9.1 |
| Spain | 1074 | 7.1 |
| Italy | 635 | 4.2 |
| Taiwan | 564 | 3.7 |
| South Korea | 557 | 3.7 |
| Canada | 554 | 3.7 |
| Malaysia | 527 | 3.5 |
| Hong Kong | 488 | 3.2 |
| New Zealand | 439 | 2.9 |
| Germany | 402 | 2.7 |

| | | |
|--------------|-----|-----|
| South Africa | 383 | 2.5 |
| India | 375 | 2.5 |
| Portugal | 339 | 2.2 |
| Netherlands | 285 | 1.9 |
| France | 276 | 1.8 |
| Sweden | 253 | 1.7 |
| Turkey | 244 | 1.6 |

Source: Scopus

Fig. 3: High Yield Nations



In table 9, we can see that a very high number of articles published by the United States, which amounts to 20%, second is the United Kingdom, which is 14%, followed by Australia and China with 10% and 9%, respectively. These four countries together make more than 50% of publications, which shows opportunity and curiosity towards the subject in these countries. Funding by different agencies might also be a reason for these vast contributions from these countries.

*j. High Yield University/ Institutes***Table 10: High Yield University/ Institutes**

| University/ Institute | No of Articles | Percentage |
|---|----------------|------------|
| Hong Kong Polytechnic University and School of Hotel and Tourism Management, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University | 709 | 4.7 |
| Griffith University | 217 | 1.4 |
| University of Central Florida | 174 | 1.1 |
| The University of Queensland | 167 | 1.1 |
| Kyung Hee University | 142 | 0.9 |
| Bournemouth University | 132 | 0.9 |
| Rosen College of Hospitality Management | 130 | 0.9 |
| University of Johannesburg | 127 | 0.8 |
| University of Surrey | 126 | 0.8 |
| University of Otago | 119 | 0.8 |
| University of Florida | 117 | 0.8 |
| Sun Yat-Sen University | 113 | 0.7 |
| James Cook University, Australia | 111 | 0.7 |
| Monash University | 89 | 0.6 |
| Universidad de Granada | 89 | 0.6 |
| University of Valencia | 87 | 0.6 |
| University of Canterbury | 87 | 0.6 |
| Temple University | 84 | 0.6 |
| Zhejiang University | 79 | 0.5 |

Source: Scopus

When we look at Table 10, we can see the High Yield Universities from which more publications are happening. The table highlights that Hong Kong Polytechnic University and School of Hotel and Tourism Management, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University is contributing 709 publications and leading the publications. It followed by Griffith University, University of Central Florida, The University of Queensland, and Kyung Hee University with 217, 174, 167, and 142, respectively. Other Universities and Institutes mentioned in the table also have useful contributions. These top 20 Universities and Institutes cover 19.11% of total publications.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Scientometric Analysis has used in this study with the data to capture trending topics with integrated knowledge mapping of social media and tourist behaviour. Based on the analysis and framework, we can draw the following conclusions. Firstly, according to statistical data available from 2001-2020, we can see that there is an increasing frequency trend in the number of publications. These analyses show the enormous scope and different areas to explore in the area. Secondly, that authors less prefer open access publications, the reasons might be the cost for publishing and so on. Thirdly, authors prefer to publish their research as an article in Journals than other types because of its wide acceptance. Fourthly, English is the most preferred and universally acceptable in research field mainly because of its vast viewership and understanding by most of the people all over the globe.

When it comes to the authors' productivity, fifthly, the importance of Business, Management, and Accounting and Social Sciences as the main subject area for Social media and Tourist Behaviour Research. Sixthly, it can be noted that Law, R., Hall, C.M., Buhalis, D., Gretzel, U. dominates the publications as high yield authors. Seventhly, in the case of journals, it can be deciphered that Tourism Management, Sustainability Switzerland, Journal of Travel, Journal of Travel Research, and Tourism Marketing, and Current Issues in Tourism are chosen by authors to publish their articles. Next, the keywords which prominently used and trending are Tourism, Social Media, Tourist Destination, Tourist Behaviour, Human, and we can say that these are the areas that are trending currently. After that, four countries, namely the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, China, together make more than 50% of publications, which shows the opportunity and curiosity towards the subject in these countries.

Lastly, Hong Kong Polytechnic University and School of Hotel and Tourism Management, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University are contributing 709 publications and leading the publications. These followed by Griffith University, University of Central Florida, The University of Queensland, and Kyung Hee University, so these are the universities or institutes which contribute more publications. By these results we can say that social media and tourist behaviour is an emerging area of research even though much research is being carried out, the dynamic nature of these areas making the researchers to go for in-depth research on the area.

LIMITATION AND SCOPE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The study is limited to publications concerning the Scopus database only. Future studies can be carried out by comparing different databases. Also, when it comes to the subject area, there are a wide number of studies done. However, there is a need to research a broad area of social media and tourist behaviour with user-generated content, and marketer generated content, influencers' effect, and decision making at different phases of the tourism process.

