Conference Proceedings

The 20th Annual Graduate Education and Graduate Student Research Conference in Hospitality and Tourism

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College of Hospitality and Technology Leadership

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA SARASOTA-MANATEE

Editor

Wan Yang, Ph.D.

Preface

These proceedings contain the abstracts of presentations at the 20th Annual Graduate Education and Graduate Student Research Conference in Hospitality and Tourism being held in Tampa, Florida, January 8-10, 2015. It is my great pleasure to share with you that this year we received a record number of 380 submissions. Out of the 380 submissions, 145 were accepted as stand-up presentations and 186 were accepted as poster presentations.

All submissions were managed by ten track chairs coming from ten different institutions. Coordinated by these track chairs, 297 reviewers contributed to the rigorous paper review process. Each paper was reviewed by at least two reviewers. Detailed comments were provided to the authors to further refine their studies. These proceedings are the final results of the quality work contributed by the authors, the reviewers, and the track chairs.

This year we are gathered to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Annual Graduate Education and Graduate Students Research Conference. At this historic moment, I would like to thank Dr. Kaye Chon for having the insight to initiate this meaningful conference 20 years ago. Without his great vision and tremendous efforts, we would not have such a valuable platform for future talents in academia to share their cutting-edge research, develop new research ideas, and network with fellow students and faculty members.

I would also like to thank all of the authors, reviewers, and track chairs for making this massive project possible. Recruiting reviewers and getting all reviews completed on time on top of the regular teaching and research loads can be demanding and difficult. But all of the ten track chairs were extremely supportive and the review process was completed smoothly. Special thanks to all 297 reviewers for spending their precious time providing valuable comments to the authors. The paper review process could not have been completed without the dedication and the fields of expertise of all reviewers and track chairs.

Distinctive recognition and appreciation go to the Best Paper Selection Committee members: Prof. Kaye Chon, Prof. Cihan Cobanoglu, and Pro. Fevzi Okumus. They spent their valuable time evaluating all the papers nominated for the best paper awards and providing recommendations for the award recipients.

Last but certainly not least, I would like to personally thank Dean Cihan Cobanoglu for giving me this opportunity; my editorial assistant, Muhittin Cavusoglu, for working tirelessly to edit these proceedings; and all of my colleagues in the College of Hospitality and Technology Leadership at the University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee for supporting me during the entire process. I am grateful for the personal enrichment I gained through my involvement in producing a successful conference of this scale.

Congratulations once again to all of the authors whose papers were accepted at the 20th Annual Graduate Education and Graduate Student Research Conference in Hospitality and Tourism.

Enjoy the conference and best wishes!

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Paper Review Committee Chair
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DEBT MATURITY-BASED FINANCING SOURCES FOR RESTAURANT FIRMS: DEDT OR STOCK?

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Introduction

A firm's financial conditions and capital structure are one of the most important aspects of its on-going and prospective performance. Further, a firm's financial decisions are also influenced by its financial conditions and fundamental capital structure. Yet despite its importance, there are no recent studies investigating restaurant firms' industry specific capital structure and its impact on financing decisions. Therefore, the purposes of this study are: (1) to identify a restaurant industry specific capital structure and its impact on financing decisions, (2) to identify and suggest restaurant firms' empirical financing behaviors based on debt maturity (e.g., short-term, mid-term, and long-term) and firm size, (3) to suggest a rational guide for restaurant firms by pinpointing restaurant industry-wide common practical financing choices, and (4) to fill the gap in academic restaurant financing research.

Methods

This study used three models to identify restaurant firms' unique financial behaviors: multi-logit regression analysis to observe the impact of debt maturity, fixed-effect regression analysis to ascertain the influence of debt maturity and firm size, and another fixed-effect regression analysis to identify the optimal leverage point for the restaurant firm's financial choices.

Results/Discussion

The main objective of this study was to identify restaurant industry specific financial behaviors and their effects on financing decisions using a firm size based approach in terms of debt maturity and leverage levels. Therefore, this study is beneficial for both financially constrained and unconstrained restaurant firms' managers in order to understand restaurant industry-wide common practical financing behaviors.

Based on this study, we provide important empirical implications. First, restaurant firms mainly issue long-term debt to pay down existing debt, but the amount is not exactly matched with its maturity. In other words, they frequently restructure their debt when portions of the debt come due in the short-term (e.g. due in less than 2 years), but debt due after 2 years acts as a constraint. See Tables 2 and 3. Second, restaurant firms seek equity financing when a firm's size is large and its stock prices are high (see Tables 1 and 2), but as the firm size (negative relationship with external financing) grows larger less stock will be issued (Table 3). Lastly, the optimal leverage points for the issuance of debt (33%) and equity (111%) differ and are higher for issuing equity (Table 4). Further, optimal leverage points differ according to a firm's size.

References Available Upon Request

EEFFECT OF HOME CLIMATE ON TOURISM DEMANG AT CITY-LEVEL DESTINATIONS

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Introduction
According to the model of "push and pull factors causing seasonality in the tourist destination" developed by Koenig-Lewis and Bischoff (2005), the climate in the tourism destination serves as a pull factor which attracts tourists to the destination, whereas tourism-generating region's climate should be considered as the push (or constraint) factor. However, few studies focused on the effect of home climate on tourism demand in previous literature, especially at the city level. This study attempts to supplement the literature by investigating the empirical links between climate of the origin market and tourism demand, based on a case of Hong Kong's tourism demand for Mainland China. The contributions of this research are two-folds. First, this study provides a more comprehensive statistical analysis of home climate's effect on seasonal tourism demand, which will enrich the literature on the relationship between tourism demand and climate. Second, as for the method, this study focuses on the city-level units to analyze tourism demand, which reveals the seasonal tourism demand more accurately and advances the existing literature which largely ignores the remarkable variations that may exist within a country (Eugenio-Martin & Campos-Soria, 2010).

Methods
This study augments the standard tourism demand model with six climatic factors in the origin market of Hong Kong as influencing factors, including maximum temperature, minimum temperature, average temperature, average humidity, average precipitation, and average hours of sunshine. Due to the large territory of Mainland China and a wide range of latitude from the north to the south, the study addresses this issue by focusing on 19 major cities in Mainland China. They are selected as they are major tourist cities that cover all the geographical regions in Mainland China and contain sufficient city/tourism data. Moreover, this study uses quarterly data from 2006:Q01 to 2011:Q04, and dynamic panel-data technique and first-difference generalized method of moments estimation method are applied.

Results/Discussion
The results indicate that the variability of the home climate has been a significant determinant of seasonal tourism demand. Among the six climatic factors incorporated in the study, the maximum daily temperature and average relative humidity in the origin positively affected Hong Kong outbound tourism to Mainland China, while the home minimum temperature and home average precipitation negatively impacted Hong Kong tourists' demand for Mainland China. Moreover, the maximum daily temperature has the most prominent effect on tourism demand. On this basis, tourism planners should focus not only on destination climate as a "pull factor," but also on the climate variability of origin markets. The findings of this study will also provide valuable insights to policy-makers and marketing professionals in the private and public sectors in terms of the appropriate timing of tourism promotion, as well as specific marketing messages tailored to target markets' needs.

References Available Upon Request

DO STOCK MARKET INVESTORS APPRECIATE SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENTS? AN EXAMINATION OF LEED CERTIFIED HOTEL OPENINGS

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Introduction

Traditional hotel buildings can be a major source of environment pollution and degradation due to their daily operations that require massive use of electric, water and sewage facilities. U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) initiates the so-called "LEED" certification program (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) that assigns sustainability scores to a structure based on its "greenness" covering all phases of a building's evolution from its design construction, all the way to its maintenance. 141 hotels achieved LEED certification (USGBC, 2013) expecting to receive positive publicity on environmental performance, enhance their reputation, and reach environmentally conscious customers (Sirakaya-Turk, Baloglu, & Mercado, 2014). While the relation between environmental performance and economic performance has been studied from a variety of perspectives (see e.g., Yamaguchi, 2008), the relationship between LEED certified hotel openings and market's reaction to such news have not been analyzed. Our study on stock market reactions to LEED certified hotel openings would have practical and theoretical contributions. First, it will shed some light on the investors' expectation on a hotel firms' efforts to undertake sustainable investments LEED certified buildings. Second, it will enhance the micro economic discussion of the role of pollution abatements in sustainable investments. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine the stock price reactions to LEED certified hotel openings using event study methodology.

Methods

In this study, we employed standard event study methodology following Fama, Fisher, Jensen and Roll (1969), which is widely used to analyze the effects of events on stock performance, to analyze stock market reactions to LEED certified hotel openings for the period 2009-2013. First, we obtained the data from Factiva and CRSP. Second, we followed the steps in the event study methodology to measure the abnormal returns. Last, we test whether the abnormal returns are significantly different from zero using t-Statistics and Boehmer, Masumeci, and Poulsen (1991) test.

Results/Discussion

According to the results, abnormal returns are significantly different from zero in most of the event windows. Specifically, among 15 events, only six events had insignificant abnormal returns. Also, further examination of 5, 11, and 21-day windows revealed significant negative abnormal returns. In conclusion, the study findings revealed that stock market investors do not seem to value sustainable investments. The study supports the alternative hypothesis that LEED certified hotel openings have significant impact on stock prices, and the impact is found to be negative. The results support the traditional microeconomic theory suggestions on pollution abatement that increased environmental performance decreases economic performance due to high investment cost (at least in the short-term). Accordingly, hotel stock investors in the U.S. do not seem to want hotel firms to focus on long-term projects at the expense of the short-term economic gains.

References Available Upon Request

AN EVALUATION OF THE STICKY COSTS HYPOTHESIS: EVIDENCE FROM THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

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Introduction

This research examines “sticky” cost behaviour and explores whether this phenomenon applies to the hospitality industry.

Methods

The study replicates the Anderson, Banker, and Janakiraman (2003) study on sticky costs using data from 106 hotels in a major US metropolitan area over the period 2007-2011 and a second set of data from a nationwide chain of 325 economy lodging hotels over the period 2003-2011.

Results/Discussion

On average, for the metropolitan hotel data, selling, general, and administrative (“SG&A”) costs increased 0.21% per 1% increase in total revenue, but decreased 0.34% per 1% decrease in revenue. For the nationwide economy hotel chain, total costs increased 0.27% per 1% increase in total revenue, but decreased 0.31% per 1% decrease in revenue. This “anti-sticky” cost behavior contradicts the ABJ results and suggests that industry-specific cost behaviors may apply in the hospitality industry. Possible explanations may also include industry-specific managerial scope, the effects of automation technology, and the overarching macroeconomic environment for the observation periods. Further studies with additional data could improve cost analysis and earnings predictions for the hospitality industry.

References Available Upon Request

DOES MANAGERIAL OWNERSHIP EXPALIN FRANCHISING IN RESTAURANT COMPANIES?

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Introduction

Ownership structure is considered as one of the most important corporate governance designs that influence a firm's strategic choices (Hill & Snell, 1988). Although a number of researchers have studied ownership structure, interestingly it has not been frequently investigated in hospitality finance research (Jang & Park, 2011). The purpose of this study is, therefore, to fill the gap by examining the influence of ownership structure on how restaurant companies make their strategic choice – franchising.

According to agency theory, the separation of ownership could not maximize the welfare of the principals (Jensen & Meckling, 1976). In order to mitigate the agency conflicts, allocating a certain percentage of shares to managers has been suggested (Fama, 1980). Equity ownership offered to managers encourages them to alter their risk orientation to align with the interests of principals. Considering that a firm's risk preference is related to its strategic choices, it is suggested that equity ownership influences a firm's choice of strategic initiatives (Sanders & Carpenter, 1998).

Franchising is commonly used as a risk-spreading strategy because of the stable income from franchising fees and on-going royalties. In addition, capital investment is required to franchisees, reducing franchisors' risks (Roh, 2002). Since consumers' discretionary spending on restaurant products/services makes the industry sensitive to economic fluctuations and market influences (Singal, 2012), franchising has been widely used in the volatile environment.

Based on the discussion above, we examine how managerial ownership influences restaurant companies' franchising decision which, in turn, influences firm performance.

Methods

Panel data of U.S. publicly traded restaurant companies (SIC 5812) is employed to test the following research model. As suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986), we use a four-step approach in which several regression analyses are conducted and significance of the coefficients is examined at each step.

Firm Performance = β_0 + β_1 Managerial Ownership + β_2 Franchise Proportion + β_3 Size + β_4 Leverage + ε

Results/Discussion

The key objective of this study is to explore the role that franchising plays on business performance while focusing on the ownership structure of restaurant companies. We find evidence that managerial ownership discourages a firm's franchising, which, in part, positively influences its business performance. In other words, it is suggested that franchising plays a mediating role in the relationship between managerial ownership and firm performance in restaurant companies.

References Available Upon Request

INVESTIGATING LOAN APPLICATION, APPROVAL AND COST DETERMINANTS IN SMALL HOSPITALITY FIRMS

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Introduction

Access to credit is very important for the survival of many small firms. Quinn et al. (1992) argues that the single greatest problem small firms in hospitality are financial due to their access to capital. Without access to capital, small firms cannot develop new products or services, and might have problem with growth or even fail due to insufficient liquidity (Coleman, 2000). Due to their financial structure and access to financial markets, most small businesses rely on loans from financial institutions, such as banks (Ang, 1992; Cole, 2009). This paper investigated loan related determinants for small hospitality firms compared to other industries using most recent SSBF (Survey of Small Business Finances) data.

Methods

The 2003 SSBF data is publicly available and includes financial information of 4,240 firms with 500 or fewer employees. SSBF data includes information regarding general characteristics, financial services, financial institutions used, the most recent loan application, financial statements, and credit history of both the firm and its owner(s). There were multiple dependent variables used; using negative binomial regression and loan application(s) the study investigated the factors that affect the number of loans firms applied, approval of loan analysis used logistic regression to investigate determinants of loan approval. Moreover, regression analysis used to determine factors that affect the cost of loan for hospitality and tourism (HT) firms while comparing them to other industries.

Results/Discussion

Overall, HT firms have higher number of employees, slightly more female owners and less sales, assets and cash compare to other industries. Several interesting points have emerged from these analyses. We can argue that when firms have liquidity or HT firm owners have a high net worth, they will be less likely to apply for a loan following the Pecking Order Theory. For the loan approval process, firm age is a significant and negative indicator for HT firms. This is against the common belief that the older and more reputable the firm is the higher the loan approval should be. Instead of paying a higher interest rate, they might be paying additional points to be able to close. This requires further investigation. Additionally, it seems that being a minority put people at disadvantage for loan approval in HT firms.Another interesting outcome is that the cost of loan analysis shows that being a female in an HT firm decreases the interest rate, and this could also be an interesting subject to investigate. As expected longer the relationships with lender lower the interest rates for the HT firms.There are many unexplored areas in terms of small HT firm’s finances. The questions discussed above merely scratches the surface. While there are some studies that investigate small firms of other industries, HT firms and owners might offer differing perspectives and results.

References Available Upon Request

DEMAND UNCERTAINTY AND INVESTMENT IN THE RESTAURANT INDUSTRY

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Introduction

The study investigates how restaurant firms coordinate their tangible (capital investment) and intangible (advertising) investments in the face of demand uncertainty. Due to the irreversibility and asymmetric adjustment cost of capital investment, firms unsure of future demand can benefit from delaying investment and waiting for new information about future market conditions, implying a negative association between demand uncertainty and capital investment (Pindyck, 1991). When it comes to advertising, however, firms may more actively engage in marketing in the hope that strong brand image and solid customer bonding would help navigate the fuzzy environment (Khandwalla, 1977). It has been suggested that marketing practitioners adopt a proactive approach to manage the environment rather than hold a reactive stance. Lastly, the moderating role of franchising in the relation between demand uncertainty and investment is examined. Franchisors share business risk with franchisees as they rely on franchisees' resources (Martin, 1988). Moreover, relatively stable cash flow obtained from franchise royalties would allow management to finance investment projects with less costly internal funds.

Methods

First, we forecasted demand uncertainty using a first-order autoregressive model.

$$D_t = \alpha_0 DV_t + \alpha_1 Trend + \rho(D_{t-1} - DV_{t-1}) + \varepsilon_t$$

where D is monthly sales revenue of food services and drinking places; DV a vector of monthly dummies; $Trend$ denotes a time trend; ρ represents the autocorrelations between periods. The residual between the actual demand and the predicted demand was adopted as a proxy measure of uncertainty. Then, we ran fixed-effect investment models.

$$CapInv_{i,t} = \alpha_1 CF_{i,t-1} + \alpha_2 Q_{i,t-1} + \alpha_3\, LEV_{i,t-1} + \alpha_4\, UNCER_t + \alpha_5\, UNCER_{t-1} + \mu_i + v_t + \varepsilon_{i,t}$$

$$Ad_{i,t} = \beta_1 CF_{i,t-1} + \beta_2 SIZE_{i,t-1} + \beta_3 UNCER_t + \beta_4 UNCER_{t-1} + \mu_i + v_t + \varepsilon_{i,t}$$

To examine the moderating role of franchising, we additionally ran interaction models, which include a franchising dummy and an interaction term of the uncertainty and franchising dummy.

Results/Discussion

Consistent with prior studies, restaurant firms postpone fixed investment when it is hard to predict the industry demand. When it comes to advertising, however, we have outcomes conflicting with theoretical predictions. Although a myriad of research has argued about the value of proactive marketing in times of uncertainty, restaurants seem to take a cautious stance as they do toward fixed investment. The moderating role of franchising was significant in the advertising model but not in the capital investment model, suggesting that franchised firms are as circumspect in hard investment as non-franchised firms but are more aggressive in soft investment. Moreover, advertising fees collected from franchisees would provide a buffer against the negative impact of uncertainty.

References Available Upon Request

INTERNATIONALIZATION AS A SYSTEMATIC-RISK DETERMINANT: THE EFFECT OF RESTAURANT TYPE

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Introduction

The restaurant industry is highly sensitive to the economic conditions or systematic risk triggered by external factors. Previous literature has examined systematic-risk determinants such as leverage, liability, profitability, efficiency, etc. (Gu & Kim, 2002). However, few studies on the systematic-risk determinants associated with internationalization in the restaurant industry have been completed. The restaurant industry has not only expanded internationally, but has also been known as a high-risk business. Furthermore, examination of systematic risk in international operations is critical for determining the cost of capital and evaluating projects. Therefore, it is of paramount importance for the restaurant operators to assess and alleviate the effects of risk on firms. The purpose of the current study is 1) to investigate internationalization as a systematic-risk determinant and 2) to examine the relationship between internationalization and systematic risk based on the type of restaurant firms (i.e., fast-food vs non fast-food), considering different characteristics of restaurant sectors.

Methods

This study analyzed 20 U.S. based publicly traded restaurant companies with international operations (160 observations) during the period of 2000-2013 to examine both the main effects of eight beta determinants and the moderating effect of TYPE by performing a pooled-OLS model. The eight determinants are DOI (degree of internationalization), SIZE (firm size), LEV (leverage), LIQ (liquidity), PRO (profitability), EF (efficiency), GW (market growth), and DIV (dividend payout ratio).

Results/Discussion

In summary, this study's findings support not only the effect of internationalization on systematic risk, but also the moderating effect of the type of restaurant firms on the relationship between internationalization and systematic risk. Results of the main effects suggest that DOI has a significant effect on systematic risk, as denoted by beta. Among other beta determinants, only LEV, EF, and GW have significant effects on beta at the significance level of 0.01. The results of the moderating effect show a significantly positive coefficient for the DOITYPE variable at the significance level of 0.01. The positive coefficient of DOITYPE indicates that as fast-food restaurants operate more abroad, systematic risk increases more than in non fast-food restaurants. The findings of the study may be attributed to price flexibility, along with health concerns. The fast food segment has faced market challenges such as fierce competition and consumers' increasing health concerns (Kalinowski, 2002; Leung, 2003). Since the non fast-food segment tends to be service driven, patrons are willing to pay a price premium (Milton, 2005). Conversely, the fast-food segment is value driven, and severe pricing competition may hamper this segment (Schoen, 2013) and possibly increase risk.

References Available Upon Request

FORECASTING THE DESTINATION SWAITCHING AND MARKET SHARE WITH A MARKOV CHAIN MODEL

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Introduction

An accurate prediction in hospitality industries is important tasks that know the rise and fall point of the enterprise. It is possible to predict the future which is to reduce the error on the basis of data and know the past and present which is the beginning of scientific management for the future. In many international and domestic journals published papers on the forecasting of tourist demand, the market share model and prediction the destination switch is not commonly studied. This study contains information that is derived from the current situation to future with Markov chain model (Markov, 1971). Also, this model is the most powerful tool that is useful for complex systems analysis and to predict the future of the same variable by the movement of the current variables. The purpose of the present study is that first, predicting the flow of tourists and the future market shares in accordance to how will changes market share in the future among 4 countries. Second, it is to look at the tourism destination for loyal customers and find the Switching patterns of 2014 and 2015. Third, this study estimates the market share of the future with respect to the selection of the four countries in 2014 and 2015. Finally, this paper will suggest the future marketing tools or plans.

Methods

This study chose 4 countries such as Thailand, Malaysia, Korea, Philippines. Data used in this study were obtained from KTO (Korea Tourism Organization), The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) (http://www.tourismthailand.org/), Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board and Philippines tourism research and statistics division. The first step of the Markov chain model is to estimate the transition probability. Two cluster tourists are followings; the loyalty tourists which identified a hard core component and switching tourist which identified a switching component. It is need to calculate the transition probabilities for the estimating probable market shares. Future market shares for the next period are calculated by multiplying the original matrix of transition probabilities by the original market shares (Choi et al., 2011). And, multiplication of the original matrix of transition probabilities by period other market shares gives the results for the other period.

Results/Discussion

This study forecasts that Korea will occupy 9% of the tourist market of the four countries in 2014. Thailand will share 61% of the tourist market, Philippines and Malaysia will share 15% of the tourist market in 2014. However, the market share pattern in 2015 will slightly change. Korea and Malaysia will decrease their market shares (Korea: 9 %-> 7%; Malaysia: 15 %-> 10%), but the Thailand will increase with a slightly portion on their market share (61 %-> 68%) and Philippines will stay their market share (15 %-> 15%) in 2015. For the marketing perspectives, Thailand tourism bureau plans lodging and convenience facilities which were ready for the lots of international tourist. However, Korea and Malaysia, Philippines should figure out the promotion strategy and creative destination program based on region typical attributions. For the future study, it is need to study the prediction of next destination for the few cities in the airline company selected by 4 or 5 countries. This model could also adapt the tourist switching pattern of the exhibition and festival at domestic region.

FORECASTING FOREIGN TOURISTS IN NORTHEAST ASIA'S ISLANDS APPLYING SEASONAL TIME SERIES MODELS: FOCUSED ON JEJU, HAINAN, OKINAWA ISLAND

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Introduction
The island tourism is becoming one of a national strategy for earning foreign exchange and stimulating the economic growth. Decision makers in China, South Korea, and Japan's tourism business sectors are investing on island tourism to attract foreign tourists. Based on these reasons studies regarding island tourism forecasting are strongly needed for analysts as well as government researchers to refer to. Therefore, this study aims to examine on forecasting of island tourism in three islands in Northeast Asia by applying two seasonal time series models, the SARIMA and Winters; determine the best suitable forecasting model for three islands and estimate the seasonal impact in the future; provide empirical evidence for decision makers in tourism sectors to refer regarding island tourism.

Methods
This study selected monthly tourist arrival data from 2004 to 2013 of each island by following standards: the administration of the island should not be separated from the home country; the main purpose of the foreign tourists' visit should be recreation; more than one million foreign tourists should have visited during 2009 to 2013. Therefore, Jeju of South Korea, Hainan of China, and Okinawa of Japan were chosen. To find seasonal fluctuations the seasonal ARIMA model is applied and to represent smoothing type models Winters model is used. The Box-Jenkins ARIMA model combines the autoregressive, differencing, and the moving average parameters. Time series data may sometimes exhibit strong periodic patterns, often referred to as the time series having a seasonal behavior. The Seasonal ARIMA is denoted as ARIMA$(p,d,q)(P,D,Q)s$ with periodicity s. One of the exponential smoothing models, Winters model is used when the data pattern shows seasonality as it consists of three smoothing equations: level, trend, and seasonality. To test for the accuracy of forecasting models mean absolute percentage error (MAPE) is used. Additionally, Paired Sample Test is used to compare the data between actual numbers and forecasted numbers.

Results/Discussion
The suggested best fitting SARIMA models for Jeju Island, Hainan, Okinawa are ARIMA$(0,0,1)(2,1,0)_{12}$, ARIMA$(0,0,1)(1,1,0)_{12}$ and ARIMA$(0,1,1)(1,1,0)_{12}$ respectively. For Winters model, the sum of squared errors were minimized when the parameters were α =0.019, β = 0.665, γ =0.999 for Jeju; α =0.045, β = 0.001, γ = 0.983 for Hainan; α =0.277, β =0.001, γ =0.930 for Okinawa. According to the MAPE, the seasonal ARIMA models have lower values of the MAPE than the Winters model for all three islands. This indicates that seasonal ARIMA model is more accurate tool than the Winters model for forecasting relevant time series. For seasonal impact, Jeju and Okinanwa's forecasted international arrivals are most high during summer months. For Hainan number of tourist's arrival estimated high in April and December. In April, Hainan has the island's biggest international festival, and in contrast to Jeju and Okinawa tourists prefer visiting Hainan in the winter season.

SPATIAL CORRELATION IN HOTEL DAILY ROOM RATES DURING SUPER BOWL XLVIII

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Introduction

This research applies spatial econometrics to identify the spatial correlation in hotel daily pricing during Super Bowl XLVIII. With the advent of revenue management pricing, hotel room rates change as dynamically as demand change (Kimes, 2002). Particularly sporting events are demand boosters that evoke hotel room rate increases. During sporting events, a hotel's location and its distance from the events are imperative factors to determine room rates. Spatial competition is considered as a driver for hotel room pricing (Lee, 2011). This research aims to specify the role of spatial correlation in hotel room rates during high demand periods.

Methods

Hotel daily room rates were collected using the Application Programing Interface (API) method to access to database of the Expedia Affiliate Network (http://developer.ean.com). Hotels' daily room rates were collected for 6 sequential days (January 29 to February 3, 2014: Super Bowl Game occurred on February 2, 2014) for New York and New Jersey hotels located within 50 miles of Met Life Stadium. A total number of 3,144 hotels observations (524 hotels) were analyzed. The distance matrix of ¼ miles distance weight was selected, because the test areas have densely located hotel businesses and have well-developed public transportation (Handbook of New Jersey communities). We hypothesized that hotel room rates are spatially dependent and influenced by their distance from the Super Bowl Stadium and nearby airports. Further, we added a regional effect of NYC hotels to include whether or not there was a brand affiliation and a time variable. The research model is presented below:

$$\text{Ln(Roomrate)} = \alpha_0 + \beta_1 H.rating + \beta_2 D_s + \beta_3 D_{C.a} + \beta_4 NY_{dummy} + \beta_5 Brand_{dummy} + T_{dummy}$$

(H_i: Hotel's hedonic characteristics (Hotel rating), D_s: Distance from the stadium; $D_{c.a}$: Distance from the closest airport (Newark or JFK), NY_d: NY city dummy, $Brand_d$: Brand affiliated or independent hotel, and T_d : Time dummy)

Results/Discussion

Moran's I statistics (0.344, $p<0.0001$) shows a spatial dependence in hotel daily room rate. Due to the heterosckedacsity in spatial autoregressive model (SAR) and spatial error model (SEM), spatial two stage least squares model (GS2SLS) was selected. The GS2SLS model shows that hotels located in NYC do not have a NYC price premium and that branded hotels do not enjoy a price premium advantages. As the hotel rating increases (e.g., 2 to 2.5), 23.1% of room rates are raised up. For every one mile distance from the stadium, hotel room rates decrease 0.4%. For every one mile distance from nearby airports, there is a room rate drop of 0.2%. Interestingly, hotel room rates increase until one day before the event and then drop during the day of the Super Bowl.

Reference Available Upon Request

RESTAURANT FIRMS' RISK REDUCTION STRATEGIES FOR FOOD CRISIS: IN A CASE WITH THE OUTBREAK OF AVIAN INFLUENZA (H5N1)

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Introduction

Pandemic disease is perceived to be a devastating factor in restaurant industry. Especially, the image of the food industry could be harmed by the food safety incidents, which significantly influences both consumer behaviors in purchase decision and, in turn, restaurant firms' performance (Verbeke, 2001). Consumers consider several primary factors to reduce the levels of their perceived risk, including brand loyalty, brand recognition, store and brand image, price premium, and quality certification (Derbaix, 1983; Mitchell, 1993, 1998). However, very sporadic research has been done to incorporate these factors into the restaurant firms' strategies to reduce consumers' concerns on food risks. It is vital to investigate restaurant firms' risk reduction strategies and their impacts on financial performance in a pandemic disease outbreak. The purpose of study was to fill the research gap.

Methods

This study collected data from Compustat and 10-Ks from the Securities and Exchange Commission. A total number of 67 publicly held restaurant firms were listed as the final sample. The AI in 2004 was first detected in state of Texas in February and spread all over the state during the first quarter of 2004. So, the study period was 2003-2004. Thus, 134 observations of the restaurant firms were retained for data analysis. This study uses DID to investigate the effect of an outbreak of AI on restaurant firm performance. This study examines firm characteristics that have a significant impact on firm performance of the AI-affected restaurants. The firm characteristics including brand recognition (BR), unit number (UNIT), store size (SIZE), and franchising ratio (FR) is examined to measure total value of firms. For this data analysis, WLS regression is employed. WLS regression estimates consistent coefficients on the variables by adjusting the heteroscedasticity.

Results/Discussion

Results of the two-way fixed effect model regarding the impacts of AI on restaurant firms' performance in the comparison between fiscal year of 2003 and 2004 clearly shows AI significantly influences restaurant firms' performance. The results of WLS regression models for AI-affected firms in 2004 indicated that brand recognition, store size, and franchising can be taken as risk reduction strategies on firm performance. It means that restaurant firms reduce risks related to the food-related disease like AI by spending more adverting expenditure to secure higher consumer brand recognition, by building larger stores with better store image to promise brand reliability and trustworthiness, and by franchising as a strategy to diversify their brand. This study makes a significant contribution by examining risk reduction strategies of consumers in the food-related disease outbreak as those of restaurant firms.

References Available Upon Request

PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS UTILIZING GO TEXAN ENDORSED PRODUCTS IN WEST TEXAS FOOD SERVICE OPERATIONS: A PILOT STUDY

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Introduction

Developed and operated by the Texas Department of Agriculture, GO TEXAN is a sustainable marketing program that encourages consumers to purchase items produced and manufactured by Texans within the state of Texas (GO TEXAN, 2014). Extant research found the use of locally produced food is a powerful differentiation tool and competitive advantage for restaurant operators (Gregoire & Strohbehn, 2002; Molina-Azorin, Claver-Cortés, López-Gamero, Tarí, 2009). Furthermore, 70% of restaurant consumers prefer establishments which engage in sustainable practices (Schubert, Kandampully, Solnet, Kralj, 2010). By approaching the food purchasing process in an eco-friendly manner, restaurant owners and managers could conceivably increase their customer base and profit margins. While state sponsored marketing programs for agricultural and sustainable products are nothing new, there is little research to date regarding the success of these efforts. This study aimed to examine the GO TEXAN program from the perspective of restaurant chefs to determine their opinions about these endorsed products.

Methods

This study utilized a convenience sample of seven chefs from West Texas restaurants whose work responsibilities include the procurement of food items for their establishments. Four semi-standardized interviews and one focus group were conducted. Each interview and focus group participant was asked the same eight questions. Upon completion of the interviews and focus group, the collected data was transcribed verbatim and subsequently analyzed. Once line-by-line coding was completed, focused coding was applied to combine topics and identify themes (Aday, 2013).

Results/Discussion

After completing the analysis four themes emerged regarding the GO TEXAN Program: 1. Lack of familiarity with GO TEXAN. When asked to define the GO TEXAN program, the majority of respondents recognized the brand but knew little about how it worked, what it was promoting or how to get involved. 2. Interest in utilizing GO TEXAN products. All but one participant indicated they were in favor of utilizing GO TEXAN products but were unsure how to procure them. 3. Lack of availability. All participants commented on the lack of available GO TEXAN labeled products in West Texas. 4. Assumption of higher quality regarding the perceived quality of GO TEXAN labeled products. Most participants were neutral about the quality of GO TEXAN products because they had not worked much with them previously.

References Available Upon Request

THE EFFECT OF CUSTOMER BRAND IDENTIFICATION ON BRAND EVAULATION AND REPURCHASE INTENTION: A SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY PERSPECTIVE

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Introduction

Brand loyalty has been investigated largely with finding loyalty antecedents, such as perceived service value (Chen & Hu, 2009), involvement (Olsen, 2007), and customer satisfaction (Ryu, Han, & Kim, 2008). Although recent marketing research has begun to apply a social identity framework to brands, hospitality context examination of this phenomenon is almost non-existent. Therefore, to address this gap in hospitality research, this study investigates the influence of customer brand identification on the development of coffee shop brand loyalty and on coffee shop brand evaluations.

Methods

All constructs were measured with multiple items developed and tested in previous studies. Each item was measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale anchored by ‘strongly disagree’ and ‘strongly agree.’ This study focused on customers of a coffee shop in Korea and a self-administered questionnaire was given to the respondents to complete. A total of 780 questionnaires were collected from the survey, after a thorough inspection, 37 questionnaires were eliminated because some key questions were left blank. Ultimately, 743 questionnaires were coded and used in the following data analyses. The collected data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences 18.0 and AMOS 20.0.

Results/Discussion

Customer brand identification had significant positive effects on service value (β=.490, t=10.887, p<.001), involvement (β=.729, t=15.401, p<.001), and satisfaction (β=.649, t=.14.433, p<.001), so H_1 H_2, and H_3 were supported. The relationships between service value and brand loyalty (H_4), involvement and brand loyalty (H_5), and satisfaction and brand loyalty (H_6) were positive and statistically significant (service value: β=.086, t=2.722, p<.001; involvement: β=.291, t=8.228, p<.001; satisfaction: β=.569, t=13.931, p<.001), thus supporting H_4, H_5, and H_6. Additionally, customer brand identification (β=.624, p<.001) had an indirect positive effect on brand loyalty through the full mediating variables (e.g. service value, involvement, and satisfaction).

This study contributes to the hospitality marketing literature. First, it tests and demonstrates that customer brand identification plays a significant indirect role in the development of brand loyalty. Second, it tests and supports customer brand identification’s power to engender positive customer evaluations of coffee shop brand as indicated in consumers’ enhanced perceptions of perceived service value, involvement, and customer satisfaction.

References Available Upon Request

FOOD AND BEVERAGE EMPLOYEE DRUG USE: A QUALITATIVE FOUNDATION

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Introduction
This study was conducted to qualitatively investigate food and beverage employee drug use behaviors, as compared to their non-food service working counterparts. It should be noted that illegal drug use is limited to the use of illicit substances; alcohol use was not reported, as it is not considered an illegal drug.

Methods
Full-time employed food and beverage workers were targeted for this study. Participants were recruited by word-of-mouth, social media postings, and distribution of flyers at food and beverage operations, resulting in the recruitment of fourteen participants ranging in age from 21-42, and consisted of 7 supervisory positions and 7 hourly positions, in both the front and back of house. Responses were collected through the use of 60-minute in-depth interviews prompted by specified open-response questions (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). A pilot test was conducted by interviewing one manager, one back-of-house employee, and one front-of-house employee currently working in the foodservice industry. Participants were asked to describe their experiences with illegal drug use both prior to and after entering the food and beverage industry. Each interview was audio-recorded then transcribed verbatim. Inductive thematic analysis was conducted, which involved three researchers independently reading, analyzing and coding the data, then coming to consensus on emergent themes. Themes were finalized once researchers reached 100 percent agreement.

Results/Discussion
Three themes emerged from the interview responses: (1) Daily Drug Use, (2) Work Impact on Drug Use, and (3) Recognition of Negative Impacts. Participants indicated daily illegal drug use, which supports previous allegations that drug use is prevalent in the foodservice industry; greater attention should be given to this phenomenon if the goal is to decrease such activity among employees. Participants indicated that their drug use increased after beginning work in the industry in order to deal with the intensity of the job, as well as the increase in drug accessibility in the food and beverage workplace. Drugs need to be made as inaccessible as possible, and a drug free workplace needs to be enforced in order to reduce work related drug usage. Participants recognized short-term negative effects as a result of their drug use, rather than considering long-term effects. It is proposed that employers play upon the fear of short-term side effects (i.e. hangovers causing poor service and less tip income), and try to make the employees more conscious of the long-term effects (i.e. more serious health problems). Future quantitative research should be conducted with a larger representative sample, and may also seek to compare the responses of foodservice employees to those of other working adults.

References Available Upon Request

CONSUMER PERCEPTION TOWARDS GREEN RESTAURANTS IN WEST PACIFIC AREA

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Introduction

The green restaurant was defined as “new or renovated structures designed, constructed, operated, and demolished in an environmentally friendly and energy-efficient manner” (Lorenzini, 1994, p.119). The green movement rose to prominence in the hospitality industry over the last decade. The green practices were increasingly utilized worldwide in the foodservice industry (DiPietro, Cao & Partlow, 2013). Many restaurant managers started to realize that implementing green practices can lead to positive environmental effects. However, there was a lack of research studying the consumer perception of green restaurants. The purpose of this study was to analyze the consumer perception towards green restaurants. This study focused on generation Y because of this generation’s significance in the market segment for their purchasing power (Paul, 2001) and their frequency of eating out (Sheahan, 2005).

Methods

An online questionnaire was developed and distributed to Generation Y consumers who were born between 1980 and 1996. The questionnaire was divided into four sections. The first section focused on participants’ basic knowledge of green restaurants and their preference in source of more information about green restaurants. The second section included items to explore Y Generation group’s attitudes toward green restaurants. The third section measured customer’s perceptions on the importance of green practices in green restaurants. The last section concentrated on basic demographic and other information of the respondents.

Results

A total of 203 responses were collected. After excluding seven respondents who did not fall under Y Generation, the final sample comprised 196 responses, with 51.5% were female. About 58% of the respondents were between 18 and 22, 28% between 23 and 28, and 14% between 29 and 34. There were 43.4% of respondents whose annual household income was more than $40,000, and 13.8% was less than $10,000. About half of the respondents dined out one or two times per week, and about 15% of respondents dined out more than six times per week. The study found out that over 90% of the respondents had not ever heard about Green restaurant. It also showed respondents’ lack of knowledge of green practices as only 1.5% of respondents exactly knew the environmental requirements to be certified as a green restaurant. However, a large number of respondents were interested in knowing more about green restaurants and 95.9% of them preferred searching information on Internet. Both male and female Y-generation customers had the similar attitude about green restaurants being expensive and protecting the environment as one of the role of restaurants. Also, importance of using organic food was different in different income level. But there was no significant difference in importance ratings among age groups.

References Available Upon Request

SENSATION SEEKING AND EMOTIONAL BRAND ATTACHMENT EFFECT ON RISKY FOODS CONSUMPTION

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Introduction

Previous research has suggested different levels of sensation seeking based on age, gender, education level, and cultural background, and these levels may be used to explain consumers' risk taking behaviors for alcohol consumption, drug usage, and sexual activities. Also, the role of attachment has been examined in many studies because consumers with an emotional attachment to brands clearly show a favorable attitude toward those brands. Sensation seeking and emotional brand attachment have been studied extensively, but limited research has been conducted on "risky foods" (foods commonly served raw or undercooked). The purpose of this study is to see how sensation seeking and emotional brand attachment affect consumption of risky food. To achieve this purpose, this study will analyze socio-demographic differences in sensation seeking and emotional brand attachment.

Methods

After reviewing research literature, this study developed a paper-based self-administered questionnaire, measuring sensation seeking, emotional brand attachment, intention to consume risky foods, and demographic information. The sensation seeking scale used two sub-scales; novelty seeking and intensity seeking. Emotional brand attachment included three sub-scales; affection, connection, and passion. A pilot study was conducted locally to test the validity of the questionnaire. For the final study, data were collected in May of 2014 at a seafood restaurant in the Washington D.C. area. A total of 325 surveys were distributed and 302 completed survey were collected (93% response rate). A series of t-test and ANOVA were performed using SPSS version 20.

Results/Discussion

Intention to consume raw or undercooked fish/eggs was significantly higher in younger groups, especially with respondents in their 30's. Novelty seeking was significantly higher with respondents who had a previous foodborne illness experience. Female respondents showed more affection toward their emotionally attached restaurants, and respondents who spent more money in restaurants displayed more connection and passion. In addition, respondents with no previous foodborne illness experience showed a greater passion for emotionally attached restaurants. To compare intention to consume risky foods in all restaurants vs. favorite restaurants, other research methods such as an experimental design should be considered. The results of this study offer additional insights for future researchers about consumer perceptions, their restaurant behavior, and the interactions among sensation seeking, emotional brand attachment, and consumption of risky food.

References Available Upon Request

YELP VS. INSPECTION REPORTS: IS QUALITY CORRELATED WITH SANITATION?

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Introduction

Consumers used to only be able to obtain restaurant sanitation information from the health department as it was provided in newspapers, TV, health department webpages, or postings in the restaurants themselves (Almanza, Ismail, & Mills, 2002; Jin & Leslie, 2003; Simon et al., 2005). Current information is limited by health department resources to make it available (Kang, Kuznetsova, Choi, & Luca, 2013). Consumers now seek information regarding prices, food and service quality, ambiance, and even sanitation level of the restaurants by reading other consumers' opinions in social media, such as Yelp, Tripadvisor, Urbanspoon, personal blogs, etc. The increasing use of social media is a new approach to assessing food safety with a nontraditional surveillance system (Bender, Hedberg, & Newkirk, 2012). Since information available through consumer generated review sites is based on actual consumers' experiences, it would be useful to determine if there is a correlation between social media ratings and health inspection scores.

Methods

New York City (NYC) was chosen for this study because it is one of the biggest cities in the United States and has readily available restaurant violation data. Data were collected through the online websites, Yelp.com and the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH). Yelp used a five-star-rating to rate each restaurant in NYC. The ratings were based on consumers' experiences for food quality, service quality, price and atmospherics in the restaurants. Ratings that had less than 50 reviews were excluded due to potential reliability issues. In addition, ratings for restaurants with no available violation scores were also excluded.NYC health department uses a letter grading system for inspection reporting. Combined violation scores from 0 to 13 points earn an "A" grade, those from 14 to 27 points earn a "B", and those with 28 or more points earn a "C". Since violation scores were thought to offer a better sanitation measure than letter grades, they were used instead of the letter grades. Violation scores were averaged to compensate for different inspection frequencies during the last three years (since 2011). Data were divided into full service restaurants and QSRs (based on the description of restaurant service type on Yelp.com), and chain and non-chain restaurants.

Results/Discussion

This study compared Yelp ratings and violation scores between full service restaurants and QSRs and between chain restaurant and non-chain restaurants. A significant difference was found between full service restaurants and QSRs for both Yelp ratings and violation scores. Additionally, this study found that only the Yelp ratings were significantly different between chain and non-chain restaurants. Correlational analysis revealed that the number of reviews and the Yelp restaurant ratings were positively correlated while Yelp restaurant ratings and violation scores were negatively correlated. This study provides practical implications to improve our understanding of the restaurant information available to consumers through social media.

References Available Upon Request

STRESS AND FOOD CHOICE: EXAMINING THE ROLE OF TIME HORIZON MESSAGES

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Introduction

A recent national survey found that nearly 50% of people report feeling greater stress now than 5 years ago and 38% report overeating or eating unhealthy food to cope with stress (American Psychological Association, 2013). Stress-related unhealthy eating is a highly distressing problem due to the increasing prevalence of overweight and obese individuals in the US (Flegal et al., 2010). Despite the prevalence of these stress induced eating behaviors, food service researchers have paid little attention to how stress affects consumers' food choices in a restaurant context. With the prevalence of stress-induced unhealthy eating increasing, healthy behaviors should be promoted. The question is, which type of message encourages customers to choose healthy foods? According to Socioemotional selectivity theory (SST), people tend to assess time as either limited or expansive (Carstensen, 1992). Thus, time horizon perceptions can in part account for consumers' decision making. People are more willing to engage in impulsive choices when they perceive that time is limited, but seek healthy choices when they perceive time as expansive. Our goal in this study is to examine how stress affects consumers' food choice behaviors. Specifically, the objectives of this study are (1) to examine the effects of stress on eating-out motivations, (2) to investigate if the time horizon framing will moderate effects of stress on impulsive food choices, and further (3) to determine whether the time horizon framing will moderate the effects of stress on healthy food choice.