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A Proposal for the Expansion of the Adriatic's Cruise Market Share

Luca Antonellini¹

ABSTRACT

The decline in market share within the Adriatic cruise industry may mostly be ascribed to the implementation of restrictions on larger vessels operating in Venice between the years 2012 and 2021. Despite diligent efforts to discover and develop alternative routes, this trend has continued to persist. The main objective of this proposal is to enhance the deployment of vessels in the Adriatic region and expand the time distribution of voyages. Presently, there exists a discernible clustering of maritime expeditions taking place over the period spanning from May to October. Furthermore, this has the ability to aid the cruise terminal operator in enhancing the efficiency of its facility management. The proposed strategy for attaining this objective is the allocation of a dedicated island solely for the utilization of one or more cruise lines. This method mirrors the established convention observed in the Caribbean and is progressively being embraced in other geographical areas. The island's design ought to be tailored to align with the distinctive characteristics of the Adriatic region. The implementation of the project and its associated components entails undertaking various procedures aimed at obtaining approval and support from both governmental and societal entities.

Keywords: Cruise Industry, Cruise routes, Adriatic Sea, Private islands/destinations

INTRODUCTION

The primary focus of cruise itineraries in the Adriatic region during the mid-2000s was centred on the utilization of Venice as the designated point of departure and/or arrival, while Dubrovnik played a crucial role as the transit port (Marušić et al., 2012; Perić et al., 2016). Following the resolution of a dispute that originated in 2012 and concluded in 2021, resulting in the prohibition of large vessels in Venice, cruise companies conducted an analysis of alternative home ports and itineraries (Risposte Turismo, 2019). As a result, they decided to utilize vessels with comparatively smaller dimensions. Moreover, in the context of Dubrovnik, the local administration and the Port Authority have taken measures to address the challenges

¹ M.SC.Eng., Independent Consultant, Via Doberdò 19, 48121, Ravenna, Italy. Phone: +39 0544 400336. E-mail address: antonellini@iol.it



posed by overtourism (Abbassian et al., 2020). Specifically, they have implemented a policy to limit the simultaneous presence of ships in the port, as indicated by the Dubrovnik Port Authority.

However, as a result of this occurrence, there was a decrease in the total passenger count engaged in maritime travel, consequently resulting in a decline in Adriatic's market presence within the global market, declining from 6.1% in 2011 to 3.9% in 2019 (Antonellini, 2023a). Moreover, it is noteworthy to emphasize that the cruise industry in the Adriatic region exhibits a substantial seasonal pattern, as indicated by data provided by Medcruise, an association that represents Mediterranean cruise ports. This is supported by the observation that a significant majority, nearly 90%, of cruise itineraries are explicitly scheduled during a six-month timeframe, namely from May to October.

As a result, home-port terminals often exhibit excessive capacity, leading to congestion at specific periods and underutilization for the remainder of the year. The current position poses a significant commercial risk for the management (Estevez Perez et al., 2019).

PRIVATE ISLANDS/DESTINATIONS

Since 1977, notable cruise groups have adopted the practice of exploiting entire islands or portions of islands as exclusive destinations in the Caribbean region (UNWTO, 2010). This is frequently achieved through the implementation of extended concession agreements with the relevant governmental entities that hold ownership rights over those islands. According to the findings of Notteboom et al. (2022), the acquisition of islands by corporations serves multiple aims, including the generation of financial resources, the provision of alternative ports of call, the establishment of exclusivity, and the provision of beach experiences. In recent years, cruise firms have faced increasing competition in their efforts to increase onboard revenues (Vogel, 2009; Zelinski, 2023, among others). Furthermore, companies have the option to implement highly proactive approaches in the realm of ticket sales with the aim of increasing the level of ship occupancy (Antonellini, 2023b). According to Lee and Ramdeen (2012), the occupancy rate of cruise ships is subject to variations of up to 23%, which can be attributed to the itineraries and corresponding locations.

The exclusive use of an island facilitates the internalization of a substantial proportion of daily profits. The post-Covid-19 era serves to further substantiate the accuracy of this assertion. Consequently, cruise companies often incorporate a designated day for their private island within their itineraries originating from Florida. CocoCay has gained significant popularity as a destination, as reported by Cruise Industry News in 2023. This has led the Royal Caribbean Group (RCG), the second-largest global operator, to announce its plans to accommodate 2.5 million visitors for the anticipated "Perfect Day at CocoCay" experience by 2023. The growing appeal of the island has played a role in establishing it as a highly coveted destination for travellers.

Showalter (1995) argues that the inclusion of private islands within the framework of cruise tourism can result in negative consequences for the natural environment, social-cultural dynamics, and economic conditions of the host countries. Wood (2000) and Pulsipher and Holdersfield (2004) highlighted the negative consequences faced by the indigenous population, whereas Wilkinson (2004) further delineated the benefits arising from the replacement of a transit port with a privately-owned island. In the present context, it is imperative to recognize that alongside the economic ramifications stemming from the ship's arrival, there exist several merits that warrant examination, such as the alleviation of congestion and pollution.

The majority of islands are situated within the physical confines of the Bahamas, as well as in the Caribbean region (Table 1).

Table 1: Private Islands/Destinations

| Name | Island / Destination | Company / Group | Mooring | Opened |
|------------------------------|--|--------------------------|---------|--------|
| Princess Cays | Eleuthera, Bahamas | Princess Cruises; CCL | Tender | 1992 |
| Half Moon Cay | Bahamas | HAL; CCL | Tender | 1997 |
| Puerta Maya | Cozumel, Mexico | CCL | Dock | 2001 |
| Grand Turk Cruise Center | Turks & Caicos | CCL | Dock | 2006 |
| Mahogany Bay | Isla Roatan, Honduras | CCL | Dock | 2009 |
| Amber Cove | Dominican Republic | CCL | Dock | 2015 |
| Ocean Cay MSC Marine Reserve | Private island in the Bahamas | MSC Cruises | Dock | 2019 |
| Castaway Cay | Private island in the Bahamas | Disney Cruises | Dock | 1998 |
| The Beach Club at Bimini | Private destination on Bimini in the Bahamas | Virgin Voyages | Dock | 2021 |
| Labadee | Private destination in Haiti | RCG | Dock | 1986 |
| CocoCay | Private island in the Bahamas | RCG | Dock | 1990 |
| Royal Beach Club | Private destination in Antigua | RCG | Dock | 2020 |
| Great Stirrup Cay | Private island in the Bahamas | NCLH | Tender | 1977 |
| Harvest Caye | Private island in Belize | NCLH | Dock | 2016 |