Methods

This study was designed to examine the effect of stress and time horizon perceptions on impulsive food choices intentions (study 1) and healthy food choice intentions (study 2). The design of this study was a 2 (Stress: Low vs. High) X 2 (Time horizon: Expanded vs. Limited) between-subjects design. We measured participants' stress levels using the Perceived Stress Scale (Cohen, 1988) and manipulated time horizons.

Results/Discussion

In an experimental study using manipulated "time horizon" messages along with unhealthy and healthy menu items, this research explored the interaction effects of stress and perceived time horizon on consumers' food choice intentions. The results showed that stressed-out consumers made significantly more healthy food choices under the expanded time horizon message than the limited time horizon message. Our research suggests that time horizon messages can help marketers further segment their target audiences and improve the effectiveness of their positioning and communication. For example, food companies could encourage healthful practices to counter the increase in obesity by creating more healthy foods and explicitly promoting them using an expansive time horizon message, such as "Life is long." This research provides insights that may benefit not only marketers but consumers as well. With expanded time perceptions, consumers can increase their tendency to make healthy food choices rather than unhealthy ones.

References Available Upon Request

CONSUMERS' EMOTIONAL RESPONSES AND BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS IN REGARDS TO SANITATION CONDITIONS IN QUICK-SERVICE RESTAURANTS

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Introduction

Not surprisingly, consumers' concern about food safety has increased (Boo, Ghiselli, & Almanza, 2000; Scheule & Sneed, 2001; Ungku Fatimah, Boo, Sambasivan, & Salleh, 2011). According to Dulen (1999), restaurant quality is determined by consumers with the three elements of food, atmospherics, and service. Kotler (1973) mentioned that the physical environment including atmospheric cues has a great effect on consumer behavior. However, few studies have evaluated the relationships among consumer perceptions about sanitation of the restaurant environment, emotional responses, and behavioral intentions in food safety. The purpose of this study therefore is to 1) identify the most important sanitation dimensions, 2) identify the specific sanitation emotions that consumers feel when they are faced with dirty conditions, and 3) confirm the relationships among positive emotions, negative emotions, and behavioral intentions in QSRs.

Methods

A self-administrated questionnaire was developed and pilot tested to ensure the reliability of the scales. Pilot study testing was conducted to identify emotions related to sanitation in a restaurant of a mid-western university in the U.S. The revised questionnaire consisted of two sections. In the first section, one written narrative scenario was randomly assigned to measure consumers' emotional responses. A total of seven scenarios were developed to assess reaction to the six dimensions and compare them to an "*all clean condition*". The seven scenarios were *all clean, all-clean but dirty food, all-clean but dirty interior, all clean but dirty personal dining area, all clean but dirty exterior, all clean but dirty restroom,* and *all clean but dirty server.* Five positive emotions and five negative emotions were assessed on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (*I would not feel this at all*) to 7 (*I would feel this strongly*). Three different behavioral intention questions were also asked on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 7(extremely). The second section asked respondents' demographic information. The data were collected by hiring a research company with a survey link.

Results/Discussion

Sanitation dimensions had a significant effect on ten emotional responses and three behavioral intention questions. As expected, the *all clean* scenario had the lowest negative emotional responses and the highest positive emotional responses among the seven scenarios. *Food* sanitation was the most important dimension influencing positive and negative emotions, and behavioral intentions. The *exterior* dimension was the least important dimension. These findings contribute to food safety research by synthesizing the sanitation dimensions in a restaurant setting and distinguishing these dimensions for consumers' emotional responses and behavioral intentions. The results of this study help managers better understand consumers' perceptions of restaurant sanitation and their behavioral implications in QSRs. This study highlights consumers' concern for food, as well as other environmental sanitation dimensions.

References Available Upon Requests

PREMIUM PRICES FOR ORGANIC HEALTHY ALTERNATIVES AT RESTAURANTS: WHAT'S ACCEPTABLE?

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Introduction

By investigating how customers' purchasing intention toward organic alternative changes as price premiums increase, the study attempted to identify the maximum percentage of price premium that customers will pay for organic menu items in restaurants. Due to customers' differing expectations of dining value across restaurant segments, patterns of purchasing intention and customers' maximum percentage of price premium may differ across the segments. As previous literature has indicated the significant influence of health-related and socio-demographic characteristics on consumers' intention to dine organically, this study also examined how patterns of purchasing intention vary by health consciousness level, gender, and age within each restaurant segment. This study provides guidelines for menu design and strategies for restaurateurs to devise effective premium pricing for organic alternatives.

Methods

A scenario-based online survey was developed and distributed to randomly selected respondents in the United States. A total of 222 responses (casual-dining: 112, upscale: 107) was collected. In the scenario respondents were asked to imagine they were dining out at the same restaurant they indicated in the screening section and ordering the same menu they had previously. Then, they realized that the restaurant offered a healthy option for the same menu item using organic food ingredients with various levels of price premiums ranging from 0% to 50% with 5% incremental increases. After reading the each scenario, respondents were asked to indicate their purchasing intentions toward organic menu items using a 9 point-Likert scale developed by Kozup et al. (2003). Four items from Olsen (2003) were used to measure level of health consciousness using a 7-point Likert scale. Finally, respondents' age, gender, and household income were collected. To estimate the relationship between purchasing intention and price premium, regression analysis was employed. To test differences in patterns of organic alternative purchasing intention between casual-dining and upscale restaurants, a Chow test (Chow, 1960) were used. The moderated regression analyses (Sharma et al., 1981) were used to identify the moderating role of health consciousness, gender, and age within each restaurant segment.

Results/Discussion

Results indicate that casual-dining restaurant customers had higher levels of purchasing intention toward organic healthy alternatives than upscale restaurant customers, suggesting that premium pricing for organic alternatives is viewed more favorably by casual-dining restaurant customers. Upscale restaurant customers may perceive the premium price of organic alternatives as too high because prices of conventional food are already high. Also, healthier and superior quality menu products might be expected by customers in upscale restaurants and charging a premium for organic food might be perceived as unfair. For casual dining restaurants, health consciousness, gender, and age were moderators influencing the relationship between organic alternative purchasing intention and price premium. Older female customers with high health consciousness have higher levels of purchasing intention toward organic healthy alternatives with a price premium. For upscale restaurants, females with high health consciousness are more likely to purchase organic healthy alternatives even with the price premium.

References Available Upon Request

KNOWLEDGE AND PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL FOODSERVICE EMPLOYEES RELATED TO FARM TO SCHOOL PROGRAMS

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Each day, nineteen million children receive free meals via the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Because of the importance of the school lunch program in providing nutritious products for children across the U.S., there has been constant evaluation of the foods that schools provide. This evaluation has suggested that farm to school programs can be an effective method in providing nutritious meals to K-12 students. School foodservice employees play a key role in implementing these Farm to School (FTS) programs, and their training can be an important tool to enhance and maximize knowledge. Thus, the current study aims to determine the perceived effectiveness of FTS training for foodservice employees. More specifically, the questions answered are: (1) What is foodservice employees' initial knowledge of FTS components? (2) Are there statistically significant differences between pre- and post-training knowledge of FTS components?

In conjunction with this study, 55 foodservice workers from schools in the southeastern United States were provided with FTS training. The workers attended one of two training sessions that were developed to teach school foodservice employees about the various components of the FTS program such as benefits of the program, use of new recipes, and overall information regarding the program. Perceived effectiveness was measured by evaluating pre- and post-training knowledge via a brief Likert-type survey. Questions focused on knowledge of FTS programs, locally grown food, recipe production, promotion to children, benefits of South Carolina foods, and food safety.

Increases in perceived knowledge were observed in all categories analyzed: (1) knowledge of the Farm to School program; (2) awareness of locally grown food items; (3) recipe production using locally grown food items; (4) promotion of food items to children; (5) knowledge of the benefits of locally grown foods; and, (6) understanding of food safety. The statistical significance for these increases were confirmed via an independent-sample t-test.

Considering the significant increases in perceived knowledge following FTS training for each aforementioned category, foodservices workers have the potential to assume new roles in their respective schools. Firstly, the foodservice employees could become stronger proponents to achieve FTS' fundamental goals. Notably, they should be more comfortable in contributing to children's produce awareness, produce consumption, and desire to consume FTS produce. Training also has the potential to enhance foodservice employees' ability to assume the critical FTS roles including ordering produce, handling storage and preparation, distributing snacks, serving meals, and coordinating food tastings.

References Available Upon Request

CONSUMER COMMENTS AND REGIONAL DIFFERENCES IN OPERATIONAL ATTRIBUTES: A LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF A NATIONWIDE RESTAURANT COMPANY

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Introduction

Customer comment cards can be a valuable asset to restaurants in identifying operational issues and marketing opportunities. A national quick casual restaurant chain collects information from comment cards from its restaurant units across the United States. Current study analyzes yearlong consumer comment data from 208 quick casual restaurant chain units distributed in the west coast and east coast. The purpose of this study is to determine if there is a difference between positive and negative service comments by region (between east and west coasts) in quick casual restaurants, and investigate differences in customer comments regarding food quality and service attributes in west coast and east coast.

Methods

A well trained research specialist was hired to code the qualitative data with over 6,600 rows of comment card data with over 6,900 data points. These data contain a store unit identifier which allows for regional segmentation into east and west coasts, each of which contains roughly 100 stores. Three hypotheses were evaluated as follows: H1, there is no difference between positive (negative) service quality comments between the east and west coasts for this brand of quick casual restaurants; H2, there is no difference between positive (negative) food quality comments between the east and west coasts for this brand of quick casual restaurants; and H3, there is no difference between total number of food comments and number of service comments for this brand of quick casual restaurants. A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relation between service quality and regions and found there is apparently a significant difference between service levels between east and west coasts. A similar chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relation between food quality between the east and west coasts also suggesting there is a slight difference between food quality levels between east and west coasts. The last hypothesis found service comments exceed food comments by over fifty percent for each region; therefore, there is a difference between food and service comments.

Results/Discussion

All three hypotheses were rejected. There appears to be a significant difference between service quality between the east and west coasts (H1). There also appears to be a slight difference between east and west coast restaurants regarding food (H2). Additionally there appears to be a difference in the number of comments between overall food and service related comments between coasts (H3). One implication of this study based on the customers' higher number of service related comments is that quick casual patrons are very conscious of service related issues in a store; therefore, store owners should continually be training their employees on providing good service to customers. One additional finding from the data coding process revealed incorrect orders were a major recurring comment. One process which would remedy incorrect orders would be to implement a rigorous double check system to ensure a second set of eyes verifies everything is correctly included in the order – especially those items for which guests paid extra.

References Available Upon Request

TEXT MINING AND SENTIMENT ANALYSIS WITH TWEET DATA REFERRING TO ASIAN RESTAURANTS

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Introduction

The Asian restaurant industry has shown significant growth in the United States with diverse types of ethnic cuisine (i.e., Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Thai, etc.). Despite the sheer growth of popularity, limited research has been conducted to examine and compare unique characteristics of different types of Asian restaurants. This gap is especially intriguing given that patrons of Asian restaurants have difficulty in identifying the uniqueness of each cuisine. Furthermore, the majority of previous studies have relied on traditional research methods, particularly the survey method with a relatively small number of participants. Responding to these issues, this study aims to identify consumers' perception of different types of Asian restaurants, employing social media analytics with big data. This study also assesses and shows the distribution of emotion (how positive or how negative) toward Asian restaurants.

Methods

Tweet data were collected by the Twitter Application Programming Interface that provides the public with the access to gather a limited flow of the entire tweets. The five searching phrases were used: "Asian restaurant," "Chinese restaurant," "Japanese restaurant," "Korean restaurant," and "Thai restaurant." The final data set contained 86,015 tweets composed only in English and posted between April 29 and July 2, 2014. Text mining was used to rank of the most often mentioned words in the data set. Sentiment analysis was conducted to measure positivity and negativity of tweets.

Results/Discussion

Word frequency analysis presented that Chinese and Thai restaurants were more popularly used phrases in the data set of four Asian cuisines and that sushi and chicken were the most often mentioned Asian foods. The analysis posed a critical issue that patrons of Asian restaurants seem to have mingled perceptions among different restaurant types. For example, the word, *Japanese*, was often mentioned in Korean restaurant tweets and *Chinese* was mentioned in Thai restaurant tweets. It also appeared that tweets referring to Chinese and Japanese restaurants included their own representative food items most frequently. Visualizing the polarity and sentiment scores of each restaurant type, sentiment analysis found out that approximately half of tweets contained emotional words in texts. More positive tweets have been sent than negative ones talking about each type of Asian restaurants. Reviews with extremely positive or negative tweets identified that attributes regarding food quality, services, and environments led to the emotional polarity of tweets.This research provides Asian restaurant managers and owners with useful implications. Recognizing the importance of social media as an effective marketing tool for their business, Asian restaurants may utilize social media to investigate current trends and opinions of customers. In particular, Korean and Thai restaurants would need to differentiate their identities from other types of Asian restaurants; for example, their popular foods could be more promoted to customers. Academically, this study contributes to new discussion on how to apply social media analytics for restaurant marketing research. Researchers could apply these methods with massive data from social media not only for the generalization of findings in previous research but also for the discovery of emerging issues or patterns regarding customer perceptions.

GENETICALLY MODIFIED WINES: THE ROLE OF PERCEIVED RISKS AND EMOTION ON CONSUMER ENDORSEMENT

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Introduction

Despite a considerable amount of research regarding functional genetically modified (GM) foods, studies examining GM wines and the underlying consumer behavior associated with them are, surprisingly, very limited. It is important to examine GM wines separately from GM food because wine in comparison to most food products is a high-involvement hedonic product, has relatively high risk associated with its purchase, can be expensive, is part of most peoples' discretionary spending, and is often used by individuals to say something about who they are. The genetic modification process that goes behind wine making can also be vastly different from that of most food products. This can either be genetically altering grapevines or genetically modifying the yeast used in the fermentation process. The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of perceived risks on fear of GM process and the corresponding effect of fear on the propensity to buy GM wines. Two types of GM wines were considered – wine made from GM yeasts and from GM crops (grapes). Risk perceptions, valence theory, and the social amplification of risk provided the underlying theoretical foundations of this study.

Methods

All the measures we operationalized were drawn from related literature. A survey was prepared using Qualtrics. The service of Amazon Mturk was employed to collect data. Structural equations modeling using AMOS was applied to analyze the hypothesized relationships. The mediating role of fear was tested using Baron and Kenny's approach.

Results/Discussion

Results utilizing a consumer survey of 407 participants confirmed an adequate model fit. Only physical risk and psychological risk had significant positive effects on fear of GM. Fear of GM significantly influenced propensity to buy both types of wines. In addition, fear of GM partially mediated the effect of perceived physical risk on propensity to buy the two types of GM wines. Consumers seemed to associate certain physical and psychological risks with GM wine that makes them fearful of GM wines. However, the same was not true for perceived performance risk and fear of GM wine. Perceived performance risks of GM wine such as risks associated with taste, quality, and benefits, did not make consumers fearful. Although performance of GM wine is important, enhancing the performance of GM wine most likely would not entail consumers to patronize GM wines. The mediation analysis underscored the significance of fear in regards to the physical risks associated with GM wine. Consumers were evidently concerned about the side effects and long-term risks to themselves and their families. Their perceived physical risks were negatively affecting their GM wine patronage through their emotional response. These findings in conjugation provide strong implications for wine manufacturers and policy makers. Their goal is to mitigate fear among consumers and as such, their focus should be on reducing the perceived physical and psychological risk associated with GM wine. In conclusion, it is expected that this study would encourage future research regarding this vastly ignored but significant and controversial subject matter.

References Available Upon Request

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTERISTICS AND RESTAURANT LOCATION IN THE UNITED STATES

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Introduction

Location selection is a decisive issue for restaurant investors to secure a competitive advantage and hence, to run a successful business. Restaurateurs choose a specific location based on the local environment and demographic characteristics that ultimately shape the demand. Numerous previous studies have disclosed the association between restaurant location and neighborhoods' socio-demographic attributes, but few studies have examined the pattern of restaurant location and underlining factors shaping this pattern. From the perspective of hospitality industry, this study aims to investigate the association between restaurant location and local communities' neighborhoods' socio-demographic characteristics, including income, race, household's renter and owner rate.

Methods

We utilized a series of multiple regression models to investigate the influence of socio-demographic characteristics on the number of restaurants (per population) in each zip code area in the U.S.. The data of individual restaurants over the U.S. were obtained from one of the biggest big data vendors, which included a number of restaurant attributes, such as location, service category, chain name, cuisine type, price level, and average reviewer ratings. The zip-code level data of various socio-demographic characteristics were acquired from the US Census Bureau and Population Studies Center at the University of Michigan. Apart from the total number of restaurants of each zip-code area, we also categorized them into different types of restaurants, such as American restaurants, Asian restaurants, Mexican restaurants, fast food restaurants, vegetarian restaurants, and pizza restaurants.

Results/Discussion

The estimation results of regression models highlighted several determinants of restaurant location at a zip-code level, such as median income, household size, house renter/owner ratio, and race composition of the neighborhood. A high number and variety of restaurants can be found in neighborhoods with a lower median income, a smaller average household size, and a large percentage of house renters. In addition, we recognized different location patterns for restaurants of different types. The number of restaurants (per population) offering different types of cuisines can be partly explained by the ethic population percentage in the neighborhood. From the supply side, this study facilitates the understanding of restaurant location choice, and provides vital information on operational decision making of location choice for new restaurant entrants. A residual analysis can be carried out to understand which areas have an under-supply of restaurant business according to our model. From the demand side, the paper imparts vital insight on the residents' preferences of different types of restaurants, and more specific marketing efforts can be adapted to target the appropriate market segments.

References Available Upon Request

MILLENNIALS' MOTIVATION TO USE NUTRITION INFORMATION

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Introduction

The current basis of the United States government's food intake recommendations for Americans ages greater than or equal to two years was published in 2010 under the title, *The Dietary Guidelines for Americans* (DGA), by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) (Ackley, 2012; Wansink & Kranz, 2013). Soon after, the USDA released MyPlate in 2011 (Post, Haven & Maniscalco, 2012). Unlike its predecessor, MyPyramid, which were guidelines for total diet recommendations, MyPlate was simpler and targeted toward mealtime (Post et al., 2012). With MyPlate being so simplistic and easy-to-understand, it allowed for multiple age groups, including college-aged students, to reach out for advice on meal planning (Brown, Lauren & Savaiano, 2014). Bearing the above in mind, three hypotheses were proposed to examine the impact of the knowledge of the benefits of healthy food selections, awareness of dietary diseases, and the impact of price on the Millennials' likelihood to use nutritional information in their food purchasing decisions.

Methods

The population for this study consisted of a Northwest Arkansas population, specifically, college-aged Millennials. The sample was a purposive sample of 521 Millennials. A survey instrument was adapted from a review of literature. The instrument addressed participants' knowledge and perception of MyPlate, along with their willingness to use nutritional information. The reliability of the instrument was based on a Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient. The reliability results of the instrument revealed that the instrument as a whole was reliable (Cronbach's alpha = 0.82). First the survey addressed knowledge of daily caloric intake, MyPlate and the use of nutritional information, through first choice questions. Next, why nutritional information was utilized and the important factors in food selection, were determined by two 5-point Likert scales: (1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree) and (1=Not Important to 5=Very Important). The remaining questions addressed participants' demographic factors. Data was collected using a web-based survey (Qualtrics) and direct data collection method. Descriptive Statistics and Inferential Statistics were used to test the hypotheses.

Result

The result of the first hypothesis indicated that those who were aware of the benefits of healthy food selections were more likely to use that nutritional information in their food purchasing decisions ($M = 4.36$, $S.D. = .81$) compared to those who do not use nutritional information ($M = 3.60$, $S.D. =.99$) conditions; $p = 0.006$. The result of the second hypothesis indicated Millennials who utilize nutrition information are more likely place less importance on the price of food products during food purchasing decisions ($M = 3.63$, $S.D. = .92$) compared to those who do not use nutritional information ($M = 3.98$, $S.D. = .99$) conditions; $p < 0.001$. The result of the third hypothesis indicated that those who were aware of dietary diseases were more likely to use that nutritional information in their food purchasing decisions ($M = 4.08$, $S.D. = 1.08$) compared to those who do not use nutritional information ($M = 3.24$, $S.D. =1.09$) conditions; $p < 0.001$.

References Available Upon Request

DOES MENU LABELING MATTER TO FAST FOOD DINERS? IMPACTS OF LABELING ON PERCEPTION, ACCURACY, AND CHOICE ACCORDING TO HEALTH-CONSCIOUSNESS

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Introduction

As obesity is a serious health problem, fast food has been blamed for rising obesity because food in fast food restaurants tend to have larger portion sizes, higher calories and more fat than foods prepared at home (Jacobson et al., 2004). In order to assist consumers in making healthier choices and to boost the changes in restaurant menus, policy makers have pushed for menu labeling legislation as a tool to control the obesity in US. However, labeling policy's effectiveness is still unclear. While it is believed that nutrient information changes food choice (Drichoutis et al., 2006, Hwang and Cranage, 2010), some researchers found no significant effects on menu selections (Finkelstein et al., 2011). These mixed results lead researchers to find a better type of label, and suggested a simple or symbolic label (Cowburn and Stockley, 2005). Thus, the study explains consumers towards menu labelling types, including detail and symbolic labeling, and examines the moderating effect of health-consciousness on the menu labeling influences.

Methods

A survey was conducted with 223 college students through self-administrated questions, and a total 669 data was analysed by ensuring that the time interval between treatments. Respondents were asked to answer the healthfulness perception of ten side menus and menu choices under three conditions. Three conditions were designed by labelling types: Condition 1) only menu item without nutrition information, Condition 2) menu with typical labeling presenting only numbers, and Condition 3) menu with traffic light labelling (TLL) using red, yellow, or green colors. Repeated-measure ANOVA and Chi-square (χ^2) were used to assess the impact of three labeling format.

Results/Discussion

The results indicate that menu labeling changes customers' perception, accuracy and menu choice of side menus. Labeling only increases consumers' ability to accurately identify food as healthy or unhealthy, but also leads to healthier choices towards to lower calorie, fat, sodium, and sugar intake. However, this study did not support the moderating role of health-consciousness on menu labeling effect. While we expected health-conscious consumers to choose healthier menus and have higher healthfulness accuracy scores than who has less health-conscious when they are exposed in a detail label, there were no significant effects of label types on menu choice and accuracy scores by health-consciousness level. Together results suggest that numeric labels in the fast restaurant can be effective. More importantly, a symbolic label has greater effects to make correct evaluation and choice regardless of level of health-consciousness. The study would be helpful for both restaurant executives who should implement mandatory menu label regulation to understand how the label influences consumers' menu choices and policy makers to consider potential benefits of symbolic labeling in the restaurant industry

References Available Upon Request

THE LEVEL OF ENERGY DENSE FOOD CONSUMPTION ON WEIGHT GAIN

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Introduction

There are many factors leading to obesity and overweight in the world, including both environmental and genetic factors (Liebman, et al., 2003). Some of the eating behavioral factors included overconsumption of energy dense food and eating food with high fat content (Liebman, et al, 2003). While numerous studies showed that nutritional knowledge and food choices impacted BMI and weight of individuals, there is room for further studies in this area. Bearing the above in mind, four hypotheses were proposed to examine the impact of nearly always eating animal proteins and eating mostly high energy dense food on the weight and BMI (obesity) of college students.

Methods

The population for this study was college students at a public comprehensive university in the Mid-Southern part of the United States. The sample selection for this study was a purposive sample of the students in a university. The instrument for this study was adapted from a review of literature (Bordi et al., 2005). The instrument's validity was established by a panel of selected nutritional and foodservice experts within the university. The reliability of the instrument was based on a Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient.The reliability results of the instrument's pilot study revealed that the instrument as a whole was reliable (Cronbach's alpha = 0.70). The instrument consisted of four different critical sections. Section 1 of the instrument was used to measure the participants' perceptions of different types of foods. Section 2 of the instrument was used to measure the participants' level of consumption of different types of foods. Section 3 of the instrument was used to measure how often the participants consumed breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Section 4 of the instrument was used to gather the participants' demographic characteristics including age, weight, and height. Data were collected via web-based survey method (Surveymonkey.com) and purposely collected directly from students in some selected classes in order for the sample to represent the demographic and psychographic characteristics of the sample. Descriptive statistics (Mean, Percentage, and Frequencies) were used to analyze the demographic factors. Inferential statistics (e.g., independent sample T-test) was used for the hypotheses testing.

Results/Discussion

The results of the first and second hypotheses testing indicated that individuals who nearly always eat animal proteins will have higher weight and are more likely to be obese than those who eat mostly vegetable protein. Similarly, the results of the third and fourth hypotheses testing indicated that individuals who eat mostly high energy dense food will have higher weight than and are more likely to be obese those who eat mostly less energy dense food. One of the implications of this study is the need for more awareness of the consequences of consuming energy dense food and excessive animal protein on weight gain and obesity. Parents and foodservice establishments should be mindful of these consequences and find a way to incorporate more vegetable proteins and less energy dense food into our food consumption.

References Available Upon Request

FOOD VARIETY SEEKING BEHAVIOR IN UNCERTAINTY: MODERATING ROLES OF INFORMATION

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Introduction

Dining out has been one of the favorite tourist activities (Kivela & Crotts, 2006). Trying unfamiliar foods, however, might be challenging for international tourists due to their latent uncertainty of a new place and thus their emotional attitude towards unfamiliar foods tends to be negative rather than positive (Kim et al., 2010). The study of food neophobia, a reluctance to try novel, unfamiliar foods (Pliner & Hobden, 1992, p. 105), has been limited only to a few sectors (e.g., functional food, extreme food). Information plays a crucial role in reducing the negative effect of food neophobia on tourists' eatings of different kinds of foods. Individuals search for more information as the level of uncertainty increases whereas lower levels of uncertainty give rise to less information-seeking (Sunnafrank, 1986). The findings suggest that responses to stimulations inducing variety seeking are different across information search. With regards to eating situations, therefore, information that diners gather increases their willingness to accept new foods (Pelchat & Pliner, 1995; Tuorila, Anderson, Martikainen, & Salovaara, 1998). Despite the role of food experience, little has been discussed in the tourism setting (Cohen & Avieli, 2004) because foods in tourism are conventionally viewed as a supplement (Godfrey & Clarke, 2000). To fill this research gap, this study examined how food-related personality affects variety seeking behavior, and further attempted to determine how a tourist's food neophobic tendency differently influences variety seeking behaviors depending on the level of information seeking.

Methods

A total of 500 questionnaires were distributed to international tourists and a final sample count of 407 was included in data analysis. Food neophobic tendency was measured on 5-point Likert-type scales using the food neophobia scale (Pliner & Hobden, 1992). Variety seeking behavior was quantified by adding up the number of different foods a survey participant tried during his/her stay (Ha & Jang, 2013). Information seeking behavior was assessed by how much different information sources were used for Korean foods/restaurants (Ab Karim & Chi, 2010). Content validity was checked, and a pilot test was conducted.

Results/Discussion

This study confirmed that food neophobic tendency has a negative effect on food variety seeking behaviors at the tourist destination. In response, it is crucial to know how to make tourists engage in food consumption at a destination. This study also uncovered that responses to stimulations that induce variety seeking differ between high and low information seeking groups. People with a high level of information search not only seek variety itself, but also are more likely to be influenced by stimulations that induce variety seeking. For those high in information search, food neophobic tendency might be less of a concern. It is thus important to provide ample, quality information about foods at destinations to help tourists accumulate food knowledge, get familiar with and then experience foods during their stay at destinations. The findings advance the understanding of food consumption behavior from the international tourist perspective, thereby providing theoretical and practical groundwork for future studies. Hence, useful insights will be provided for destination marketers and foodservice suppliers in promoting their gastronomic products.

CASCATING EFFECT OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPOSIBILITY ON CUSTOMER LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIP ORIENTATION: MEDIATION OF CORPORATE IMAGE AND CUSTOMER CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIORS

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Introduction

Despite much research of CSR over the last decades, previous studies have focused mostly on the aspects of community involvement or corporate giving; however, there has rarely been research demonstrating the overall process of CSR, consumer perception of the corporation, customer citizenship behavior (CCB), and developing and maintaining long-term relationships between the seller and buyer in the foodservice industry. That is the objective of the research is to comprehensively scrutinize a series of processes through which (1) a corporation's socially responsible activities and business ethics influence consumers' perceived images of corporations, (2) their corporate perceptions lead to CCB, (3) and their voluntary CCB builds a strong, reliable trust, leading to a long-term relationship between corporations and consumers in the foodservice industry.

Methods

The target sample of this study consists of customers of foodservice industry in South Korea and the data of the research are from 568 usable questionnaires out of 650. CSR is measured using the 16-item scale by Carroll (1979); customer citizenship behavior is measured using the 12-item scale by Groth (2005). Corporate image is measured using the 6-item scale modified from Chowdhury, Reardon, and Srivastava' (2001); customers' long-term relationship orientation is measured using the 3-item scale by Ganesan (1994). The two-step procedure of structural equation modelling (SEM) is employed and the measurement model and parameters are assessed. LISREL (Version 8.30) is used to perform the structural analysis and maximum likelihood is employed to estimate the parameters.

Results/Discussion

The confirmatory factor analysis is performed and all measurement items demonstrate statistically significant loadings at the alpha level of .001. Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability of each measurement indicate its internal consistency and unidimensionality. Then using structural equation model the relationships between the variables in the proposed model are tested, showing an adequate fit of maximum likelihood estimation to the data. Hypothesis 1 supports that CSR activities have a positive influence on corporate images except for one sub- dimension, legal responsibility. Hypothesis 2 states that corporate images positively influence all the three dimensions of customer citizenship behaviors; hypothesis 3 supports that the two sub-dimensions of customer citizenship behaviors have a positive influence on their long-term relationship orientation while in the other sub-dimension, "providing feedback", such a relationship is not founded. As to the results, we believe the reason why legal responsibilities are not positively related to corporate images is because they are neither noticed nor considered significant and meaningful to customers; customers are prone to take it for granted for corporations to follow the laws and regulations and thus do not grant it special credit. We, also, believe that "providing feedback" is not as aggressive as the others of CCB the relationship might account for the results of hypothesis 3.

GRADUATE STUDY IN HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT IN THE UNITED STATES: MASTER OF SCIENCE PROGRAMS

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Introduction
The purpose of this paper is to provide a general informative profile of hospitality master's programs in the United States, focusing on institutional affiliation, core curriculum content, admission standards, and degree requirements. Using only secondary data available to the public, this exploratory paper seeks only to assess the current state of master's programs in hospitality management education. Furthermore, by summarizing details of entrance requirements and degree requirements, the authors hope to help prospective graduate students in deciding where to attend and what to research in their graduate program. Program leaders, administrators, and scholars can use the findings of this study to position their programs among the competition and identify areas where programs need further improvement or differentiation.

Methods
The population for this study was taken from Khan et al. (2013) as their sample established the leading institutions of hospitality master's programs in the United States. Another reason was that their list did not include hospitality executive master programs and hospitality MBA programs, focusing only on hospitality Master of Science programs. The sample resulted in a list of 18 programs. Secondary data was collected through a document review of websites and Internet-based brochures, handbooks, and bulletins of the sample institutions. The data collected during this process focused on institution characteristics, curriculum, course descriptions, admissions requirements, degree requirements, and faculty profiles.

Results/Discussion
The institutional locations of the sample reveal that only one third is located in independent colleges devoted to hospitality. Also, the review of core curriculum show large variations between different institutions regarding core courses. While the three most frequent courses are research oriented, the following two courses are business related. These indications are consistent with Scott et al.'s (2008) findings on lack of identity in hospitality higher education. Overall admission requirements showed little variation other than in work experience. It seems more institutions want students with practical as well as academic knowledge of the hospitality industry as they enter graduate school. Half of sample institutions require certain amount of industry experiences as an admission requirement. This finding indicates program leaders and administrators value peer leaning among students in the graduate classrooms through the dynamics of different industry backgrounds. The summary of degree requirements show that most programs offer a non-thesis option. The typical form is a professional paper, research project, or comprehensive exam. These options for master's degree completion suggest that faculty should consider the difference in research expectations from students who consider a PhD and those who wish for industry placement. The findings of this paper may be useful to prospective graduate students in choosing graduate schools and to graduate faculty and administrators in comparing programs and findings niches to develop a competitive edge.

References Available Upon Request

RETHINKING A BALANCE BETWEEN WORK AND STUDY: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION OF WORK AND STUDIES FROM HOSPITALITY STUDENTS' VIEW

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Introduction

The U.S. Census reports, 72% of the nation's college undergraduates sought employment and became employed as of 2011 (Davis, 2012). This statistic encompasses all academic programs, yet an increasing trend is evident in hospitality students. So far, research concerning hospitality students has focused on the relationship between 'internship experience' (Richardson, 2008), 'learning styles' (Lashley & Barron, 2006), and 'stressors' (Jogaratnam & Buchanan, 2004) of the undergraduates. Furthermore, the existing and limited research on this topic emphasized on causality from positivists' (quantitative) mechanism (Hunt, 1991) rather than humanistic inquiry (qualitative) (Hirschman, 1986). This study employed phenomenology to extend the research on the unexplored concept of work and study of hospitality students in higher education institutions.

Methods

This research employed a purposeful sampling as suggested by Creswell (2013). An invitation email was sent to students actively enrolled in classes of hospitality and tourism management at a university in the southeast United States. Interview protocol was developed. The interview was informal, unstructured, and open-ended (Polkinghorne, 1989) style to allow freer expression of their feelings and thoughts (Fetterman, 1998) about their work and study. The interviewer self-transcribed the interviews verbatim immediately following each interview. The transcripts were vivo coded in an active form which means that the exact words used, by the participant, were coded in "-ing" form, called active coding (Morrison, 2002).

Findings

From the interviews, three themes regarding working and studying were emerged. First theme emerging from the interviews was being in control vs. being out of control. The experiences of being in control are related to their personalities and are conspicuous by an undaunted sense of knowing. In their social context, "being in control" seems to be planned and known, whereas "being out of control" is portrayed as not fulfilling responsibilities. Second theme was comparing and selecting which were associated with a personal strategy. For the participants, comparing and selecting were marked by strong connection to their family members, especially parents. Third theme was expecting and pursuing. For the participants, working and studying are shown as a combined tool to achieve their dreams. The descriptions express the complexity of perception and behavioral issues of hospitality students in work and school. This study provides meaningful insight as to hospitality students' perceptions and behaviors toward school and work and contributes to the foundation toward the identification of successful work and study strategies in hospitality students.

Reference Available Upon Request.

PRE AND POST PERCEPTIONS OF STUDYING ABROAD: AN ITALIAN PROGRAM CASE STUDY

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Introduction
Experiential learning via study abroad is a popular route of education in higher education. This approach integrates classroom and real world experiences to foster complete self-realization among students. A California State University created an Italy study abroad for experiential hospitality management learning. The purpose of this research is to measure short-term study abroad student benefits with cultural awareness, personal development and career decisions. This study adds to the current literature that focuses on intercultural student activities in Italy, identifying student intra and interpersonal authenticity, and confirming positive elements that experiential education offers.

Methods
The pre and post surveys analyzed student attitude transformations through quantitative questions concerning demographics, Italy and travel experience, perceptions of the Italian University and qualitative, open-ended experience questions. Due to the small size of program participants, the qualitative approach was necessary to find rich data and observe personal statements.

Both surveys were conducted online or in person to increase the level of contact, response, and retention rate. The qualitative data was content analyzed for repetitive patterns and themes, while the quantitative data from Likert scale rankings was tabulated (1 is low, 5 is high). The pre-departure survey concerned demographics, travel experience, program perceptions and the anticipated experience. The follow-up survey gauged evaluations of the program’s impact on career and studies.

Results/Discussion
In regard to perceptions before and after the Italian study abroad, the means of rankings rose for international issue awareness, Italian proficiency, roommates, dorms/apartments and overall Italian culture knowledge. Mean rankings declined for Italian education expectations compared to the US, the courses taken, and the program expectations and experience.

Prior to studying abroad, the students perceived language, navigation and money as challenges. Upon return, the added major issue was the program workload. Students felt the experience would alter their self-improvement and espoused this on return. The primary motivations to study abroad were the love of Italy and to live outside of the US, the culture and course credits. The motivations were a new experience, learning about food and wine, and educational purposes. Student recommended the program for culture immersion, independent experience and gaining social skills. These results provided implications for the program director, university and partnering school.

References Available Upon Request

HEALTHIER HOTEL ROOMS: TRAINING PROCEDURES FOR GUESTROOM SANITATION

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Introduction
Currently, there is a lack of guestroom cleaning standardization in the hotel industry. The hotel industry is in need of science based cleaning and sanitizing standards as well as training materials based on these standards. This project aimed to determine the most effective and efficient sanitizing methods for hotels guestrooms through the use of environmental sampling techniques, a thorough content analysis of educational textbooks and industry manuals, and generated training factsheets.

Methods
Twenty-three high-touch contact areas in hotel rooms were sampled using the environmental sampling technique called adenosine triphosphate bioluminescence (ATP-B). ATP-B is more commonly used to determine the sanitization level of food contact surfaces through light signals generated from a chemical compound. These light signals are known as relative light units (RLU).

ATP-B samples were taken in two intervals from three separate hotels. Each hotel sampled nine guestrooms before cleaning (Dirty) and after cleaning (Clean). To collect each sample, a 10 X 10cm (4 X 4in) area was swabbed for ATP-B sampling. Total RLU averages per location (RLU/cm^2) were calculated for all sampled rooms. These averages were used to determine areas needing more attention when cleaning as well as the creation of a factsheet. The purpose of the factsheet was to inform room attendants of possible cleaning improvements as well as evaluate the effectiveness of the recommendations. Replicating the ATP sampling procedures fulfilled validation of the factsheet.

A total of six hotel manuals and three textbooks were categorized using emergent coding methodology. A content analysis of this material was then completed through the evaluation, coding and frequency analysis on the suggested guestroom cleaning standards and procedures.

Results/Discussion
Results of the environmental sampling procedures suggest that specific locations in the guestroom required more attention when cleaning. After introduction of a factsheet with enhanced cleaning suggestions, average RLUs per location reduced.

The results of the content analysis offer suggested cleaning steps. The general cleaning steps determined from the content analysis were stock cart, enter room, pre-treat room, clear room, strip bed, dust bedroom, spray bathroom tiles, make bed(s), clean bathroom, vacuum, report, and inspect.Incorporating the determined target areas and factsheet techniques into the procedures determined from the content analysis may increase guestroom cleaning efficiencies and reduce the risk of contamination.

References Available Upon Request

MEASURING MOOC SUCCESS

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Introduction
With faster adoption than any prior product or technology, millions globally have enrolled in Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) (Lewin, 2013b; Ng, 2013). MOOC's revolutionary ability is to provide free and open access to quality higher education courses, including tourism.

Thanks to huge enrollments and publicity, the supply of and demand for MOOCs continues to grow, diversify and evolve. MOOC suppliers range across for-and non-profit entities and individuals. In tourism, MOOC supply is limited. As of November 2014, four institutions provide nine MOOCs. FLOOFL (floofl.com), a UK-based social enterprise dedicated to accessible learning for all, offers six of these nine MOOCs.

Yet with reported drop-out rates of 90-95% (Jordan, 2014; Murphy, et al, 2013), critics argue that MOOCs are a failure (Dolan, 2014). Others counter that defining failure in traditional academic notions of attendance and completion is an inappropriate MOOC comparison (DeBoer et al, 2014; Koller et al, 2013). This conceptual paper draws on a literature review to examine MOOC success based on a fundamental MOOC aspect, open learning for all. Discussing the MOOC market, particularly diversity and universal access to learning, leads to two proposed MOOC success areas ─ supply and demand.

Methods/Literature Review/Results/Discussion
In response to growing global demand, suppliers provide MOOCs to an increasing number of non-English speaking countries including those with limited bandwidth. Suppliers have diversified their subjects to include employment skills, vocational and secondary curricula and the arts. This inclusive trend is commendable. However, MOOCs continue to reflect English speaking, elite university origins and fuel the MOOC success versus failure debate (Emmanuel, 2013). Proposed supply success measures include the number and variety of MOOCs, content diversity ─ such as languages, partner institutions and target populations ─ and accessibility factors such as catering to hearing and vision impaired learners and those with low bandwidth.

Despite low completion rates, 7,000 students in an early Harvard xMOOC earned a certificate of accomplishment (Murphy et al, 2013). Even more participants accessed materials, perhaps simply for the sheer joy of learning a specific topic. Without MOOCs, such students may have never accessed nor learned the materials.There are rich research and industry opportunities for developing MOOC success measures, driven by intrinsic motivations rather than an extrinsic motivation to earn a certificate (Koller et al., 2013). Hence, demand measures should focus on participant engagement and demographics. Measures of successful MOOC supply should adhere to the MOOC, and Illich (1970), ideal of universal access to education.One promising research stream is the role of engagement, goal setting and self-efficacy in taking a MOOC (Bandura, 1977, 1978). For example, what type of engagement or goals improve learning and to what extent? What role does an individual's self-efficacy play in sustained MOOC engagement activities?

References Available Upon Request

RETESTING HERZBERG'S TWO-FACTOR THEORY AMONG THE HOUSEKEEPING STAFF IN THE LODING INDUSTRY IN THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

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Introduction
The main duty of housekeepers in the hotel industry is keeping the rooms and hotel clean (Goh, 1989). Preparing rooms for sale is essential to customer satisfaction, the inclination to return, and hotel profitability (Kandampully & Suhartanto, 2003). Despite their obvious importance, hotel room attendants and their work remain extremely "unseen" by guests and other hotel employees (Powell & Watson, 2003). Furthermore, there are only a limited number of studies on housekeeping departments and workers compared to studies on food & beverage and hotels in the hospitality industry (Lennon & Wood, 1989). The purpose of this study is to test the reliability of the current survey instrument and to determine whether the current study using Herzberg's two-factor theory of job satisfaction with a sample of housekeepers in the hotel industry in the Republic of Korea would yield the same results as Herzberg's initial study.

Methods
The survey instrument was developed based upon previously validated instruments derived from the literature review. The participants of this study were housekeeping staff currently working in top-rated hotels in the Republic of Korea. On July 22nd, 2014, the researchers visited the two top-rated hotels in Seoul, the Republic of Korea to explain the importance of the study, provide detailed instruction and distribute the survey. The survey was administered on site and collected by the director of the housekeeping department at a time and location convenient for the employees. *T*-test and correlation were conducted to determine whether there were any significant differences between the satisfied and dissatisfied groups and to examine the correlation between surveyed factors and job satisfaction.

Results/Discussion
A reliability test was performed to check the consistency and accuracy of the measurement scales. The results for Cronbach's coefficient α were satisfactory (between 0.69 and 0.96), indicating questions in each construct measure a similar concept (Cronbach, 1951). The findings show that motivators and hygiene factors were both sources of job satisfaction rather than dissatisfaction. These findings are the opposite of Herzberg's original study, which concluded that hygiene factors only affect job dissatisfaction. However, this study did support Herzberg's theory that motivators are the most significant factors that create job satisfaction. This inconsistency might be caused due to the different samples between Herzberg's study and this study, a great number of outsourced employees, or the different nationalities of the samples participants. It is also possible that employees' values on motivation and job satisfaction have changed since Herzberg conducted the study in 1959. The main study, with more participants, can better determine the reasons for these inconsistencies.

References Available Upon Request

DISPARATE PRE-ENTRY CAREER EXPECTATIONS: A STUDY ON GENDER INEQUALITY

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Introduction
This paper reports on two studies that were conducted to determine career expectations of new entrants to the hospitality industry, with a specific emphasis on the role that gender plays in forming pre-entry expectations.

Methods
The first study used cluster analysis to determine which factors were most closely related and employed a taxonomy building approach, while the second study was a correlational field study used to test several hypotheses.

Results
The studies found that gender moderated career expectations in those women who perceived partying, as less of a social norm in hospitality, than men and their female counterparts who perceived partying as a strong social norm.

References Available Upon Request

UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE'S ROLE IN PRE-ENTRY CAREER EXPECTATIONS

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Introduction
These studies aim to reveal the cross-cultural differences in how hospitality students form their pre-entry career aspirations.

Methods
Analytic induction was used with data collected from 38 interviews with participants in four different cultures. Analytic induction generated theory that was supported by a second study, which used cluster analysis with 285 survey responses collected from various cultures.

Results
The findings of the two studies indicate that the cultural orientation of uncertainty avoidance plays a role in how students form their expectations for a career in hospitality. For students with a low uncertainty avoidance orientation, the effects of social support significantly increased their career commitment and in turn their expected length of tenure in the hospitality industry. Conversely, this relationship did not exist when an individual's cultural orientation regarding uncertainty avoidance was high.

References Available Upon Request

EMOTIONAL LABOR AND TURNOVER INTENTIONS: THE MODERATING ROLE OF COMMUNICATION IN DEPTH

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Introduction
The present study investigates the moderating role of communication in depth in the relations between emotional labor strategies and turnover intentions.