Legend: CCL = Carnival Cruise Corporation; HAL = Holland America Line; NCLH = Norwegian Cruise Line Holding

Sources: Press Offices and web sites of cruise companies

Ongoing efforts are underway to develop supplementary initiatives for the years 2024/2025, encompassing not just the Caribbean region but also extending to the Pacific. In the foreseeable future, more initiatives could be conducted in varied locations, such as the Middle East or Africa. Today, some ports are exploited by multiple cruise lines, which are granted exclusive access for a specific day of docking. On other days, these areas are made available to other enterprises or engaged in regular tourist activities.

PROPOSAL

The present proposition entails the identification of an island in the Adriatic Sea that would be amenable to hosting various cruise groups on a concessional arrangement. Based on initial investigations, it was feasible to ascertain the precise geographical coordinates of such an island, situating it inside the southeastern region of the Adriatic Sea. According to Dorigatti et al. (2022), a considerable number of islands in this area are located within natural parks or highly susceptible environmental areas. The study conducted by Carić and Mackelworth (2014) brought attention to the many effects caused by the presence of a cruise ship in the Adriatic region. This intervention is situated within a longstanding debate that has spanned numerous years, encompassing proponents and opponents of the practice of cruising. Clancy (2023) posits that the business in question is expected to witness a heightened intensity of conflicts, encompassing concerns pertaining to destination consequences and the environmental effects of ships. For example, the utilization of coastal areas holds significant relevance in Croatia, as seen by the amendment of the Maritime Domain and Sea Ports Act in July 2023. The recently enacted legislation incorporates several innovations, among which is the provision that grants for the commercial utilization of state-owned coastal territory will be granted for a duration not exceeding five years (Croatian Parliament, 2023).

The rigorous selection process, the technical and operational characteristics of the project, and the identification of participatory and inclusive solutions are essential for reducing the proposal's negative effects and building widespread consensus at political and social levels.

Certain cruise companies in the Caribbean and the Middle East have implemented conservation initiatives. The aforementioned initiatives have been strategically developed to harness the potential of the tourism industry while simultaneously promoting environmental sustainability and mitigating the ecological footprint on the islands. The main goal is to minimize negative impacts and protect the inherent natural beauty and attractions of these destinations. These firms hold the belief that placing a high priority on environmental consciousness contributes to the distinctive nature of the destination, a characteristic that is recognized in a favorable manner by both government entities and the population. Mission Blue, a non-profit organization founded by Dr. Sylvia Earle, a renowned oceanographer with a strong commitment to the preservation of marine ecosystems, has designated Ocean Cay, a site owned by MSC Cruises, as a "Hope Spot". The aforementioned policy has exhibited numerous

accomplishments and has received recognition from international organizations (Mission Blue, 2023).

The efficient implementation of this plan necessitates the active involvement and backing of the central government, which holds authority over the island, along with the regional and local governments, starting from the initial phase. The rationale for the idea is attributed to its broad reach and substantial significance, as well as the potential ramifications it could yield. An advisable approach involves commencing a thorough market analysis by formally expressing interest in order to locate a suitable company or group that would be inclined to acquire the concession rights for an island. Among the seven nations that possess a common boundary with the Adriatic Sea, four are presently affiliated with the European Union (EU), and the remaining three are actively pursuing membership in the EU. Therefore, it is crucial to comply with all EU procurement and concession rules. Potentially, the development of a protracted, multi-year contract is important in order to spread out the considerable investments required for the implementation of the project. This agreement should be structured in compliance with the legislation governing infrastructure concessions. In the case that the caller expresses a preference for non-exclusive utilization, it would be smart to explore contracting the services of a real estate operator to oversee the provision and maintenance of the island or resort, thereby catering to the demands of different firms. One such scenario is the Calypso Cove Bahamas, a multimillion-dollar venture handled through a joint collaboration of private operators (Kalosh, 2023).

When studying the average yearly temperatures of Corfu and the Bahamas, it was found that they exhibit similarities between the months of May and October. However, during the winter season, the Bahamas sees temperatures that are generally 14 °C higher than those in Corfu, with average temperatures of 26 °C and 12 °C, respectively. Consequently, the presence of a beach alone cannot serve as the main or primary criteria distinguishing an island in the Adriatic region. Instead, it must be coupled with an enterprise that prioritizes substantial environmental considerations or, alternatively, puts less attention on cultural characteristics. This can theoretically provide passengers with the four fundamental elements of a cruise experience, namely sand, sun, sea, and smorgasbord, in addition to the fifth factor, which applies to the general surroundings (i.e., the fifth S's). In order to ensure inclusivity, it is vital that the island be made accessible for those with disabilities. Furthermore, it is recommended that particular attractions be customized to fit their specific demands.