Methods
This study was administered to employees in four Chinese hotel companies. Frontline employees were asked to participate in the survey and 216 valid responses were retrieved for data analysis.

Results/Discussion
The results showed that surface acting and deep acting were associated with turnover intentions, and communication in depth moderated the relation between deep acting and turnover intentions. Although there was not a direct effect of authentic emotions on turnover intentions, communication in depth was a significant moderator of this relation. This study suggests that training should be encouraged to enable employees to distinguish between surface acting and deep acting. In addition, building close relationships among employees should be strengthened to enhance employees' retention.

References Available Upon Request

EXPLORATORY INVESTIGATION ON THE IMPACT OF SUPPORT ON THE JOB PERFORMANCE OF FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME EMPLOYEES

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Introduction

Research is limited in the hospitality setting that distinguishes different organizational-oriented outcomes of organizational support on employees with different employment status. As such, this study attempts to contribute to existing literatures of organizational support by investigating the contribution of supervisor and coworker support on the performance of full-time and part-time hospitality employees. The authors seek to add incremental dialogue to the existing organizational support literatures by differentiating supervisory support from co-worker support, in addition to testing a new moderator variable of employment status. The purpose of this study is to identify how employees' perception of support in the workplace influences work-related performance, and how this relationship is interrelated to an employee's employment status.

Method

This study utilises a quantitative approach, using a self-administered survey for data collection. Close-ended questionnaires comprised of 42 structured questions were deployed to 21 participating 4-star and 5-star hotels in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. 196 completed questionnaires, an 80% response rate, were successfully analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The researchers used simple linear regression and split-half method in SPSS to confirm the postulated hypotheses.

Results/Discussion

Findings of the study indicate that only coworker support significantly influenced employees' performance. This further substantiates the need to distinguish differing support functions as they have different impacts on employees' organizational-oriented outcomes. This study also found that full-time and part-time employees exert different levels of performance, according to their distinctive perception of support from different sources. In conclusion, results of this study indicate that hospitality employees feel that they perform better in the presence of support from their peers, but there is no indication of a heightened perception of performance in the presence of support from supervisory personnel. Findings of this study suggest that hospitality supervisors need to pay attention to the level of support that is provided to the employee base. Perception of supervisory and coworker support has the ability to either frustrate or stimulate employees' organizational-oriented outcome, particularly work-related performance, which will ultimately impact the overall performance of a hospitality business.

References Available Upon Request

AN EXAMINATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF WORK ADAPTABILITY AMONG CASINO WORKERS

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Introduction
Casino organizations are often characterized by inflexible schedules, heavy workloads, and limited weekend's timeoff, in which the need for adaptive workers has become increasingly important (Pulakos et al., 2000; Wan & Chan, 2013). Despite the importance of work adaptability for casino workers, few efforts have been devoted toward the understanding of organizational antecedents and outcomes of work adaptability of casino workers (Prentice & King, 2013). To fill the aforementioned gap in the literature, this study applies resource theory (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000) and protean theory (Hall, 1996) to examine the structural relationships of work adaptability with its organizational antecedents (i.e., schedule flexibility and personal career development) and consequences (i.e., job performance and turnover intention) among casino workers.

Methods
Casino workers in South Korea comprised the population of this study. Participants were asked to complete a self-reported questionnaire distributed by senior managers during shift meetings. Questionnaires were distributed to 530 employees with 500 returned, and with 12 outliers discarded. With a response rate of 92%, a total of 488 casino workers was identified in the analysis. The measurement instruments were derived from previous studies to measure the constructs in the conceptual model. Then, the questionnaire was finalized through feedback gathered from a group of professors and casino employees. Structural equation modeling was used to test the research hyposthese.

Results/Discussion
This research integrates the psychological resource and protean career theories to develop a conceptual model of organizational drivers and outcomes of work adaptability in a casino industry. The results show that schedule flexibility and opportunities for personal career development have a significant effect on work adaptability, which promotes job performance and lessens turnover intention of casino employees. This study fills a gap found in extant literature in that empirical research is scant on the drivers and outcomes of work adaptability (Back et al., 2010; Chan et al., 2014). The findings offer rich implications toward hospitality human resource management in general and, in particular, improve our understanding of how schedule flexibility and personal career development programs can help achieve organizational strategic goals, such as superior job performance and retention of high-quality employees, and the mechanisms associated with work adaptability. Therefore, practitioners can use the findings of the study to scrutinize human management strategies and maintain sustainable competitive advantages through the optimization of work adaptability.

References Available Upon Request

THE PSYCHOMETRIC VALIDATION OF A GENERALIZABLE SALES POTENTIAL PROFILE: A CASE OF FOUR DISTINCT INDUSTRIES

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Introduction

Interest in employment-related measures of sales potential is not a recent phenomenon, with earlier definitions involving the computation of relative sales possibilities in geographic areas (Wellman, 1939). Such measures in distributing personnel and resources, as well as to appraise the effectiveness of sales and advertising efforts against performance quotas can be a key tool for control mechanisms (Brown, 1937). Guidice and Mero (2012) described control mechanisms for sales performance as either outcome-based, in which quantifiable productivity is the priority, or behavior-based, in which adaptive selling is the main focus. In either case, control mechanisms are essential as sales roles, by their nature, because they require specific monitoring and evaluation (Fang, Palmatier, & Evans, 2004).

Methods

This study investigated the validation of a psychometric behavioral model, generalizable for commission-based sales professionals. The participants were gathered from four unrelated employers, each representing a distinct industry; Financial services (n=52), Automobile (n=51), Staffing (n=32), Hospitaity/Timeshare (n=69). To identify specific behavioral tendencies among sales professionals, participants completed the Leading Dimensions Profile (LDP), a psychometric inventory designed specifically for employment-related purposes and the outcomes from which were compared with performance measures provided by their respective employers. Leveraging advanced psychometric techniques; researchers derived a scoring model based on participants' LDP outcomes.

Results/Discussion

Research findings derived from 204 participants from four distinct industries: financial services, automobile, staffing/temporary placement, and hospitality/timeshare. When applied to the entire sample, the model yielded statistically significant correlation with the employer-provided performance criteria. Further, the model exhibited statistically significant findings as a screening device, revealing efficient categorization of higher and lower performers. Consequently, cross-validating the automobile, staffing/temp and hospitality/timeshare data with the profile developed with only financial services data adds credence to Pervin (1996). He defined personality traits as temporally stable, cross-situational individual differences that refer to broad behavioral consistencies in the conduct of people. In addition to the results also suggest some "broad behaviors" in Achievement Drive like Work Intensity, Assertiveness, and Adaptability referring competitiveness, in Relationship Drive, Status Motivation referring confidence.The findings suggest the model could serve as a criterion-valid predictor for a variety of employment decisions, including selection, succession planning, coaching, and training.

References Available Upon Request.

A SOCIAL ROLE OF HOSPITALITY COMPANIES: SOCIALIZING MIGRANT WORKERS

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Introduction
Corporate social responsibility (CSR) has drawn attention from corporate executives, managers, and academic researchers. In particular, several empirical studies on CSR of hospitality companies show that CSR activities cover environment, social, economic, philanthropic, and consumer dimensions. A number of hospitality companies are operating CSR activity programs focusing on these dimensions as well. By the way, the research question of "Is there any other social role which hospitality companies can serve?" was suggested. Therefore, this study aims to explain the social role of hospitality organizations which serve to help migrant workers of the hospitality industry socialize in the host country, and aims to examine this social role by empirical analysis, applying social exchange theory, and acculturation model. Especially, this study investigated the relationship among perceived organizational support (POS) from hospitality organizations and host culture orientation (HCO) of migrant workers, their sociocultural adjustment (SCA), job satisfaction (JS), life satisfaction (LS), and turnover intention (TI).

Methods
Based on snowball sampling, 267 valid samples among 300 respondents from Chinese migrant workers at restaurants in Korea were used for statistical analysis. Eight items were used to measure POS, 8 items for HCO, 14 items for SCA, 4 items for JS, 5 items for LS, and 3 items for TI. The survey instrument was in Chinese and Korean. The Korean version was translated into Chinese, and also back translation was performed. A structural equation modeling was conducted to test the hypotheses after examining construct validity and discriminant validity by a confirmatory factor analysis.

Results/Discussion
This study showed that both POS and HCO have a significant effect on SCA. In particular, coefficients of POS, rather than those of HCO, were higher, which indicates that although personal efforts of migrant workers are important for their effective socialization, positive support from a hospitality organization plays a far more important role. Moreover, POS had a positive effect on JS and HCO on LS, respectively. SCA had an insignificant but somewhat negative effect on JS while having a positive effect on LS. The plausible reason for these results is that migrant workers are often assigned to mainly low-skilled duties at work, so they grow unsatisfactory with their job as they become adjusted through socialization. In addition, TI as a final outcome in this model appeared to decrease through SCA, JS, and LS. Socialization of migrant workers reduces their turnover, positively affecting the hospitality organization. In conclusion, for better sociocultural adjustment of migrant workers at hospitality companies, it is crucial for migrant workers themselves to make efforts to adapt to the host culture, but support from the organization that they belong to is far more important. Hospitality companies should play a social role to help migrant workers working at their organization to better settle down in the host country, leading to the increase of life satisfaction of migrant workers and thereby decrease of their turnover intention.

References Available Upon Request

EMOTIONAL LABOR DISPLAY RULES AND JOB BURNOUT IN HOTEL INDUSTRY: THE MODERATING ROLES OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND CUSTOMER ATTITUDE

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Introduction

The employees' abilities, knowledge, and skills are valuable internal resources that lead the organization to success. The hospitality industry is known to have a high job turnover. Job burnout is the key driver that causes employees to switch jobs (Lee and Ashforth, 1996). In service-related sectors, in order to satisfy customers, employees (i.e., frontline employees in the hotels) are assigned a work load with heavy emotional involvement, potentially leading to emotional exhaustion and reduced job satisfaction. Job burnout may be caused by internal and external factors or the employees' inability to adapt to internal and external stress. However, evidence from the existing literature is limited to integrating the three sources to explore the job burnout antecedents. Based on the hotel context, this study aims to: 1) examine the predicting impacts of emotional display rules and job burnout; 2) test the moderating impact of employees' emotional intelligence; and 3) examine the moderating impact of customer friendliness on the job burnout framework.

Methods

This study used a self-reported, scenario-based survey to collect the data. The student convenience sample was surveyed. The survey started with a short scenario in the hotel frontline employee setting. The participants were randomly assigned to read one of the four scenarios and asked to imagine themselves as the employee mentioned in the scenario. Based on their perceptions, they were asked to answer the questions related to emotional display rules, job burnout, emotional intelligence, and perceived customer friendliness. We designed the four scenarios by mixing the employee's different initial daily working moods (good/bad) with friendly/unfriendly customers. Multiple-regression was used to test the hypotheses.

Results/Discussion

Surface acting has a significant positive impact on emotional exhaustion/depersonalization and a negative impact on reduced personal accomplishment. Deep acting has a significant negative impact on emotional exhaustion/depersonalization and a negative impact on reduced personal accomplishment. Emotional intelligence plays only a significant positive moderating effect on the relationship between surface acting and emotional exhaustion/depersonalization. The moderating effect of customer friendliness is not significant. This study recommends that hotel operators develop and improve employees' emotional intelligence through training programs. In addition, the hotel operators may focus on evaluating new employees' emotional intelligence during the recruitment and selection processes.

References Available Upon Request

HOSPITALITY FEMALE EMPLOYEES' WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT AND TURNOVER INTENTIONS: A STUDY IN CHINA

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Introduction

Relative to other industries, the hospitality industry is known to experience a higher employee turnover rate, especially among female employees (Blomme, Rheede & Tromp, 2010). Work-family conflict (WFC) is considered to be one of the major causes for this challenge (Blomme, Tromp & Rheede, 2008). Moreover, studies on WFC outside Western countries are rare, not to mention studies within a complicated background as China. The traditional Chinese culture is largely influenced by the Confucianism (Mortazavi et al., 2009), female may experience higher levels of WFC compared to their male counterparts, which may lead to their turnover. However, in recent decades, Eastern developing countries such as China and Korea have experienced significant economic and social structure changes. More female choose to resign and focus on their family after getting married or having a child, which may bring new views of work-family balance among women in China. Thus, a study of WFC and turnover intentions among female employees in China, especially within a high turnover industry as hospitality, need to be conducted. The present study is set out to answer the following questions: (1) how does WFC associate with turnover intentions among hospitality female employees in China? (2) Do gender, marital and parental status have influence on the relationship between WFC and turnover intentions of hospitality employees in China?

Methods

The study was conducted among hospitality employees of five hotels from the same local Chinese hotel chain. These hotels are located in four major cities in China. Work interfering with family (WIF), family interfering with work (FIW) and turnover intentions were measured by five-point Likert scales, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Gender, number of children, marital status were also included in the study. Given gender, marital status, and parental status are categorical variables, both Pearson correlation and Kendall correlation were carried out to examine the relationships between these variables. Then hierarchical multiple regression was conducted to test if gender, marital status, and parental status moderate the relationship between WFC and turnover intentions among hospitality employees in China.

Results/Discussion

A total of 375 usable responses were collected. The sample was 42% male, 58% female, 61% were married, while 39% were single. Approximately 33% had no children and 67% of the respondents had at least one child at home. The results of correlation analysis indicate that gender has statistically significant relationship with WIF, FIW, and turnover intentions while marital status only has statistically significant relationship with turnover intentions. Both WIF and FIW have statistically significant positive relationship with turnover intentions. For hospitality female employees, both correlations of WIF and FIW with turnover intentions are also strong and statistically significant. The results of hierarchical multiple regressions show that both gender and marital status strongly moderate the relationship between WIF and turnover intentions and the relationship between FIW and turnover intentions. Parental status was found to only moderate the relationship between WIF and turnover intentions.

References Available Upon Request

ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP AND ITS IMPACT ON HOSPITALITY EMPLOYEE BEHAVIOR: A STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

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Introduction
This study investigated the relationship between entrepreneurial leadership, proactive, and innovative behavior through work engagement and leader–member exchange (LMX) as mediating factors.

Methods
Participants were students from the hospitality management program of a Midwestern university. 150 questionnaires were distributed; 146 were returned. Of these, 27 were incomplete, and thus, unusable, leaving 119 (79.33%) questionnaires available for data analysis. All constructs were measured using the Cronbach's alpha. Entrepreneurial leadership was measured using an 8-item ENTRELEAD scale (Renko et al., 2014) with .93 reliability, while Work Engagement was measured using a 17-item version of the UWES (Schaufeli et al., 2006) with a reliability of .90. Furthermore, the LMX was measured using a 7-item LMX scale (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) with a .91 reliability. Innovative behaviors were measured using a 9-item IWB scale (Janssen, 2000) with a .94 reliability. Proactive behavior was measured using a 17-item the Proactive Personality Scale by Bateman & Crant (1993) with a .89 reliability.

Results/Discussion
The findings showed that entrepreneurial leadership had a positive impact on proactive and innovative behavior and was mediated by work engagement. However, entrepreneurial leadership did not have a significant direct and indirect effect on both proactive and innovative behavior through the LMX. This study would help entrepreneurial leadership research development and showed the effect of entrepreneurial leadership in the hospitality industry. The study also demonstrates the importance of employee work engagement which leaders need to focus on to get employees to be more proactive and innovative.

References Available Upon Request

PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL PUBLIC RELATIONS, EMPLOYEES' JOB SATISFACTION, AND TURNOVER INTENTION: EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE IN KOREAN HOTELS

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Introduction

Internal public relations, defined as "communications and interactions among employees or members of an organization" (Moyer, 2011, p. 1), has gained growing attention from businesses, because effective internal public relations can lead to higher employee job satisfaction and commitment (Broom & Sha, 2013). In this study, we examined the relationships among hotel employees' perceived effectiveness of internal public relations, perceived organizational support, job satisfaction, and turnover intention. The results of this study can help hotel managers to develop internal public relations strategies that are more effective.

Methods

Research questionnaires were distributed to six hotels in Korea. The principal investigator of this study asked the general managers of each hotel to distribute the survey questionnaires to their employees regardless of gender, age, race, and position. The instrument for measuring the perceived effectiveness of internal public relations was developed based on the items for the relationship scales suggested by Hon and Grunig's (1999) study. Questions about perceived organizational support were adopted from Cheng and colleagues' recent study (Cheng, Yang, Wan, & Chu, 2013). The items for measuring job satisfaction and turnover intention came from two previous studies (Johnson, 2004; Lee, Kim, Lee, & Li, 2012). A five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 5 (strongly disagree to strongly agree) was used for all questions in the survey except for the demographic questions.

Results/Discussion

The findings of this study suggest that Korean hotel employees' job satisfaction is more likely to increase (1) when the employees perceive that there will be long-term relationships between the organization and themselves (commitment) and (2) when they find that the organization is an enjoyable place to work (satisfaction). In contrast, building trust or securing mutually equal benefits (exchange relationships) at work did not have a statistically significant impact on job satisfaction. Turnover intention was found to be positively related to exchange relationships. In other words, employees' turnover intention decreased when the employees felt that the organization would provide benefits without expecting anything in return. Meanwhile, the result of this study suggests that turnover intention is negatively related to satisfaction. The mediating effect of perceived organizational support (POS) between perceived effectiveness of internal public relations (PEIPR) and job satisfaction was partially supported. However, POS did not mediate the effect of PEIPR on turnover intention.

References Available Upon Request

INVESTIGATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING IN HAWAII LUXURY HOTELS BY RECONFIGURING VISITOR FEEDBACK

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Introduction

The outburst of social media created the virtual Internet world that provides newer and more advanced means and opportunities to stay in contact with both hotels and their current and potential customers. Researchers showed usage of various types of social media as a marketing tool and various usages of social media were framed as the Digital Marketing Framework (DMF) (Kierzkowski et al., 1996), composed of five phases: 1) attract users, 2) engage users' interest, 3) retain users, 4) learn the users' preference, and 5) relate back to users as customized interactions. The purpose of this study was to explore the extent to which social media marketing is adopted in luxury hotel business in Hawaii. As numerous past studies focused on customers' perceptions toward using social media as a marketing tool (Chan, 2008; Chu, 2001; Rong, Li, & Law, 2009; Ye, Law, & Gu, 2009), this study focused on hotels' social media marketing performance based on DMF.

Method

Contents of TripAdvisor, Facebook, and hotels' official websites for the four and five star hotels in Hawaiʻi were collected and analyzed based on DMF (Kierzkowski, McQuade, Waitman & Zeisser, 1996). The procedure of data collection started with visiting TripAdvisor and looking for comments to each of the eight luxury hotels during the period between August 2013 and February 2014. Second, activities and functions provided on each hotel official sites were collected. Then, links to social media sites from official web pages were visited. Facebook provided most comments between August 2013 and February 2014, and was therefore kept as our third source. The collected data was examined using the digital marketing framework proposed by Kierzkowski et al. (1996) and the criteria proposed by Chan and Guillet (2011).

Results

Findings of this study illustrate that these hotels excelled in attracting and relating to customers, but performances differed in engaging, retaining, and learning phases. In addition, several problems in Hawaii luxury hotels' social media marketing were detected, including the lack of language used to reply to comments, passive response on social media websites, the lack of online interaction between hotels and social media users, and unresponsiveness from hotels to online reviews.

References Available Upon Request

TOWARD AN UNDERSTANDING OF CONSUMERS' BEHAVIORL INTENTION TO USE ONLINE FOOD ORDERING BASED ON UTAUT

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Introduction

The Internet and other information communication technologies have provided consumers with access to food menus for online ordering. However, compared with the other self-service technology such as online travel purchases and airline check-in kiosk usage, restaurant online food ordering system shows less popular usage by customers (Kim & Brewer, 2012). The main purpose of this study is to explain the determinants related to customers' adoption of restaurant online food ordering by extending the unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT) with three constructs: perceived enjoyment, price value, and need for interaction. The rich understanding gained can help restaurant operators design better system and market strategies to enhance customers' self-service experience.

Methods

An online survey method was adopted to collect data through Qualtrics.com. The target population were U.S. citizens who have the experience of restaurant online food ordering. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to test the measurement model and structural equation modelling (SEM) was used to test and estimate the assumptions of research model.

Results/Discussion

The findings of this study have important implications. Firstly, our findings support the basic relationships proposed by UTAUT (Venkatesh et al., 2003), demonstrating that intention to use online food ordering can be predicted by Performance Expectancy, Effort Expectancy and Social Influence. Secondly, our results show substantial effects of three antecedents on Performance Expectancy: need for interaction, price value and perceived enjoyment. We found that these three constructs all directly influence consumers' perception of Performance Expectancy which significantly impacts their intention to use online food ordering. For customers who prefer human interaction service, the technology makes them feel less useful for food ordering than other customers. Thirdly, Facilitating Condition was not found to have significant influence on usage intention, which is consistent with previous studies (Taylor & Todd, 1995; Venkatesh et al., 2003). Based on the results, practical recommendations were made to the restaurant operators regarding management and marketing strategies. A friendly and easy online ordering process would help consumers order food effectively. The restaurant marketing managers could consider offering discounts and other marketing strategies to motivate and improve customers' online food ordering intention. In addition, managers should provide customer-friendly instructions or build-in aids to educate customers for ensuring that customers with the appropriate needs can also be attracted to this self-service technology.

References Available Upon Request

DO CONSUMERS CARE ABOUT HOTEL BRANDS? ANALYTICS OF CUSTOMER PERCEPTIONS IN ONLINE REVIEWS

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Introduction

The increasing popularity of hotel consumer reviews has enabled researchers to further understand traveler perceptions of marketing concepts such as branding. This study explores a large set of hotel properties to determine if brands are reflected in reviews and can these reviews be used to identify distinct hotel brands. Customer reviews collected from the largest online travel agency, Expedia.com, are used to understand the extent to which the notion of brand is reflected in customer reviews and to compare major American hotel brands in an effort to better understand the distinct factors that comprise how consumers perceive their related experience. Two research questions were included: To what extent is a hotel brand reflected in hotel guests' online reviews and can online customer reviews be used to differentiate hotel brands?

Methods

This exploratory study followed a text analysis procedure. Hotel properties were classified according to parent company brand and each category contained multiple properties with numerous reviews. The reviews were processed and broken down into unique terms representing concepts. Frequencies of words suggested more common ideas within each brand. Correspondence analysis was used to plot the semantic space garnered from reviews, with the most frequent concepts defining the position of the chain hotel companies.