The entire appeal of the Adriatic region might be boosted for enterprises, thereby enhancing its allure to prospective cruisers. The potential impact of establishing a route connecting various destinations and incorporating a visit to the island, while also considering the presence of culturally significant ports in the Adriatic region, has the potential to influence both the expansion of maritime activities in the Adriatic and, more significantly, the extension of the tourism season. The development of a substantial number of 3- to 4-day short cruises with the home port and private island at its center may also be a consequence, enabling more effective management of the home port terminal facilities and an overall rise in the number of people

sailing. There are various possible advantages connected with heightened traffic flows. In addition to the traditional players within the cruise value chain, there are other interrelated sectors such as airlines and hotels that will see notable effects, particularly in relation to short trips before or after the cruise. Moreover, the introduction of intra-Adriatic routes would offer a dual benefit, comprising both the cost savings in fuel for companies and the avoidance of the environmental impacts connected with each individual trip. If a leading company or group in the Adriatic region, such as MSC, CCL, or RCG, were to extend the duration of the cruise season, deploy larger vessels, and offer shorter cruise itineraries, there is a possibility of achieving a moderate-term growth of around 15-20% (equivalent to 150,000-200,000 individuals) in the overall number of passengers participating in cruise travel within the Adriatic region. Additionally, it is important to highlight that the islands and destinations in the Adriatic region may be simply reached by itineraries that originate from many Mediterranean home ports, including Malta and Piraeus.

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Archaeotourism and the Local Community: a Case Study of Porolissum

Ioana Irina Gudea¹

ABSTRACT

Along with the continuous development of tourism, archaeological tourism is gaining more and more scope all over the world. An influence of this development is also felt on the territory of our country, many tourists being interested in this type of tourism. Archaeological discoveries in Romania have been researched since the beginning of the previous century but put to use only in the last 30 years. Being a niche sector, the results related to the tourist activity are deficient. The present study briefly reports on one hand, the tourism activity within the Porolissum archaeological site in Sălaj county and on the other hand it highlights the interest of the local community in the development of tourism in their commune. The methodology of the work consisted in the analysis of the tourist indicators of demand and supply and the application of a sociological survey based on questionnaire. In the survey, a series of statements were analyzed that revealed the level of interest of the inhabitants of the village. The results were subjected to an analysis using statistical frequency formulas. Through the current research, I wanted to highlight the influence that the local community can have and will benefit in order to develop tourism activity within the Porolissum archaeological site in Sălaj county. Most of the residents are aware that developing archeologic tourism in their village will bring economical, social and environmental growth, more than 50% of them are not satisfied with the actual situation of tourism being eager to be involved in tourism activities.

Keywords: archaeotourism, local community, attitude towards tourism, Porolissum site, Sălaj county

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a sector of particular importance and being defined by The World Tourism Organization as a 'form of educational and recreational, cultural manifestations of modern societies'. Considered as a socio-economic phenomenon, creating important benefits, and despite the fact that the term 'tourism belongs to the linguistic circuit for almost two centuries, a distinct

¹ Babeş Bolyai University, Faculty of Geography, Doctoral School of Geography, Grigore Alexandrescu Street, no 19, Cluj Napoca, Romania, +40747992219, ioana.gudea@yahoo.com



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definition unanimously accepted does not exist. Also, it has been defined in varied versions by different authors: 'the art of travelling for one's own pleasure', 'the leisure activity that consists of a will or living far of the place of residence for fun, rest, enrichment of experience and culture'; 'the set of relationships and phenomena resulting from the movement and stay of people outside their home (Costețchi-Jușca, 2017).

Cultural tourism can contribute to the full formation of the person, increasing the educational level, preserving and affirming the cultural identity and respecting the cultural heritage of the people (OMT). At the basis of the affirmation and development of cultural tourism as a form of recreation and knowledge are three requirements:

1. Protection and preservation of all cultural heritage, both natural and anthropological
2. Preparation and provision of high-quality tourist services
3. Respecting the way of life of local people

In Romania as in many countries in the world, archaeological sites and heritages are considered to be tourism attractions. This association with tourism was possibly made because of the feelings that a tourist may experience, such as travelling back to the past and discovering habits and objects that existed centuries ago. By uncovering evidence of past societies, archaeologists provide valued resources that modern people use in defining their identities through the exploration of their heritage. By providing the material remains of cultural heritage, archaeologists also provide the materials for an expanding heritage tourism industry (Pacífico, Vogel; 2012).

Nationally speaking, archaeological tourism has been constantly growing in the last decades and has attracted both national and international tourists. Being situated in the Ancient Roman Empire, the actual territory of Romania has rich archaeological potential which is not maximized.