Results / Discussion

The resulting correspondence maps suggest that there are distinct differences between brands as reflected by the positioning of hotel chains in the semantic space. Analysis shows clear implications that while customers do not explicitly discuss brands, there are underlying factors at work that serve to distinguish between lodging segments and hotel brands. Direct competitors were also shown to be very similar in consumer perceptions, reinforcing the concept that brands are not a priority for consumers writing reviews. This study serves as an example of the potential for big data analytics, as well as the groundwork for future research in customer perception of the lodging industry.

References Available Upon Request

THE JOINT IMPACT OF SERVICE FAILURE MODE AND GENDER ON CONSUMERS' INTENT TO VOICE

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Introduction

Prior hospitality literature exploring consumer complaining behaviors (CCBs) across different service failure modes (interpersonal vs. self-service technology service) provides inconsistent findings. In this study, we argue that gender will moderate the impact of service failure mode on consumer responses. Specifically, the present study aims to investigate the joint impact of the service failure mode (interpersonal vs. SST service) and gender on consumers' intent to voice their complaints, and to explore the psychological mechanism explaining the effects.

Methods

This empirical study employed a quasi-experimental design in which service failure mode (interpersonal vs. SST) was manipulated, while the participants' genders were measured. The written scenario reflected a hotel reservation failure experience (interpersonal - calling the hotel vs. SST - booking online). ANOVA and PROCESS analysis were employed to test the hypotheses.

Results/Discussion

The findings from the current research demonstrate the joint impact of service failure mode and gender on consumers' intent to voice their complaints. Specifically, our findings indicate that female consumers are more likely to voice their dissatisfaction when the failure involves an SST (outcome failure) than an interpersonal failure (process failure). In the context of SST failures, females want to satisfy their need for social interaction and their need to vent by talking to the service provider. Moreover, we found that women's communal tendency to help motivates them to voice their dissatisfaction to the service provider. In other words, motivation to help mediated the effect of service failure mode on female consumers' complaint intentions. On the other hand, the more outcome-focused, agentic-oriented male consumers showed similar complaint responses across the two service failure modes. That is, they want complain to portray their masculinity.

Taken together, we demonstrate that gender moderates the impact of service failure type on consumers' complaint intentions, and that female consumers are "positive" complainers in an SST context. Women want to help hospitality practitioners to be aware of the failure and to fix the problem. Therefore, hospitality practitioner might pay special attention to female consumers' complaints.

References Available Upon Request

DESTINATION MARKETING RESEARCH USING BIG DATA ANALYTICS: A CASE FOR FLORIDA

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Introduction

Social media platforms have become significant channels for tourism information sharing and marketing. Travelers also greatly rely on social media content during their decision-making process. These inter-relationships within social media networks have resulted in increased interest in developing communication strategies. The amount of information generated from both sides is massive. Twitter, for example, sends approximately 500 million tweets daily. In that regard, discussions on big data analytics in tourism marketing research are a timely agenda. The advantages of adopting these techniques to understand popular topics, emotional states, and communication structures are well demonstrated; however, tourism research related to social media network utilizing big data is still in an infancy stage. This paper demonstrates the application of social media analysis techniques useful for destination marketing organizations (DMOs) to draw meaningful implications from social media content for their destination marketing development.

Methods

This study dealt with a case of Florida, one of the most famous travel places in the United States. Using the Twitter Application Programming Interface, a corpus of tweets containing words, "Florida travel," "Florida vacation," and "Florida trip," was collected from June 16 to July 2 in 2014. A simple filtering technique was applied to remove non-English tweets and duplicated tweets in three search data sets. The final data set contained 50,463 tweets. Text mining and word frequency analysis were applied to identify popular issues and themes. Spatial analysis and network mapping analysis were performed to characterize communication patterns in the Twitter network.

Results/Discussion

Popular words identified in this study were consistent with results found in previous studies on Florida images: *beach*, *weather*, *summer*, *family*, and *Disney*. The analysis also observed destination-related words in Florida such as *Panama City*, *Orlando*, *Miami*, and *Florida Key* or *Key West*. Positive emotional words used in many tweets included *beautiful, love*, *inspiration*, *enjoy*, *happy*, and *great*. Spatial analysis quantified and sorted tweets referring to Florida travel and visualized major states where the tweets were posted during the data collection period. Those are *Florida, New York, California, Texas, Nevada, and Colorado*. Cluster analysis in network mapping analysis extracted four major groups, and the most active users in the groups were further investigated. The most active accounts in each group included an antiviral supplement brand, a celebrity, a professional blogger, and a travel agency. As demonstrated in this study, the number of tweets referring to Florida travel was phenomenal in spite of the short period of data collection. Further, considering the relationship among followees and followers, the influence of Twitter is immense and is not ignorable. This paper demonstrated the feasibility of applying social media analytics for destination marketing. DMOs need to track popular words and emotional expressions used in tweets to refer to their destinations to better understand users' perception of destinations. The results of word frequency analysis and spatial analysis are helpful for DMOs to be aware of trends among different places. DMOs could consider major Twitter accounts in their network to disseminate diverse travel information quickly and broadly.

THE IMPACT OF PASSENGER FOCUSED AIRPORT TECHNOLOGY ON TRAVELER SATISFACTION

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Introduction
Anticipating the needs of contemporary travelers, different airports utilize the advantages of software applications and technology advancements to improve overall airport experience.

Methods
To understand how travelers react to various technology features, this study developed an instrument that measures travelers’ perceptions of airport technologies and a model that captures the relationship among different types of technologies, travelers' confidence, enjoyment, and satisfaction. A confirmatory factor analysis distinguished two airport technology factors: *self-service* and *supporting technologies*. An SEM model with five latent constructs was developed.

Results
An SEM testing showed that airport self-service technologies positively affect travelers' confidence benefits, while supporting technologies contribute to the enjoyment passengers experience at the airport. Furthermore, both confidence benefits and enjoyment have positive effects on the traveler satisfaction.

References Available Upon Request

ANALYZING ATTRIBUTES OF HOTEL-RESERVATION-RELATED APPS: E-SERVICE QUALITY ON MOBILE EXPERIENCE

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Introduction

As a result of the increasing popularity of mobile devices, a growing body of evidence suggests that mobile devices and apps have an influence on travelers' activities, such as seeking information, purchasing airline tickets, and booking hotels (Wang, Park & Fesenmaier 2012). Mobile devices offer clearly different experience from desktop computers through mobile applications (apps) available in mobile devices. As the number of tablet users today grows, so does the number of new apps for hotel reservations. With the assorted amount of apps in the mobile device market, investigations of using tablet apps in the hospitality industry as a new electronic distribution channel and user interface are warranted, while relatively little research has been carried out on examining and analyzing attributes of tablet apps in hospitality industry. Thus, this study focuses on not only examining the contents of attributes of hotel-booking-apps currently in the markets but also attempting to categorize a number of apps' functions by the level of importance, which was measured from an online survey. Moreover, the means-end chain theory was used as a theoretical framework to analyze the attributes of the apps with the dimensions of e-service quality.

Methods

Twenty seven attributes of hotel-reservation-related apps were excerpted by authors. For better reliability of the results, a coding instruction was developed and used by two coders, who are familiar with using hotel-booking-related apps, to independently examine 27 features of the apps. All recordings of 27 features of the apps met the agreements set by the two coders. Based on content analysis, all app features were evaluated by respondents, using a five-point Likert scale ranging from "Not Important" (1) to "Very Important" (5). An online self-administrated survey was developed to probe consumers' perception of the e-service dimension provided on hotel-reservation apps. A total of 421 tablet users from two US Midwestern universities participated in the online survey. After data screening, 390 responses were found as the valid sample for further data analysis.

Results/Discussion

An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was performed in order to identify underlying factors of apps' functions. The four factors were labeled as: 1) hotel reservation experience, 2) hedonic experience, 3) online support, and 4) sharing travel activities through text message and email. The factors drawn from EFA have been attempted to compare with the dimensions of e-service quality (e.g., the factor of hedonic experience may be comparable with the e-service quality dimension of flow/emotional appeal, which was drawn from Loiacono et al. (2002)). Although this interpretation is speculative, and considerable additional work needs to be done using wide variety of data, it is hoped that this paper can be an initial bridge between traditional e-service quality and mobile app experience.

References Available Upon Request

TRAVELERS USE OF ONLINE SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS ACROSS OVER TIME: AN APPLICATION OF LATENT TRANSITION ANALYSIS

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Introduction

The emergence of Web 2.0 based systems has enabled travelers to communicate, interact, and form relationships with destinations, travel-related businesses, and other travelers (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). Mobile technology, especially smartphones and tablets has also changed the nature and timing which travelers use travel information (i.e., real-time information searching) (Gretzel, Fesenmaier, & O'Leary, 2006; Xiang, O'Leary, & Fesenmaier, in press; Xiang, Magnini, & Fesenmaier, in press). As such, it is argued in this paper that the use of travelers' social media could (and probably does) differ across the three stages of the tourism experience (e.g., pre-, during, and post-trip); consequently, travelers develop their own idiosyncratic information searching strategies. Based upon the concept of media repertoire, it is further argued that different patterns of use of social media lead to different behavioral outcomes and tourism experiences (Choe, Stienmetz & Fesenmaier, 2014; Kushwaha & Shankar, 2013). Thus, the primary goal of this study is to first identify the structure (i.e., the media repertoires travelers develop) of travelers' use of social media and second, to identify the different in social media use across the three stages of the trip experience (i.e., before, during, and after trip).

Methods

Data were obtained using an online survey of 281,646 American travelers who had requested the information to 44 advertising programs during calendar year 2013. Of these, 21,214 travelers responded; however, this study included the 7,261 respondents who actually visited a destination. As part of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to indicate whether or not (1 = yes, 0 = no) they used each type of social media before, during, and after the trip. The social media included the following channels: 1) travel reviews, 2) social networking, 3) photo or video sharing, 4) microblogs, 5) personal blogs, and 6) special interest or online communities. After basic descriptive analyses were conducted, Latent Class Analysis and Latent Transition Analysis was used to assess transition patterns among travelers' use of social media across three stages of the trip (i.e., before, during, and after).

Results/Discussion

The results of the analyses indicated that there are four distinct patterns of social media use by travelers and distinguished two different types of social media (personal use vs. social use). Interestingly, about 40 percent of the travelers changed their patterns of social media use based on the timing of their trip across the three stages of the tourism experiences. Thus, it is argued that travelers in these four groups should be targeted differently by tourism companies or destination marketing organizers. Further, the results demonstrated that travelers adapt their use of social media to the needs of the situation as defined within the various stages of travel. Further research should be conducted in order to understand the patterns of social media and its membership change in more detail and factors driving use.

References Available Upon Request

THE EFFECT OF LONELY TRAVELERS' SOCIAL NETWORK SITES USAGE ON PERCEIVED ENJOYMENT DURING THE TRIP AND ON TRIP AND LIFE SATISFACTION

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Introduction

Loneliness is a common emotional state in modern society. This phenomenon is a widespread human mental sentiment that is complicated to define as it is unique to each individual (Cacioppo et al., 2010). This research examines how loneliness affects travelers' SNS usage and ultimate trip-satisfaction levels. Since loneliness is closely linked to people's SNS involvement, researchers have argued that loneliness also influences travelers' SNS usage in the context of travel. Consequently, the use of SNS in the travel setting must be expected to influence trip satisfaction. Thus, the purpose of this study is to determine 1) whether individual SNS usage has different impacts on travel and life satisfaction and 2) whether the degree of travelers' loneliness and their age affects their travel and life satisfaction, perceived enjoyment and usage pattern during the trip.

Method

In this research, a total number of 238 U.S.-based adult respondents who have a Facebook account were obtained. In the online questionnaire, the respondents answered questions regarding their degree of loneliness using the UCLA loneliness scale in order to classify the group. After they conducted loneliness questions, they answered the questions about their Facebook-usage patterns, attitudes towards Facebook and travel and life satisfaction in terms of their recent trip.

Result/Discussion

The result of this study indicated that the degree of travelers' loneliness (low vs. high) significantly differs based on their travel and life satisfaction, as well as their attitude towards Facebook. In addition, this research also found that there are significant interaction effects of travelers' loneliness status and their aging (20s, 30s, and greater than 40) in terms of Facebook usage pattern, attitude towards Facebook and perceived enjoyment of Facebook. Precisely, the high-level of loneliness group was less satisfied with travel and life after the trip than the low-level of loneliness group, while the former group indicated a more positive attitude towards Facebook during their trip. Additionally, travellers in each age group showed differences in their pattern of Facebook usage, their attitude towards Facebook and their perceived enjoyment of Facebook depending on degree of loneliness. This research discusses some critical implications of these trends for both research and practice.

THE EFFECTS OF IMAGE, PERSONAL INNOVATIVENESS, AND HEDONIC MOTIVATION ON TRAVELERS' ATTITUDE TOWARD TRAVEL MOBILE APPLICATIONS

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Introduction
Despite increased interest and usage of mobile technology, including mobile applications in the hospitality and tourism industry, the efforts to understand travelers' attitude and behavioral patterns in using travel mobile applications are still limited to cognitive and utilitarian motivation such as perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness. Hedonic motivation, i.e., perceived enjoyment, is relatively underexplored. In addition, further investigation should be made into what stimulates users' hedonic motivation in adopting mobile technology. Considering that mobile devices are a means for identification and fashion style, social influence and individual traits should be considered as significant predictors of perceived enjoyment. The purpose of the study is to investigate the effects of perceived enjoyment on perceived usefulness and attitude based on the technology acceptance model and to assess the effect of social influence (image) and individual traits (personal innovativeness) on perceived enjoyment and perceived usefulness. Furthermore, this study is to examine the moderating effect of users' levels of experience in using general mobile application on the proposed research model.

Methods
The target population of the study is travelers in the United States who had an experience in using travel mobile applications and whose email addresses can be accessed from the purchased database of the Center for Hospitality and Tourism Research at a university located in the south central United States. The online survey was conducted with a self-administered questionnaire. The self-administered questionnaire was developed and included eight segments with 28 items adopted from previous studies. All of the items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale except the questions regarding demographics and characteristics in using travel mobile application. A total of 202 responses were used for data analysis. Descriptive statistics, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), structural equation modelling (SEM), and multi-group analysis was conducted for data analysis with SPSS and AMOS 20.0

Results/Discussion
The results of the findings revealed that perceived enjoyment has no significant/direct relationship with attitude; it positively influences attitude through perceived usefulness. In addition, the results showed that image is positively related to perceived usefulness and perceived enjoyment whereas personal innovativeness is only positively related to perceived enjoyment. Significant differences were found in some relationships between the high-experience group and the low-experience group. This study extended the technology acceptance model by including perceived enjoyment and investigating image and personal innovativeness as antecedents of perceived enjoyment. Theoretical and practical implications are further discussed.

References Available Upon Request

LEVEL OF TRUST IN REVENUE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF INTEGRATED RESORTS

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Introduction

According to a 2012 study of hotel executives (Erdem, Schrier, Cobanoglu, & Nusair, 2012), driving revenue is a top concern for hoteliers. Interestingly, 30% of the respondents of the 2012 study reported that their organizations were underutilizing the existing revenue management systems to make such decisions (Erdem et al., 2012). Nicolaou, Sedatole, and Lankton (2011) discovered that the users of technology could be encouraged to adopt the technology if they felt that it expanded their decision making skills. This was achieved by the system not telling them what to do, but rather allowing them to share information and make a more informed decision. Users' trust toward a particular technology was a key factor. Given the aforementioned perceived importance of revenue management systems (RMS) across hotels and the ambiguity about the underutilization of RMS in hotels, the purpose of the study is to explore potential concerns of RMS' users and investigate if trust is indeed a factor for RMS' users. Three research questions were formulated: 1) in what instances do revenue managers generally find RMS to be unreliable?, 2) in what instances do revenue managers override RMS pricing recommendations?, and 3) what are the reasons for not trusting RMS?

Methods

The target population for this study consisted of corporate and property level revenue managers of the 40 largest integrated resorts in the world. Fifteen of the forty largest integrated resorts were invited for participation in the study. The particular fifteen resorts were selected due to access and convenience to the research team. A total of nine revenue managers agreed to participate in this study. Data collection was based on e-mail interviews. Both closed-ended and open-ended questions were used during the e-mail interviews. Open coding, axial coding, and selective coding were utilized. To form an audit trail and to show how the selection of analytical units was created, the word processing tool Microsoft Word's Insert Comment reviewing option was employed (Chenail, 2012).

Results/Discussion

The main findings of the study revealed a host of issues that resulted in distrust of RMS and pricing recommendations provided by RMS that were perceived to be less than optimal. The study identified several situations in which revenue managers did not trust the system (e.g., incorrect labelling of business types). In addition, the study found that revenue managers tend to override the RMS pricing recommendations on a regular basis mainly when groups were not filling their blocks, the system did not see a large percentage of bookings. It is recommended that future studies extend the research questions posed quantitatively and reach out to a nation-wide survey to empirically test the findings.

References Available Upon Request

LEVERAGING GUESTROOM TECHNOLOGY: THE TALE OF TWO GUEST PROFILES

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Introduction

Hoteliers started to make higher investments in Guest Room Technologies (GRTs) since technology is now seen as a critical determinant for guest satisfaction. Primary purpose of the study is to examine hotel guests' attitudes toward GRTs and determine whether hotel guests' characteristics and attitudes vary according to hotel guest typologies (i.e., Technology compassionates, Technology dispassionates). Furthermore, the current study evaluates the impact of the availability of new GRTs on guest decision making based on the principles of the Theory of Planned Behavior.

Methods

The data were gathered from a sample of 508 hotel guests, who have stayed in a hotel in the past 12 months, via a self-administered online survey. Probability sampling method was used to select the representative sample which provided a 70% response rate. The analysis of the study consisted of two main research steps which were (1) identification of cluster groups via K-means cluster analysis algorithm and discriminant analysis and, (2) performing series of Chi-square analyses to determine whether hotel guests' characteristics and attitudes vary according to previously obtained hotel guest typologies.

Results/Discussion

A two-cluster solution was considered as the most meaningful solution with a sufficient number of cases within each cluster. Based on the importance and agreement values that are attached to the related survey items by each cluster, Cluster 1 (46.2% of the sample) and Cluster 2 (48.6% of the sample) were respectively named as Technology dispassionates and Technology compassionates. Significant differences between the Technology dispassionates and compassionates with respect to the age groups, marital status, employment status, willingness to pay, internet payment preference and interactive TV enhances guest experience variables were discovered via series of Chi-square analyses. For instance, Technology compassionates cluster included significantly more participants who were single. On the other hand, Technology dispassionates had proportionally more married participants. Based on the study findings, it could be stated that even though Technology dispassionates provided significantly different answers for the specific guest room technology questions compared to the Technology compassionates, their overall assessment seems to be partially positive for these technologies. The study findings could help hoteliers who aim to use state-of-art guest room technology as a sustainable competitive strategy. Practitioners can finally generate market segmentation and pricing strategies with respect to the technological needs and wants of the hotel guests. This is also the first study that evaluates the impact of available GRTs on guest decision making based on the principles of the Theory of Planned Behavior.

References Available Upon Request

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE AFFECTING FACTORS FOR THE AUTHENTICITY OF ONLINE REVIEWS

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Introduction

Extended technology in the travel industry has become very important. Today many people make their reservations through the internet because they can find many online travel agencies. These online travel agencies help the customers to find good deals for hotels, flights, and car rentals. In addition, online travel agencies help the customers with their decisions by providing reviews that other customers write and post to the website based on their experience. Many customers trust that online reviews are based on past customer experience, and often times make their decision or choices based on the online reviews. However, in many cases, these online reviews may not be authentic. Fake reviews are a problem that affects the integrity of the travel industry. Moreover, these phony reviews are frequently posted by first-time site visitors, unscrupulous competitors wishing to increase their traffic or sales. The aim of this study is to evaluate customers' perception of the authenticity of online reviews, and how personal background and credibility affect the customers' attitude when making a decision based on reviews. There are six factors affecting the credibility of online reviews that will be applied in this study; which include: argument quality, source credibility, review consistency, review sidedness, quantity of posts, and corroborating sources. Finally, the results of this study will provide an understanding of how customers' can better evaluate fake reviews, and facilitate the booking agencies with better strategies to protect their vulnerabilities and enhance their credibility.

Methods

Ground theory method will be applied for data collection, coding, and analysis. Based on the aforementioned six affecting factors, open-ended personal in-depth interviews will be conducted among thirty college students from an east coast university. Then, the results will be compared against to the results generated from the content analysis of online comments from Tripadvisor.

Results/Discussion

the results of this study will provide an understanding of how customers' can better evaluate fake reviews, and facilitate the hospitality industry and enhance their services and quality to meet the customers' expectations and improve their business standards with better strategies to protect their vulnerabilities and enhance their credibility

References Available Upon Request

DO CORPORATE SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE INCENTIVES STIMULATE CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBLE INVOLVEMENT AMONG HOTEL EMPLOYEES?

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Introduction

Although Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has emerged as an organisational behavioural issue (Moura-Leite & Padgett, 2011), many factors drive the move towards further CSR involvement and sustainable practices by hotel organisations. This explorative study has examined the influence of CSR rewards and incentives stimulating New Zealand hotel employee further CSR involvement. Additionally, whether independent or chain hotels were more motivated to promote employees involvement through dedicated CSR rewards and incentives.

Methods

The sample frame encloses New Zealand hotels registered with the NZ “Qualmark Quality Assured” standard and graded as 4-5 star. The methodological instrument for this study consisted of in-depth semi structured interviews with managers from 33 self selected hotels. New Zealand hotel managers were considered a critical factor in this study due to their knowledge of managing high grade hotels and potential influence over employee CSR rewards and incentives. Additionally, each hotel manager agreed to administer an on line survey with employees through “Qualtrics” research software. Results from the online survey were used to support the qualitative data from the in-depth interviews. This mixed method research approach indicated that independent hotel CSR rewards and incentives has little influence and motivation over employees to perform and address CSR objectives in line with organisational and employee goals and perception. It was also evident that New Zealand hotel managers in this study were not recognising employee CSR participation through offering rewards and incentives that stimulated further CSR involvement.