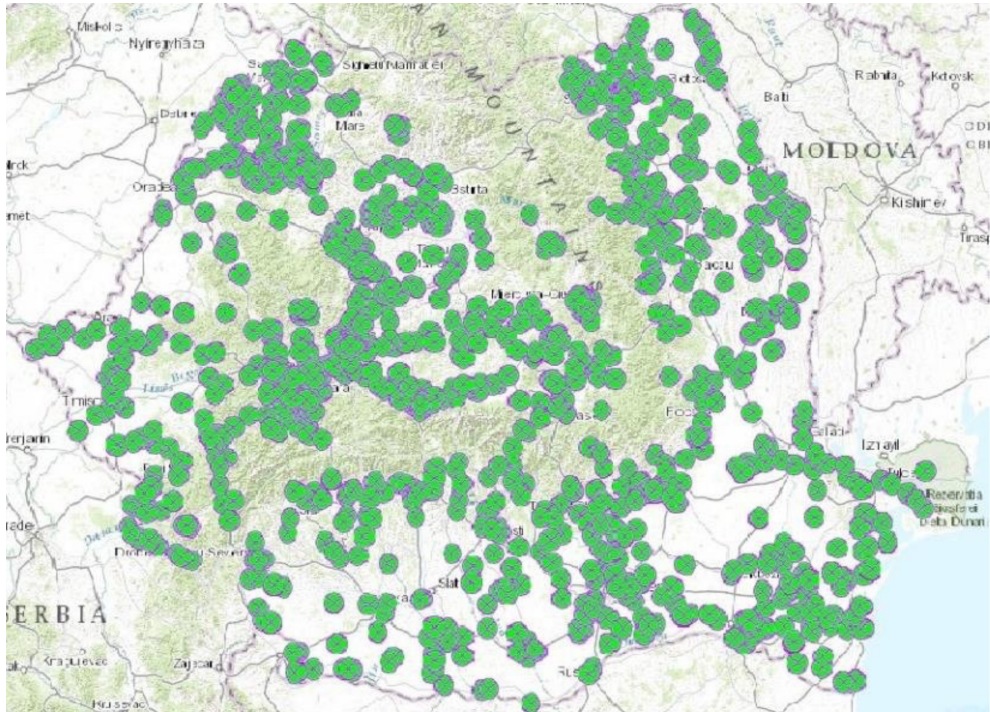


Fig. Archaeological sites recorded in Romania (source: Ganciu,2016)

Even if there is such a large presence of archaeological sites and discoveries on Romanian territory many of them are not exploited yet and some of them that are exploited can have better improvements.

One of the most important benefits that archaeological tourism brings to Romania and many more countries is the economic development. An organization called Trade Wings, offers the information that tourism produces 10% of the world's gross national product. It says also, that the most significant feature of the tourism industry is the capacity to generate large scale employment opportunities even in backward areas for both educated and uneducated people (Comer, Willems; 2011). It can definitely be a source of income for students, adults, parents and many other people by providing part time and full-time jobs.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Archaeotourism is a relatively new concept but paradoxically it is one of the oldest form of touristic niches because one visited historical places centuries ago not knowing that this type of tourism existed at that time. Besides the economic, social, and environmental benefits,

archaeological tourism can generate funds for the ongoing works or funds for their restoration. This type of tourism generates a special interest for tourists who visit historical places, restored or abandoned archaeological complexes and helps a lot to raise awareness of history and the discovery of long-lost cultures.

Archaeological tourism is not a new phenomenon but it started to be exploited to its real potential at the end of the 20th century. Starting with the first decade of the 21th century it developed much more intensively worldwide (Pătrascu et al, 2011). Over the centuries, archaeologists, artists, explorers, poets, scholars and tourists have been attracted by history, ruins and archaeological sites such as pyramids in Egypt or ancient cities in Greece (Verkerk, 2017). There are many definitions of archaeotourism such as 'a form of tourism that focuses on archaeological resources (Bowers, 2014) or definitions of many researchers who put archaeological tourism under cultural heritage where historical tourism is automatically included (Pinter, 2005).

Archaeological sites and historical places are resources that cannot be renewed, they are the image of a fragile past making them unique and irreplaceable places (Srivastava, 2015). Uncontrolled tourism and poor management can lead to the destruction of the elements of uniqueness, making them a very vulnerable space. Archaeological tourism plays a very important role in preserving the identity of the place and the local community, it helps to educate the population about the past and created a space for a continuous development of tourist communities and not only.

In addition to the benefits that tourism itself brings to the local communities, archaeotourism it also has a set of benefits among which can be found:

1. It creates a relevant image of a less known type of tourism and less exploited area. This notoriety will attract tourists which has many effects on the local community
2. Both national and international funds and investments can be attracted for the best conservation and management of the site
3. From a social point of view it increases the culture of the local community and from an economic point of view it increases the touristic offer for accommodation units, food units or souvenir shops which will generate income

THE REGION

The main focus of this study is the Porolissum site in Moigrad village, Mirșid commune. Mirșid commune is located in the central area of Sălaj county and is composed by the villages of Firminiș, Mirșid, Moigrad and Popeni. The predominant form of relief is represented by hills with maximum altitudes of 520 m. The territory of the commune is crossed from west to east by the Mirșid stream with the following watercourses: Valea Sărată for a distance of 14 km, Ortelec for a distance of 4 km and Valea Fânețel with a distance of 2 km (Gudea, 2010).

The traces that attest the existence of a former city in Antiquity are represented by the ruins of the Roman fort discovered in the village of Moigrad. The Roman fort of Porolissum was a roman town established as a military camp during the Dacian-Roman wars. Known since the 19th century, the ancient vestiges have been explored repeatedly but quite briefly. Most of all, the fort on the Pomiet peak and the roman settlement aroused the interest of archaeologists. Since 1977 new systematic excavations have been carried out every year. They primarily targeted the Pomiet fort and the Amphitheatre and in the last 20 years the researches were undertaken in the civilian settlement. The archaeological material is very rich with 2 cemeteries, one amphitheater and one big settlement discovered (Ardevan, 1998).

The current study is on a smaller scale which can be the starting point of something bigger. In this research it is intended to make a review of the actual tourism within the village where the archaeological site is found and the analysis of the challenges that are brought along with a possible development of the existing archaeotourism. A set of data about archaeological tourism in this complex does not exist precisely because its notoriety at the national level is very low.