Results/Discussion

Results from this explorative study have shown that of the 33 hotel managers interviewed only 16 (48%) indicated there was a dedicated employee CSR reward and incentive initiative. The majority of these hotel managers (12) were from chain hotels with only 4 independent hotels represented. Although interviews with hotel managers acknowledged employee participation in future hotel CSR activities as important, results from the survey has shown, 46.7 percent indicated *“No”* with, 37.0 per cent indicating *“Yes”* to their hotel having rewards and incentives in place specifically related to CSR activities. Of note in was that 16.3 per cent of the survey respondents “Don’t know” if any rewards and incentives were in place specifically for CSR activities. Survey results from hotels employees also indicated that of those hotels engaged in CSR rewards and incentives, 15 percent of hotel employees indicated *“Some”* and 30 percent indicated *“A Few”* when asked how often they had participated in CSR activities over the past year. Evidence from this study is in contrast to findings by Maroudas, Kyriakidou and Vacharis (2008) that identified employees’ motivation in hotel brands suggests that suitable rewards and strategies developing CSR activities were significant. Research by Bohdanowicz and Zientara (2009) has also shown that supporting community environmental programmes contributed to improving the quality of life of local communities and the well-being of hotel employees. In addition, findings from this study have suggested that when CSR related rewards and incentives are offered the more motivated employees will participate. Also, Chain hotels are more engaged in offering CSR related rewards. These finding also suggest that chain hotels motivate employees to participate in CSR through rewards more than do the independent hotels.

LEISURE-WORK PREFERENCE AND HOTEL EMPLOYEES' PERCEIVED SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING: AN EXPLANATORY MIXED METHOD

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Introduction
Conservation of resources theory and labor economics are combined as the theoretical foundation for this study, and the concept of leisure-work preference is firstly proposed as the antecedent of subjective well-being (SWB).

Methods
An explanatory mixed method was used with quantitative and qualitative phases to analyze the creation of SWB.

Results/Discussion
Results of the quantitative phase revealed that leisure preference shows a negative influence on job satisfaction while provides positive influence on leisure satisfaction and SWB. Work preference performs a direct negative influence on SWB while contributes indirect positive effects on SWB through job satisfaction. Results of the qualitative phase further revealed that hotel employees recognize managers as top one source to influence their SWB, followed by coworkers, customers, and family members.

References Available Upon Request

FOOD SERVICE AND RETAIL MANAGEMENT COMPETENCIES: THE C-STORE INDUSTRY EVOLUTION

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Introduction

Management competencies are central to organizational success, especially in a competitive and evolving industry, such as the convenience store (c-store) industry. Recent literature on the c-store industry shows a current evolution toward more varied retail foodservice operations; bringing with it a need to investigate management competencies in both areas of retail sales and foodservice. While literature on c-store management competencies is lacking, studies in the two related industries have investigated necessary competencies for management success. The literature on management in these two industries provides multiple similarities and differences arise that influence the c-store industry. The purpose of the current study is to examine the findings in the literature alongside the perceptions of top executives in the c-store industry on what competencies are important for management success; by providing responses from the following questions: what are the competencies found in successful retail managers; what are the competencies found in successful foodservice managers in retail operations; and what are the similarities and differences in these competencies.

Methods

After a review of literature provided insight into potential competencies needed for managers in the c-store industry, the research questions listed above were developed. A convenience sample of c-store executives that are members of the National Association of Convenience Stores (NACS) was then utilized to find perceptions of management competency needs for the c-store industry. Qualitative research was determined to be the best method to use in order to obtain thorough and thoughtful reflection on the open-ended research questions. The use of open-ended questions allowed for determining any commonalities between respondents. A total of four interviews were conducted over the phone, each lasting approximately 25 minutes. Upon completion of the interviews, the responses were evaluated in order to determine any similarities or differences in the competencies of successful managers in the retail and foodservice sectors.

Results/Discussion

Responses to the first research question showed that management and leadership skills along with guest service and communications skills were the top competencies for retail manager success. The second research question found that respondents listed foodservice specific skills in food quality, consistency, safety and purchasing as the top competencies for foodservice managers; followed by profit and loss experience and training employees. The last research question assessed the similarities and differences of the competencies for successful retail and foodservice managers. Findings showed that all respondents noted the importance for retail and foodservice managers both to have previous profit and loss experience along with being strong leaders and trainers of employees; however, it was found that retail managers need to have great people skills while foodservice managers need to be very detail and process oriented. Findings in the current study were similar to those in previous studies of necessary competencies for retail and foodservice managers. However, the respondents in the current study provided more detailed explanations of the competencies required; they also noted that most of their c-stores have separate managers for both sides of the operation, food and retail.

References Available Upon Request

THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAGERIAL ACCOUNTING SKILLS TO PRIVATE CLUB GENERAL MANAGERS

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Introduction

Private club general managers have a wide range of responsibilities. One of the important skill sets is expertise in the area of managerial accounting, which is critical for them to understand the club's financial status. Further, general managers use the accounting information to plan strategy, to communicate it, and to determine how to implement it. However, the research that has explored the accounting competences for private club general managers is still limited. Therefore, this study is designed 1) to examine the importance of managerial accounting skills to private club managers and 2) to compare the importance of managerial accounting skills to private club general managers between profit-oriented clubs and non-profit oriented clubs.

Methods

In this study, financial controllers of private clubs were asked to rank the importance of managerial accounting skills to club general managers. The clubs were classified into two groups by type (profit-oriented vs. non-profit oriented clubs) to compare the differences of the accounting skills. Online survey was conducted to members of the Hospitality Financial and Technology Professionals. The survey contains two parts of questionnaires, first part includes demographic items of the respondents, and the second part will be the list of managerial accounting skills that are important to club general managers.

Results/Discussion

Private club controllers perceive that "operating budgeting," "capital budgeting," "income statement (statement of activities)," "analysis of budget variance," and "financial forecasting" are the top five important managerial accounting skills to private club general managers. There were significant differences between profit-oriented and non-profit oriented clubs in the perception of importance of the skills of "cash budgeting ," "cash flow statement," "ROI analysis," "property tax," and "depreciation accounting." This study can provide useful information for both private club general managers and controllers. Further, this study can help educators understand current trends of managerial accounting skills that would be important for future hospitality managers, and help them develop the curriculum in hospitality managerial accounting courses.

DO CUSTOMER COMPLIMENTS REALLY MAKE RESTAURANT EMPLOYEES SATISFIED WITH SERVIE ENCOUNTERS?

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Introduction

Most if not all service encounter studies focused on how service encounters influenced customer's attitude and behaviors either from the customer perspective, or from the service employee perspective, or from both. The missing element was employee's attitudinal and behavioral changes related to their interactions with customers. Meanwhile, the research on customer compliments, a type of positive feedback giving behaviors, is scant (Jacob & Gueguen, 2014), even though they act as a powerful tool in service encounter management. In light of those research gap, this study aims at examining the effects of customer compliments on employee's encounter satisfaction through employee's post-encounter mood. Furthermore, we propose that customer tipping, a monetary behavioral reinforcer, moderates the relationship between customer compliments and employee attitude toward service encounters.

Methods

A 3 (Customer compliments: no compliments, compliments to the server personally, and compliments to the server in front of a manager) by 3 (Customer tipping: less than 15 percent of the bill, 15 to 20 percent of the bill, or more than 20 percent of the bill) between-subject quasi-experimental design was used to test the hypotheses. All the treatment effects were manipulated using scenarios. The scenarios describe situations in which the focal restaurant server was receiving compliments from a customer. After that, the focal server got to know how much the customer tips for the service. Each respondent was asked to read a scenario in which he or she imagined himself or herself as the restaurant server and then to answered questions about their responses to customer compliments and tipping. The population consisted of people who are working or have worked as restaurant employees on Amazon's Mechanical Turk (also called MTurk). After a pretest of the questionnaire on about ten subject matter experts (SME), the researchers adopted a convenience sampling method to recruit 318 respondents on MTurk and then randomly assigned one of the nine scenarios to each of them. All of these 318 respondents provided valid answers to the survey questions.

Results/Discussion

The ANOVA analyses of post-encounter mood and of encounter satisfaction both indicated significant differences among participants in various compliment conditions. Based on the results of a simple regression analysis, post-encounter mood was a significant predictor of encounter satisfaction. Despite of these, the interaction effects of customer compliments and tipping on employee post-encounter mood and on employee encounter satisfaction were not supported. The findings have made a convincing recommendation in adding to the literature with a new motivational mechanism, customer compliments, to promote positive employee attitude and subjective well-being. Being aware of the important role of customer compliments in employee attitudinal change, managers would get more committed to managing customers to provide employees more compliments since compliments are effective but entail little cost.

References Available Upon Request

SHOULD WE IMITATE A CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY-RELATED STRATEGY? A DATA ENVELOPMENT ANALYSIS (DEA) APPROACH

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Introduction

Imitating an emerging strategy is a common approach in a competitive market. Although realizing innovativeness may bring new opportunities and a competitive advantage to enterprises (Ottenbacher, 2007; Guisado-Gonzalez & Guisado-Tato, 2013), for small businesses, it is difficult to innovate strategies with high R&D costs and high uncertainty (Vyas, 2005). Therefore, small businesses may choose to imitate a successful competitor's strategy based on their relatively limited internal resources and external environment. Because a corporate social responsibility (CSR)-related strategy may involve high initial investment costs and a longer period of implementation with higher risks, it can be difficult to make the decision to use the imitating strategy. Moreover, the profitability of a CSR-related strategy is unclear based on the existing literature. This study aims to use Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA) to reach the imitation speed efficiency and explain the decision-making process.

Methods

In order to collect data, this study was conducted using an online scenario-based survey targeted at college students majoring in hospitality management who also had experience working in a restaurant. The participants were asked to answer the questions regarding strategy characteristics and their response speed from the imitators' perspectives. Moreover, the participants were asked to identify the strategic orientations of the restaurants where they work or had worked. The DEA approach is a "multi-factor productivity analysis model for measuring the relative efficiencies of a homogenous set of decision making units" (Lewis, 2000). We consider that the decision-making inputs are the firm's strategic orientations and the perceived characteristics of the imitated CSR-related strategy. The output in the DEA system is the imitation speed. Based on the model developed by Charnes et al. (1978), the efficiency is the weighted sum of outputs divided by the weighted sum of inputs in the decision-making system.

Results/Discussion

The ranking scores and imitation efficiency scores give us the full picture of the entire competitive market. With an efficiency score = 1, the restaurants are considered the most efficient units to make the CSR-related strategy imitation decision. The restaurants with low efficiency scores can conduct slack analysis to specify the over-considered inputs to improve their efficiency scores toward the CSR-related strategy.

References Available Upon Request

UNDERSTANDING COMPARATIVE ADVERTISING IN THE SERVICE CONTEXT

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Introduction

Comparative advertising has become a prevalent marketing tool in the United States. Comparative ads are defined as ads that explicitly or implicitly compare at least two brands in the same product or service class on specific attributes or market positions. For instance, when Samsung launched Galaxy SIII, they created an ad that presented a feature-by-feature comparison between iPhone 5 and Galaxy SIII, in which Galaxy SIII seemed to excel in every dimension. Drawing on the regulatory focus theory, we propose that regulatory fit might explain why comparative ads are more persuasive than noncomparative ads. We argue that comparative ads induce either gain or loss perceptions depending on the consumer's regulatory focus, and this regulatory fit results in favorable evaluations of the advertised object. In contrast, with no mention of a reference brand, noncomparative ads fail to trigger gain or loss perceptions, thus resulting in less favorable evaluations. Furthermore, previous literature shows that the presentation format of the message also influences consumers' information processing. We thus propose that the two commonly used presentation formats, the narrative format and the list format, will interact with regulatory focus. Specifically, while narrative ads explicitly specify advantages and gains (e.g., "The advertised brand is superior to its competitors"), comparative ads in a list format present attributes of both brands and allow the viewers to adopt a viewpoint on their own (e.g., "The advertised brand is superior to its competitors" or "Its competitors are inferior to the advertised brand"), leading to either gain or loss perceptions that match their regulatory goals. Consumers should react more favorably to the advertised brand when the ad induces regulatory fit.

Methods

This study used a 2 (regulatory focus: promotion vs. prevention) × 2 (comparison frame: comparative vs. noncomparative) × 2 (presentation format: narrative vs. list) between-subjects experimental design. Respondents were primed with regulatory focus and then were asked to view an ad regarding a hotel service.

Results/Discussion

Findings from this study indicate that comparative ads are more persuasive than noncomparative ads. Moreover, while comparative ads in a narrative format might suit promotion-focused individuals better, comparative ads in a list format seem to be appealing to individuals with either a promotion or prevention focus. Results from mediation analyses show that loss-gain perceptions are the underlying mechanism that explains the relationship between comparison frame and purchase intention. The present research demonstrates that comparative advertising is highly effective in promoting intangible services. Strategies regarding the selection of presentation format are discussed.

References Available Upon Request

IS COBRANDING EFFECTIVE IN ACHIEVING HIGHER BRAND EQUITY?

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Introduction

This study will focus on cobranding between an independent hotel, Hotel ICON, and the resort chain spa hotel company, Banyan Tree, which currently operates the Angsana Spa (a branch of Banyan Tree) in Hong Kong S.A.R. Cobranding can be defined as giving "a competitive advantage in the marketplace by allowing us (the company) to penetrate markets that are cost prohibitive or do not have the population density to support a single concept" (Garber, 2003, p. 125) Cobranding has become more popular in the hospitality industry as one of the marketers' instrument by creating initial awareness, increasing familiarity and customer loyalty related with the brands (Denizci-Guillet & Tasci, 2010b). The purpose of this exploratory study is to investigate how brand equity is affected from a corporate international spa company forming an alliance with an independent hotel.

Methods

The fieldwork took place in the February and March of 2014. Denizci-Guillet and Tasci's (2010b) survey which had evolved from two different cobrand studies was adopted for this study. The survey tested awareness, image, quality, value, loyalty, and perception of fit between Hotel ICON and Banyan Tree. The data was collected in or just outside the dining venue areas of Hotel ICON premises. Simple random sampling technique was utilized. T-tests were used to investigate differences between the Hotel ICON, Banyan Tree, and the alliance of the two brands.

Results/Discussion

Results showed that Hotel ICON has statistically higher mean value in terms of brand equity than the alliance with Banyan Tree or the Banyan Tree Brand. However, in terms of brands, the respondents did not find that Hotel ICON has higher brand dominance than Banyan Tree. Another important conclusion was that the alliance did not change the loyalty of the respondents. However, the respondents also did not suggest that the goodness of fit between the two companies to be strong.

The results of this study can be used for marketing purposes and future market penetration methods into new markets for companies. The alliance may have started as an alternative was for Banyan Tree to enter the market into Hong Kong (Banyan Tree's core business model is wholly owned resort properties). As the respondents clearly prefer the Hotel ICON brand over the Banyan Tree brand, Banyan Tree can use the Hotel ICON brand to increase their brand equity attributes in the Hong Kong market. Results indicated that the respondents were still loyal to the cobrand, which means that Banyan Tree can use the alliance to build their brand with an already successful brand in Hong Kong.

For Hotel ICON, this brand alliance could be seen as potentially hurting the company's brand equity. Typically, companies hope to increase their brand equity through forming an alliance; however, there is always a risk with how the consumers will perceive the fit, especially entering cobranding with companies from different market segments (Boone, 1997).

References Available Upon Request

THE IMPACT OF BUSINESS TRAVELERS' ATTITUDE AND SUBJECTIVE NORM TOWARD E-COMMENTS ON INTENTION TO PURCHASE

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Introduction
This research focused on parameters of e-comments effecting business travellers' attitudes and subjective norms on intentions to purchase. The attitude sub-constructs include: service quality, the value of money, the hotel business facility, hotel security, food and beverage, and service recovery. Results of hypotheses testing indicated that service quality, the value of money, and subjective norm have a positive effect on business travellers' intention to purchase.

Methods
The survey for this study was administered with the aid of the Qualtrics online questionnaire service. The targeted respondents for this research were business travellers in the United States who read hotel e-comments and made a reservation based on the e-comment during the last six months. The first question of the survey screened respondents to identify those who made a reservation at a full-service business hotel in the past six months after reading e-comments about the hotel. Only those that answered YES to the first question were asked to complete the rest of the survey.

With the aid of the Theory of Reasoned Action as well as the comprehensive review of literature, the initial survey questionnaire was developed and modified to fit the hospitality industry. The data was formatted for use with SPSS 19.0 and the Mplus 6.0 statistical software programs. An Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and Cronbach`s alpha were tested. The hypothesized relationship among variables was tested using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM).

Results/Discussion
Results from this study showed that behavioural beliefs had a positive effect on attitude toward e-comments. This means that the sub-dimensions of attitude, which include: supreme service, the quality of offered service, the value of money, hotel security, and service recovery, are all considered important parameters by business travellers. While just two sub-dimensions of attitude (quality of offered service and value of money) have a positive effect on intention, other sub-dimensions (supreme service, hotel security, and service recovery) do not have a significant effect on business travellers' intention to purchase, which is not consistent with the research findings of Chu and Choi (2000).

The findings of this study can provide useful information for hoteliers since the quality of the offered service and the value of money have a significant effect on business travellers' intention to purchase a hotel room. Therefore hoteliers should emphasize strategies which focus on enhancing the quality of offered services and guests' perception of the value of money. Providing more reliable and convenience services, such as an enhanced reservation system, can influence business travellers' intentions to purchase.

References Available Upon Request

A PROFILE OF AN EMERGING SPA MARKET IN LUXURY HOTELS AND RESORTS: A POSTERIORI MARKET SEGMENT APPROACH

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Introduction

As of 2013, nearly 164 million spa-goers regularly visited spas, generating nearly $15 billion in the spa industry (ISA, 2014). Although spas are beginning to gain recognition as independent profit centers (Withiam, 1993), hoteliers must understand the needs and wants of their spa guests, so they can effectively market to and serve their guests. The main purpose of this study was to identify and assess profitable homogenous market segments for the luxury hotel and resort market, with a special focus on why spa-goers go to spas and what characteristics they have. More specifically, this study determined whether those characteristics and motives could be used as viable spa market segments. A spa-goers' profile focusing on spa market segments was developed to concentrate marketing resources and efforts. Understanding what motivations and characteristics are most important to guest satisfaction will have significant value in developing marketing strategies and enticing guests to re-visit.

Methods

A focus group of hospitality educators and spa industry professionals validated each spa motivational attribute, eliminating ambiguity and confusion in some attributes. A pilot study was conducted to assure the acceptance and reliability of the measurement items. A total of 323 responses were collected through the Qualtrics from August 22 to August 26, 2014. A total of 309 responses were used for analysis. The collected data were analysed using the IBM SPSS 21.0 statistical package. First, descriptive statistics provided demographic profiles of study participants. Then, underlying dimensions of spa motivational attributes were delineated through exploratory factor analysis (EFA). Upon validation of spa motivational factors with an inter-reliability test, a K-mean cluster analysis identified groups of individuals (clusters), and ANOVA tests profiled significant clusters of spa-goers' motivational factors, their past experience, and social-demographic variables.

Results/Discussion

Three clusters were identified from K-means cluster analysis. Each group was called "pleasure pursuers," "healing pursuers," and "relaxing pursuers." First, pleasure pursuers, as a market, find spas more attractive if they are provided with entertainment, visiting with their friends or purchasing spa products. Second, healing pursuers most likely will visit spas to ease emotional stress (Lam & Hsu, 2006) and heal their spiritual fatigue. Third, the marketing can draw more attention to relaxation and relief of pressure for the relaxing pursuers to encourage their spa visit.

References Available Upon Request

THE INDIRECT CONTRIBUTION OF A LOYALTY PROGRAM TO CASINO RESTAURANT REVENUES: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

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Introduction

Las Vegas Strip casinos have reported that the revenues from non-gaming amenities have surpassed the gaming revenues since 1999. The source of revenue for casinos has shifted toward non-gaming (Ryan, 2012). The generally accepted assumption is that loyalty programs with added customer benefits produce more non-gaming revenues, but there is a lack of empirical research testing the effectiveness of such programs. As casinos offer additional benefits from non-gaming amenities, financial commitments and risks increase for these companies. The growing competition in the casino industry has introduced aggressive incentive offers, which has cut casino returns significantly (Gu, 2007). Although the significant non-gaming revenues come from casino-operated restaurants, no research exists that scrutinizes the indirect effects of casino loyalty programs on casino-operated restaurants. With respect to the growing importance of non-gaming amenities, the purpose of this study is to evaluate the impact of a casino loyalty program on casino-operated restaurants.

Methods

Using secondary data from a Las Vegas hotel and casino, the effectiveness of a casino loyalty program was examined on casino-operated restaurant revenues. The property has reinvented its old loyalty program and introduced a new loyalty program with added customer benefits. This study used 730 daily observations beginning a year before the date of the new loyalty program launch and ending a year after that. The data came directly from the company’s database and included the total slot and table volume for each day of the series. The study applied a model adapted from Lucas and Tanford (2010) and used multiple regression analysis with Autoregressive Moving Average (ARMA) terms to analyze the data.

Results/Discussion

The results indicated that the loyalty variable significantly increased the daily restaurant revenue at a rate of $62,433.60 per day. The daily restaurant revenue increase of $62,433.60 was converted to $9,302.61 in estimated restaurant profit per day on days with the new loyalty program. This study was the first attempt to estimate the restaurant contributions of a loyalty program on a casino’s profitability. Given the amount of the contribution, it is obvious that the program is an effective tool to stimulate more restaurant visits. However, it is questionable whether this incremental profit is large enough to offset the operating costs of the program. Although only the management would know the total investments and costs associated with the loyalty program, this study provides a critical piece to determine the success of the program by the casino operators. Given the lack of empirical research related to this subject, this study is a valuable contribution to the limited literature associated with the indirect effects of loyalty programs on non-gaming business volumes.

References Available Upon Request

A PROPOSED MODEL FOR CUSTOMER LIFETIME VALUE IN HOTEL SEGMENTS

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Introduction

The importance of market segmentation within the hotel industry is evident through the various hotel types, product offerings, price points and levels of service. Traditionally, research has focused on the attributes and characteristics of customers that may be targeted to influence a firm's long term success (Baloglu, 2002; Rondan-Cataluña & Rosa-Diaz, 2014). Although many studies draw conclusions about which customers to target and how to customize products for these segments, determining a monetary value remains a challenging task. The present study aims to propose a customer lifetime value (CLV) model for the hotel industry, utilizing a segment-based approach. For instance, research has shown that business travelers accounted for a higher level of demand and over a longer period of time (Palakurthi, 2000). Additionally, the business segment is significantly more profitable, while leisure travelers only marginally impact a hotels bottom line (Dalci et al., 2010; Noone et al., 1999). The customer loyalty literature generates information regarding retention rates and suggests that truly loyal customers have significantly higher switching costs (Baloglu, 2002). These studies among others provide propositions for the CLV modeling to be tested in future research

Proposed Model

The key components for constructing a CLV model include the frequency and profitability of a purchase, as well as the segments rate of returned business. The model multiplies the average frequency (F_{x+t}) and profit (C_{x+t}) of each night of stay to the probability of retention (P_{x+t}) and the number of current and new customers within the segment ($Y_{x+t} + N_{x+t}$). These calculations are conducted each year to compute a segment value that is then discounted to present day at interest rate i. A summation of each year's total provides a monetary value for the entire customer segment. The proposed model is presented below.

$$Segment\ CLV = \sum_{t=0}^{W} \frac{(Y_{x+t} + N_{x+t}) * P_{x+t} * (F_{x+t} * C_{x+t})}{(1+i)^t}$$

The rate of retention (P_{x+t}) is modeled using a Markov Chain probability vector that allows for customers to move freely between segments. A vector may be constructed for each year that will depict the probability a customer remains in the current segment, transitions to another segment or leaves a hotel brand all together. These probability estimates can be determined using historical data and probability estimators such as the Nelson-Aalen or Kaplan Meier techniques.