One goal was to analyze the dynamics of the local community when it comes to the development of archaeological tourism in their village. A unique element within this archaeological site is the strategic positioning of the former ancient settlement, its interweaving with natural elements, with the relief specific to the hill area of Sălaj and the location in relation to the area's hydrography. Several reference studies were taken into account in the making of this work, studies in which questionnaires were applied to the local community where there are archeological sites and highlighting the need for their involvement in the development of tourism (Odrum et al, 2020).

METHODOLOGY

The importance of this theme crystallized when I arrived at the conclusion that inside the archeological complex there are several authentic elements of Antiquity which could not be estimated at their true value due to the lack of promotion of cultural tourism. There exist real possibilities to intensify tourist activities; the larger number of tourists could favor the economic growth of both the archeological complex and the village itself.

The accomplishment of this objective required some preliminary proceedings:

1. Analysis of the natural and anthropogenic tourism and their evaluation, especially the anthropogenic ones with numerous archaeological discoveries.
2. Evaluation of tourist infrastructure and tourist circulation
3. Carrying out a research study on the attitude of local residents regarding the development of tourism in the village of Moigrad

In order to write this paper it was necessary to identify all the elements that could turn to good account the existing tourist potential. I had to search for information concerning the studied area by consulting monographs or various documents preserved at the state institutions among Institute of Statistics as well as field visits to the Porolissum archaeological site. To determine the touristic influence upon the archaeological complex were analyzed economic indicators characterizing tourism activity.

To discover the perception of the inhabitants of the village of Moigrad regarding the possibilities of tourism development, a sociological survey was applied to the research area. The sociological survey aimed to find out the resident's opinions about current tourism, whether they are open to development and whether they are willing to get involved. The research instrument is structured on 11 closed questions with dichotomous, multiple choice or scaled choice answers and open-ended questions. The scale used was the Likert scale measured from 1-5 where 1 represents total disagreement and 5 represents total agreement. And in order to evaluate the opinions of the locals, a series of statements were addressed. These statements were grouped according to the criteria the influence the development of tourism in the village (statements related to economic, social, environmental and infrastructure side). The sample on which the sociological survey was applied amounted to 80 respondents most of whom lived in the village before the year 2000. Everything was applied online between 2021-2022 individually through social groups.

The methods of data analysis were frequency analysis, analysis of central tendency indicators, analysis of distribution scatter and analysis of chronological series. Frequency analysis is the most used and the simplest method of data analysis which allows the grouping of variants that are repeated indicating the number of occurrences or the percentage related to each variant of the analyzed variable (Dumitraş, 2018). The absolute frequency is the number of occurrences of a value in a data series. The sum of all absolute frequencies calculated within data series is equal to the sample volume.

$$\sum_{j=1}^n n_j = n$$

n_j - absolute frequencies of the variants, n - sample volume

The mean value is the simple arithmetic mean value which is determined by dividing the sum of all values in the database by the total number of observations.

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum x_j}{n}$$

x_j - absolute frequencies of the variants, n - sample volume

The standard deviation, also known as Ecart is determined as the square root of the dispersion, regardless of how the data are organized (Dumitraş, 2018).

$$\sigma = \sqrt{\sigma^2}$$

The analysis of the chronological series was carried out with the help of the rhythm indicator. Rate is a relative indicator that measures the change between two states of the indicator, showing by what percentage the indicator changes between 2 states. It can be determined with the help of absolute differences or with the help of the levels of the studied indicator (Dumitraş, 2018).

$$R_y^{k/(k-1)} = \frac{\Delta_y^{k/(k-1)}}{y^{(k-1)}} * 100$$

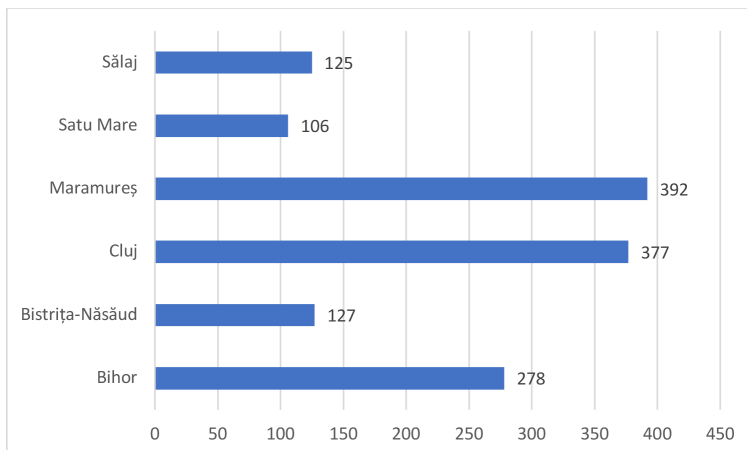
Y(k)- the level of indicator registered in the researched year, y(k-1)- the level of the indicator registered in the previous year

RESULTS

Sălaj county is located in the administrative surface of the North-West macroregion of Romania. The regio has its limits on the border with Hungary and Ukraine and the main transport axis is along the Someş river. The economy of the region is diversified being specific and regionally specialized, Sălaj being characterized by agriculture and industry, less by services. According to the statistical yearbook in 2013, Sălaj county has an surface of 3.864,38 quare kilometers with 4 cities of which 1 is a municipality and 57 communes.

In order to understand the tourist demand within the Mirşid commune, indicators such as the number of arrivals and the number of overnight stays for the period of 2014-2021 were analyzed with data provided by the National Institute of Statistics Romania.

Fig.1 Number of Tourist Units in North-West Region



In 2021, at the region level Maramureş county registered the highest number of tourist units followed by Cluj and Bihor. The activity structure of the enterprises active in the region indicated their preponderance in the service sector (72%), a characteristic recorded by all counties in the region while Cluj and Bihor stood out by increasing the share of the tertiary sector.

Table 2: Accommodation Capacities on Regional, County and Communal Level

| Accommodation capacity | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| North-West Region | 9.014.530 | 9.855.757 | 10.353.049 | 11.440.975 | 11.879.876 | 11.766.476 | 8.350.780 | 11.135.200 |
| County | 530.974 | 581.597 | 660.906 | 651.258 | 634.066 | 563.644 | 403.412 | 474.508 |
| Village | 4.384 | 5.840 | 5.856 | 5.664 | 5.840 | 5.840 | 4.160 | 5.840 |

Data processed after INSE (2014-2021)

The North West region has a large number of places to stay, in a slight increase from one year to the next due to the interest of entrepreneurs to start businesses in the field of tourism. At county level, there is still an increase in the accommodation capacity in operation until 2018. With the beginning of 2019, funds were accessed for the reconditioning/ renovation of boarding houses and the capacity decreased due to the non-operation of the accommodation units for the entire duration of the year.

The guesthouse in Moigrad is the only guesthouse with constant functionality (for the analyzed period) in the commune that was established with an installed capacity of 12 places. In the following years, the guesthouse expanded, increasing the accommodation capacity. The accommodation base is poorly developed and deficient, there are no hotels in both the upper and lower categories. Due to this deficit, accommodation requirements are not obvious, they are at a low level.

Table 3 - Number of tourist arrivals in tourism reception units

| Arrivals | | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|-------------------|------------------------------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|-----------|
| North-West Region | Number | 972.856 | 1.140.667 | 1.316.363 | 1.581.744 | 1.721.729 | 1.766.289 | 791.158 | 1.264.591 |
| | Percentual increase/decrease | - | 18% | 15% | 20% | 9% | 3% | -55% | 60% |
| County | Number | 34.125 | 33.367 | 32.260 | 37.377 | 40.738 | 46.488 | 17.766 | 28.740 |
| | Percentual increase/decrease | - | -2% | -3% | 16% | 9% | 15% | -62% | 61% |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---------|------------------------------|----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|------|-------|
| Village | Number | 98 | 384 | 574 | 643 | 469 | 533 | 51 | 0 |
| | Percentual increase/decrease | - | 74% | 49% | 12% | -27% | 13% | -90% | -100% |

Data processed using INSE (2014-2021)

According to table 3 where the arrivals of tourists are highlighted, at the macro-region level the-number of tourists who chose accommodation in a tourist reception unit experienced a substantial evolution starting from 2014 to 2017; their number has almost doubled. Making a comparison between the county of Sălaj and the NV Macroregion of Romania, one can notice that the village Mirșid registered a significant decline of tourist arrivals starting with the year 2018; of cca 27% decline as compared to 2017. A significant contribution to this situation being due to the corona virus which led to the decline of tourist arrivals both on county level as well as regional level.

Table 4: Number of Tourist Overnight Stays in Tourism Reception Units

| Overnights | | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|-------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Norht-West Region | Number | 2.287.467 | 2.713.820 | 3.088.566 | 3.337.541 | 3.634.733 | 3.791.900 | 1.656.992 | 2.620.848 |
| | Percentual increase/decrease | - | 17% | 13% | 20% | 9% | 4% | -56% | 58% |
| County | Number | 78.485 | 87.536 | 85.772 | 93.543 | 90.647 | 102.208 | 39.301 | 59.872 |
| | Percentual increase/decrease | - | 12% | -2% | 9% | -3% | 13% | -61% | 52% |
| Village | Number | 98 | 384 | 574 | 643 | 469 | 533 | 51 | 0 |
| | Percentual increase/decrease | - | 74% | 49% | 12% | -27% | 13% | -90% | -100% |

Data processed after INSE (2014-2021)

The evolution of the number of overnight stays is presented in Table 4 and at the commune level it is similar to the evolution of arrivals in the period of 2014 to 2018. In 2014, the lowest number of overnight stays was recorded and in 2017 the highest values were recorded. In 2018, the number of overnight stays falls by approx. 21% compared to the previous year. Those who participated in the sociological survey were asked to express their opinion regarding the statements related to the development of tourism. Of all respondents, 60% stated that they are not satisfied with the state of tourism in locality.

Table 5: Respondents Attitude Concerning the Economic Development

| Affirmation | Medium Value | Standard deviation | Minimum Value | Maximum Value |
|---|--------------|--------------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1. The development of tourism would improve the local economy | 4.47 | 0.8 | 0 | 5 |
| 2. The number of jobs would increase a consequence of tourism development | 4.02 | 1.2 | 1 | 5 |
| 3. The family income will increase after the tourism development | 4.09 | 1.2 | 1 | 5 |
| 4. The increase of tourism would favour the rise of property values in the area | 4.04 | 1.2 | 2 | 5 |

According to Table 5, the respondents believe that the most important aspect of tourism development is the improvement of the local economy, the increase of family income and the existence of more jobs.

Table 6: Respondents Attitude Concerning the Social Aspects Of The Development

| Affirmation | Medium Value | Standard deviation | Minimum Value | Maximum Value |
|--|--------------|--------------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1. Tourism helps to increase a friendly atmosphere in the community | 4.47 | 0.6 | 3 | 5 |
| 2. It will improve the knowledge of the cultural and historical heritage | 4.02 | 0.96 | 2 | 5 |
| 3. Tourism will favour the loss of the local identity | 2.64 | 1.3 | 1 | 5 |
| 4. Tourism would bring negative aspects upon local community (agglomeration, noise, pollution) | 2.9 | 1.3 | 1 | 5 |

They agreed that tourism helps to create a friendly atmosphere in the locality and that tourism improves knowledge on the village' heritage. A small number of respondents disagreed with the negative statements: tourism would favor the loss of local identity and that it brings negative impacts to the community. By analyzing this set of statements, it can be confirmed that the respondents agree with the development of tourism in their village of residence.

Table 7: Respondents Attitude Concerning the Effects Upon the Environment

| Affirmation | Medium Value | Standard deviation | Minimum Value | Maximum Value |
|--|--------------|--------------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1. The tourism will affect/destroy the surrounding flora and fauna | 2,2 | 1,1 | 1 | 4 |

In the case of this statement, the opinions of the respondents were divided into those who agreed that the development of tourism destroys the fauna and the flora in the surroundings and those who did not agree with this statement.

Table 8: Residents Opinion about Infrastructure

| Affirmation | Medium Value | Standard deviation | Minimum Value | Maximum Value |
|--|--------------|--------------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1. Tourism development will improve the local public facilities | 3.7 | 1.02 | 1 | 5 |
| 2. It will increase the attractiveness of the village | 3.9 | 1.03 | 1 | 5 |
| 3. The tourism will contribute to the protection and conservation of the village | 3.8 | 0.9 | 2 | 5 |
| 4. It will improve the local infrastructure | 4.2 | 0.7 | 2 | 5 |

According to the Table no.8 the most important aspect from this point of view is the fact that tourism could improve the infrastructure of the village. Few agreed that the development could improve local public facilities and that the village would become more attractive.

Table 9: Residents Opinion on Advantages and Disadvantages Of Tourism

| Affirmation | Medium Value | Standard deviation | Minimum Value | Maximum Value |
|--|--------------|--------------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1. Development of tourism will bring benefits | 4.2 | 0.8 | 1 | 5 |
| 2. Tourism development will bring disadvantages | 3.7 | 1.2 | 1 | 5 |
| 3. The local administration should promote the area more | 4.4 | 0.8 | 2 | 5 |

From the table above, it is clear that the local people are of the opinion that there are benefits for the village through the development of tourism and that the local administration should promote the area more. The following sets of questions were asked in order to find out if the local people are involved in tourism related actions or if they are willing to participate in the development and establishment of tourism by offering goods and services. Respondents were asked if they are satisfied with the current development of tourism in the village and the answers were balanced: 40% satisfied while 60% answered negatively.

From the investigated sample, 5% of the respondents are involved in activities related to tourism by selling their own food products, promoting the area through photos posted on various social media sources or selling handcraft products. The locals were also asked if their household would be willing to offer goods and services to tourists to create the phenomenon of authenticity and belonging to village life. All answered this question from which they could choose one or more options. Of the total respondents 50% were women and 50% men. The average age was 38 with a minimum of 18 and maximum of 64. Most of them finished only the high school or vocational school.

CONCLUSION

The present study was dedicated to the existing archaeological tourism within the Porolissum complex. It followed the analysis of the perception of the locals regarding the development of tourism and their degree of satisfaction and involvement in this process. Relevant results were obtained by analyzing a series of factors such as the analysis of tourist demand and supply in the village and by applying a sociological survey on the local community.

The main criteria that were chosen in the study of the impact upon the local community referred to the economic, social and environmental aspects. Although the notoriety of the archaeological site is by no means at the maximum level, the residents would like a possible development of tourism in their village, a fact that emerged from the large number of respondents who are not satisfied with the current level of tourism development. This fact indicates that from an economic point of view, archaeological tourism does not bring visible and essential benefits to the local community. Also, economically, the lack of tourist infrastructure such as accommodation units is noticeable, which if it existed and functioning at maximum capacity would bring greater benefits.

However, the village falls into a typology specific to the hill area of Sălaj county, it has a special individuality due to the history of the area and the presence of Porolissum archeological site and based on this unique presence on the territory there is potential for archeological tourism. The residents of the village are of the opinion that from a social point of view they could contribute to the development of tourism and the improvement of services, creating an authentic atmosphere, being willing to offer goods and services from their own households. The low touristic traffic in the village in term of tourist arrivals and overnight stays does not

fully reflect the current state of tourism. At the present time, tourism in the archeological site is considered to be transit or recreational. Few people tend to visit the complex regarding the archeological aspects.

This particular case of a small village in the North-West region of Romania could be one of the many examples that this form of tourism can develop and expand. The local communities that belong to the cities and villages where archaeological discoveries were found tend to have another approach and be more emphatic and have a sense of belonging there, making the experience more approachable for the tourist. Tourism in the archaeological sites is a form of tourism that has been rapidly growing in the last decade and has attracted many challenges in its development.

The academic world and people interested in tourism, archaeology and heritage should consider this type of tourism a starting point in economic, social and environmental development through investments and research, intense promotion and local involvement. All the aspects that were mentioned above are intended to provide an understanding of how archaeotourism is seen on a small scale and how it could be reflected on a large scale, nationally speaking. Nevertheless, in order to develop this type of tourism on national scale in Romania it is necessary to involve the local community, the authorities, the archaeologists and researchers, people who see the real potential and become investors and a good strategic plan in terms of marketing. By connecting all of these mutually beneficial outcomes can be achieved.

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