Results/Discussion

The key contribution of this study is with regards to the rate of retention(P_{x+t}). Retention rates are largely unknown for hotel segments over time and the probability vector allows for customers to transition between segments as they do in the real world. From the reviewed literature it is proposed that business travelers exhibiting high levels of loyalty through loyalty programs would have the highest lifetime value. Correspondingly, leisure travelers that are not part of loyalty programs will exhibit low levels of retention, profitability and frequency of purchase implying the lowest customer lifetime value.

References Available Upon Request

A PROFILE ANALYSIS OF SPA CUSTOMERS

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Introduction

Due to the scarcity of literature examining the relationship between spa customers' motivations in relation to their experience and subsequent expected outcomes, there is a need to understand spa service consumers' psychological, behavioral, and demographic characteristics, as well as their experiences, to inform the industry how to better understand and serve their clientele. The purpose of this study was to identify the spa customer segments based upon their motivations, and delineate similarities and differences between these segments in terms of their experience, subjective well-being, loyalty, and demographics.

Methods

Before profiling the segments, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used for experience to define the underlying structure in the variables. Factors were determined based on an Eigen value greater than 1.0 and only those factors with loadings greater than .40 were retained. Next, a hierarchical procedure was used to generate clusters so that the researchers could best determine the cluster variate. Chi-square tests examined differences between the clusters and the demographics. Finally, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used to assess group differences across the multiple dependent variables simultaneously (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 2010). Conservative post-hoc measures were used for group comparisons.

Results/Discussion

Of the 24 spa customer motivations examined, it was found that there were two distinct clusters or groupings of attributes. These motivations comprised the rejuvenators/indulgers and socializers/self-esteem enhancer groups. This classification of spa consumers represents meaningful groups and a resulting profile that can be used to segment the market and develop tailored marketing strategies and tactics (Koh, Yoo, & Boger, 2009). These two groupings that emerged are supported by self–determination theory and represent both the autonomous (rejuvenators and indulgers) and controlled (socializers and self-esteem enhancers) aspects of the theory (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Ryan & Deci, 2000). It was determined that both age and gender were significant when compared across motivational clusters. Additionally, it was revealed that regardless of the motivation to patronize a spa facility, be it for purposes of socializing and self-esteem enhancement or for indulgence and rejuvenation, spa customers did not differ in what they were seeking in terms of pleasurable memories and their subjective well-being. Finally, spa customers' motivations did not affect their loyalty toward the spa. Practical implications include more tailored website marketing and promotional strategies.

References Available Upon Request

FACTORS AFFECTING CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND CUSTOMER LOYALTY IN THE CASINO INDUSTRY: UNDERSTANDING HOW ECONOMIC BENEFITS, SOCIAL BENEFITS AND SPECIAL TREATMENT BENEFITS AFFECT CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND LOYALTY WITH SERVICE QUALITY AS THE MODERATOR IN THE CASINO INDUSTRY

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Introduction

Referring to the casino literatures, previous studies evaluating customer satisfaction and loyalty in the casino industry mainly focus on service quality and relationship benefits as contributing factors without considering gambling motivations.The purpose of this study is to integrate gambling motivations and other key factors that could affect customer satisfaction and loyalty in the casino industry.

Methods

The purpose of this study is to test how economic benefits, social benefits, and special treatment benefits influence gamblers' satisfaction with service quality as the moderator. In addition, the research results will test how this satisfaction influences the gamblers' loyalty. There are three parts to the instrument. Part I and II of the survey questions were modified from previous literature and contain questions related to the economic benefits, social benefits, special treatment benefits, service quality, as well as questions regarding gamblers' satisfaction and loyalty. Part III of the survey was composed of questions related to participant demographics. The survey instrument uses a 7-point Likert scale for measuring the economic benefits, social benefits, special treatment benefits, service quality, satisfaction and loyalty, with 1=strongly disagree to 7=strongly agree.

Results/Discussion

Referring to the results of the study, the relationship between economic benefits and customer satisfaction and the relationship between special treatment benefits are both modified by all of the dimensions of service quality (service product, service environment, and service delivery). Only the service environment will modify the relationship between social benefits and customer satisfaction. The results of the t-Test analysis in this study showed that males are more likely to enjoy the interaction with other fellow gamblers when playing games. The results showed that different age groups of people have different perceptions of slot and video games hit frequency. The Tukey Multiple Comparisons showed that participants aged over 61 had the highest mean score. The ANOVA results indicated that the more often customers gambled in the casino, the more they agreed that they had developed friendships with other players in the casino. The model in this study contributes to the casino marketing literature by identifying the key factors that could affect customer satisfaction. The results will help the casino managers to better understand the key factors influencing customer satisfaction and loyalty.

References Available Upon Request

WHEN STEREOTYPES HURT: THE JOINT IMPACT OF ETHNICITY AND GENDER ON CONSUMERS' RESPONSE TO MANAGEMENT-LEVEL SERVICE FAILURES

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Introduction

Existing research on demographic stereotypes suggest that ethnicity and gender are an important determinant of consumer attitudes and behaviors. Based on the Stereotype Content Model and the Role Congruity Theory, this research focuses on the effect of these two demographic stereotypes on management-level service failures in the context of hotels. We also examine how consumers' blame attribution mediates the moderating role of ethnicity on consumers' dissatisfaction and negative behavioral intentions for service failures caused by female managers.

Methods

Study 1 tests the double whammy effect of the two stereotypes, ethnicity and gender, on consumers' reactions to service failures caused by Hispanic female hotel managers (vs. female Caucasian). Study 2 investigates whether such double whammy effect extends to line-level employees. Both studies adopted a 2(ethnicity: Caucasian vs. Hispanic) x 2 (gender: male vs. female) between-subject design. Participants were asked to imagine that they had recently experienced a service failure during a check-out procedure at a hotel. Specifically, their hotel bill was overcharged by 25% by a front desk manager or a front desk clerk, who was either female or male, and either Hispanic or Caucasian. After reading the scenario, participants were asked to fill out a survey.

Results/Discussion

The results of this study suggest that Hispanic female managers suffer from a double whammy effect due to ethnic and gender-based stereotyping. Furthermore, our findings indicate that blame attribution is the underlying psychological mechanism of this effect. As predicted, occupation status functions as a boundary factor to the double whammy effect – the gender by ethnicity effects on dissatisfaction and negative behavioral intentions were attenuated for line-level service failures. The findings of this article contribute to the service management literature by examining the role on employees' demographic characteristics in influencing consumer responses to service failures. Additionally, the current study has some important managerial implications for service providers managing a diversified workforce.

References Available Upon Request

EMOTIONAL AND COGNITIVE INVOLVEMENT IN CONSUMER'S ENGAGEMENT OF HOTEL BRAND SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

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Although consumers' engagement activities (e.g., liking, commenting, and sharing) have been considered an important outcome of hotel practitioners' brand building activities on Social Networking sites (SNSs), little is known about the underlying mechanism of how consumers' engagement works. Drawing on persuasion theories, the paper identified two key mediating variables relate consumers' engagement activities to positive brand attitude and brand commitment. In a sample of 226 consumers that follow hotel fan pages on SNSs, we show that the action of "like" denotes both cognitive and emotional involvement of consumers, while "share" is associated only with emotional involvement. No relationship was found between the "comment" action and cognitive or emotional involvement.

The study extends the application of persuasion theories in the context of SNSs beyond the traditional marketing approaches such as TV commercials, windshield flyers, brochures, etc. It also contributes to social media literature by confirming the implication of SNSs in developing close brand-consumer relationship of hotels. Most importantly, the study tested a framework explaining the underlying mechanism by which consumer's engagement on hotel brand fan page is altered to positive brand attitude and commitment. Drawing on the findings of the study, hotel practitioners can leverage their brand equity characterized by profound brand-consumer relationship through delivering information inducing consumer's emotional and cognitive involvement.

DYNAMIC OF NARRATIVE STRUCTURE IN TOURISM ADVERTISING: INTEGRATING EMOTIONS WITH COMMUNICATION

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Introduction

Event segmentation theory and narrative structure suggest that our brain uses stories and narrative structures to deconstruct and group a series of events into meaningful units and to store them in memory. However, most of the advertising studies in tourism do not address these dynamic mechanisms because many of these studies have focused on the aggregate results after exposure to the ads (Kim, Kim & Bolls, 2014). Thus, the goal of this study is to examine the process of event segmentation and the impact of the narrative structures of online destination advertising based upon people's emotional responses in real-time.

Methods

This study used an experimental approach, which combined physiological measures (i.e. electrodermal activity) and subjective measures (i.e. self-report) (see Figner & Murphy 2010). Before the main experiment, a series of pre-tests were conducted to select study stimulus with similar A/V quality and destination reputation. For the main study, 16 graduate students (12 females) with an average age of 22.4 years from Temple University participated. Each participant was exposed to four online destination ads; Utah, Louisiana, Oregon, and Ohio in a random order and their emotional responses were recorded using the Affectiva Q-sensor. Also, perceived event units, emotion, and attitude toward ads were measured using a self-report questionnaire. Approximately 12,000 EDA observations from the 10 participants (6 were excluded due to the failure of following the task instruction) were collected. After noise reduction and normalization, the EDA responses were aggregated and matched with online ads slide-by-slide. Finally, the self-report data were used to evaluate overall assessment of the ads.

Results/Discussion

Visual observation of the physiological data (EDA) indicates there are three distinctive patterns of people's emotional responses to online advertising: dynamic (i.e. Utah & Louisiana), decreasing (i.e. Oregon), and monotonic (i.e. Ohio). Also participants identified more event units from dynamic pattern ads than decreasing or monotonic pattern ones. Additionally, the self-report data confirms that the levels of positive emotion and attitude towards ads differ significantly. In particular, destination ads with dynamic emotional responses patterns show higher positive emotion and attitude toward ads than others. The results of this study indicate that simply presenting a series of images with a monotonous narrative pattern has little effect on people's emotions or attitudes toward destinations. Therefore, destination marketers and advertisers need to understand the comprehension of events and structure of narrative to create effective online advertising. The findings of this study also will provide a framework for understanding how experiences of various events are constructed from continuous information, which can be applied not just within the context of advertisements, but also can be extended in real tourism setting.

References Available Upon Request

AN EXAMINATION OF THE MULTI-DIMENSIONAL SERVICE FACTORS AFFECTING EXHIBITION ATTENDEES' SATISFACTION AND LOYALTY

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Introduction

With growing competition in the convention industry, identifying unique services that are requested by attendees and revamping game-changing services, has become valuable in achieving a predominant advantage over other venues resulting in customer satisfaction. The aim of this study is 1) to identify the various new services provided by the convention center and/or the exhibition/tradeshow organization 2) to examine how it can lead to the attendees' overall satisfaction and loyalty, focusing on the newly renovated Phoenix Convention Center (PCC) which provides cutting-edge technological and food services.

Methods

The empirical setting for this study was the Magic Grand Prix Phoenix (MGPP) at the PCC in April 2014. Overall, 290 cases out of 350 were used for analysis, with a response rate of 83 percent. Based on previous literature, the questionnaire was developed and modified in the context of the Phoenix Convention Center. It included 1) 23 service items, which were categorized into the five-factor structure (i.e., facility, staff, sustainable effort, innovative, and exhibition service factors); 2) three items investigating attendees' overall satisfaction and two items examining customer loyalty to the convention center; and 3) four questions obtaining attendees' socio-demographic information. To facilitate the research questions, descriptive analysis, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and path analysis were utilized.

Results/Discussion

EFA was conducted as an attempt to test factor structure. Bartlett's test of Sphericity (χ^2 = 696.437 (105), p < 0.001) and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy (0.82) both confirmed the statistical significance, with Cronbach's alpha for each construct ranging from 0.72 to 0.87. To test for the hypothesized relationships, path analysis using the ML estimation method was carried out. The path model provided a good fit to the data (χ^2/df =2.5, GFI=.99, IFI=.99, and RMSEA=.072). Results indicated that facility (i.e., cleanliness) and innovative (i.e., special food and free Wi-Fi) services have a statistically significant effect on attendees' overall satisfaction (β=.39, p<.01, β=.16, p<.01), which lead to strengthening the revisit intention to the PCC. More interestingly, the study results show that exhibition/trade show services have a direct positive impact on loyalty (β=.12, p<.05). This study provides important insights in terms of enhancing venue competitiveness in the convention industry. Emphasis on providing service excellence regarding facility and innovative services can intensify competitiveness with other convention centers. In particular, this study revealed that the inherent service quality of exhibition/trade shows impacts attendees' retention and positive comments about the convention center. In this regard, convention marketers need to consider services of exhibitions/trade shows as a part of their promotion strategies, and communicate with the exhibition/trade show organizations to facilitate the quality of services, reinforcing the competitiveness of the venue.

Acknowledgement

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References Available Upon Request

UNDERSTANDING BRAND EXTENSION IN DESTINATION MANAGEMENT: KEY ISSUES AND RESEARCH PROPOSITIONS

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Introduction
The essence of a brand in tourism is to maximize the value of a destination. In the marketing literature, researchers have highlighted brand extension as a brand strategy to advance brand value. Brand extension is a critical marketing strategy that utilizes an established brand name (i.e., parent brand) to launch a new product instead of creating a new brand name altogether, which is usually associated with higher marketing risks and costs (Aaker & Keller, 1990). Despite the critical role that brand extension plays in marketing, we have yet to see an established body of research focusing on brand extension within the destination context.

Conceptual research propositions
In investigating and conceptualizing brand extension in a destination context, what can be established as a brand name and a new product needs to be defined. Hence, it is proposed: P 1. Brand extension in destination management defines an emerging destination as a *product* and an existing, well-known destination brand as an *established brand*.

In many brand extension studies, scholars have confirmed that the success of brand extension depends on the fit or similarity of product classes (Keller, 1993). It has been concluded that the more similar and closer the parent brand and the new product, the better the fit (Ambler & Styles, 1997). The attitudinal effects of congruity inherent in the concept of brand personality is similar to brand extension in that the evaluation of brand extension depends on fit or similarity between the parent brand and extension (Keller, 1993). Following these arguments, this paper proposes: P 2. Perceived similarity between two destination personalities, that is, the parent brand destination personality and brand extension destination personality, can serve as a measure of fit; P 3. The closer the fit between the parent brand destination personality and brand extension destination personality, the more effective the brand extension is.

Through brand extension, marketers seek to transfer brand equity of the parent brand to the product (Boush & Loken, 1991), thus increasing the value of the product brand. The effectiveness of extension is measured by consumer evaluation of brand equity following extension (Martinez & de Chernatony, 2004). It is proposed: P 4. Extensions with similar fit result in better brand value than those with poor fit or less similar fit; P 5. Value transfer from the parent brand (established destination) to the new destination brand (emerging destination) can be measured using Consumer Based Brand Equity scale.

Conclusions and direction for future study
This paper proposes a conceptual framework that can contribute to the development of destination brand extension literature. The framework may serve as a tool for evaluating the optimality of brand strategies for promoting an emerging destination.

References Available Upon Request

THE IMPACT OF SERVICE QUALITY ON CUSTOMER LOYALTY IN THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND THE MODERATING ROLE OF PERCEIVED VALUE

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Introduction

There are two objectives for this study. First, to assess the mediating effect of customer satisfaction on the relationship between service quality and customer loyalty. Second, to examine the moderating effect of perceived value on the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction.

Methods

The major objectives of this study were to identify the mediating role of customer satisfaction and moderating role of perceived value. Hence, SPSS 16.0 was used in order to calculate the reliability test and regression analysis.

Results/Discussion

A survey and analysis confirm that customer loyalty is indirectly influenced by service quality through the mediator of customer satisfaction. Furthermore, the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction is found to be stronger for customers who perceive high value than for those who perceive low value.

References Available Upon Request

SEQUENTIAL INFLUENCE OF SERVICE FAILURES AND RECOVERY STRATEGIES ON HOSPITLITY CUSTMER SATISFACTION AND REVISIT INTENTIONS

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Introduction
Considering that service failure occurs at any time of a service delivery process (Betts, Wood, & Tadisina, 2011), the timing of service failure and recovery strategies may influence customer satisfaction during their stay with a service provider. Although research on sequential influence has been widely adopted in pain judgment model (Link, Kos, Wager, & Mozer, 2011), social influence (Cosley et al., 2010), and decision-making studies (Jensen et al., 2006), limited number of studies have investigated the sequential influence of service failure and recovery in the hospitality industry. This study therefore fills this gap and makes contributions to the existing literature. This research consists of two related studies: Study 1 discusses the sequential influence of service failure and recovery in a hotel setting and Study 2 integrates brand equity effect into the sequential influence of failure and recovery in a restaurant setting. For these two studies, we use customer satisfaction and revisit intention as dependent variables to measure the customers' attitudinal and behavioral intentions towards different timings of service failures and recovery strategies. The findings of this study provide useful practical implications to hospitality practitioners on how to utilize appropriate recovery strategies to minimize the decrease in customer satisfaction and revisit intentions after experiencing service failure.

Methods
Scenario-based experimental survey was conducted. Subjects were asked to read one of multiple scenarios respectively describing a service failure in a hotel/restaurant and service recovery packages the hotel/restaurant offers and make subsequent responses based on the scenarios they have read. Study participants were emailed with a survey kit that included a questionnaire and scenarios were randomly distributed to participants. A randomized sample of 683 adult customers who visited hotels/restaurant within 6 months with demographic diversity constituted the subject pool. After data screening, the number of valid responses were 582 (response rate was 85.21%). Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) with univariate follow-ups were performed to test the hypotheses.

Results/Discussion
The findings of this research indicated that customers at the earlier stage of their stay at the firm are more satisfied than those experience service failure at the latter stage of their stay. This paper also found that customers with high brand equity tend to be less satisfied with a service failure than those with low brand equity. For customer management, practitioners are advised to emphasize the importance of providing error-free service especially to customers with high brand equity. At the same time, for those hoteliers/ restaurant managers working at a famous hotel/ restaurant, it is important to improve service flawlessness in order to avoid customer dissatisfaction and loss of customers.

References Available Upon Request

RECONCEPTUALIZING CUSTOMER SHARE OF WALLET: AS A PERSPECTIVE OF DYNAMIC PROCESS OF BRAND CATEGORIZATION

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Introduction

The consumer decision journey is a complex and situation-dependent process. From need recognition to final purchase, consumers' decision-making process is a series of sequential stages in most consumption situations (e.g., Engel, Kollat, & Blackwell, 1973; Howard & Sheth, 1969). When consumers are faced with several brands, they categorize the brands into different sets (Brisoux & Laroche; 1980, Howard, 1963; Howard & Sheth, 1969; Laroche & Sadokierski, 1994). By helping consumers simplify this process, companies hope their consumers repeatedly purchase their brands without, or with fewer, cognitive evaluations and thus become loyal to them (Laroche, Rosenblatt, Brisoux, & Shimotakahara, 1983). However, as the brand war is getting hotter and brand differentiation is getting blurrier over time (Matovic, 2002), the existing brand categorization model in general marketing does not fully capture the consideration set formation process and customer brand choice behavior in the hotel context. In fact, it has been reported that customers divide their wallet between several brands in the hotel category and do not always purchase one brand in the automatic response loop (Dioko, So, & Harrill, 2013). Thus, this study focuses on understanding how different levels of loyal customers (i.e., true loyal vs. multi-loyal) narrow their decisions down to a subset of alternative brands and eventually choose one in the decision-making process. Moreover, several combined factors present the unstable nature of the brand categorization process in brand choice. Therefore, this study examines how customers' wallets are allocated to a particular brand among a set of competing brands in different consumption situations.

Methods

This study proposes a conceptual framework that incorporates several recent theoretical developments in previous consumer research which help us better understand customers' purchasing behavior in the hospitality industry.

Results/Discussion

Consumers' choice behavior is very dynamic and less stable. Theoretically, it is assumed that a true loyal customer considers only one brand and purchases that particular brand in every consumption situation, despite situational influences. However, in reality, most customers evaluate several brands in the categorization process, and their consideration sets are not stable. The hotel industry is characterized as being highly competitive, with diverse brands and similar product offerings. Moreover, attractive marketing efforts from competitors (e.g., special promotions, last-minute discounts, packages) strongly encourage people to choose another brand among several alternatives. Therefore, attractive alternatives play significant roles in determining brand categorization and hotel brand choice. Clear understanding of dynamic process and brand categorization will provide guidelines for designing a more effective marketing and communication strategy.

References Available Upon Request

IS SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT FOR RESTAURANTS EXAGGERATED? A CASE OF THREE PROMINENT INDEPENDENT RESTAURANTS

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The appeal of social media is owed to its low cost and mass consumer appeal more than its ability to connect with consumers. Social media sites predominantly offer brand building benefits and the ability to know what guests are saying about your company. Businesses often utilize their social media pages without knowing their effect on end-users due to the inability to gauge level of engagement for an individual customer. The increasing influence of social media has resulted in a need for a finer understanding of how its usage influences short-term business goals as well as long-term strategic objectives. Customer engagement remains tenuous, specifically in the restaurant industry, where the influence of social media usage in restaurant decision-making is unknown. The purpose of this exploratory study was to determine the extent to which social media usage impacted customer engagement within three local restaurants. More specifically, the goal was to determine differences in how customers at three different restaurants currently utilize the restaurant's social media based on their distinctive customer bases.

Voluntary patrons (N=460) of three differently themed, popular, independently owned restaurants with divergently different customer bases were surveyed during their dine-in meals over a two-week period. The patrons who chose to voluntarily participate consisted of a random mix of men and women ranging from 19 years to over 69 years of age. Surveys were provided to the customers after the meal was completed as a comment card. Analysis of survey data was completed with cross-tabulations and frequencies utilizing IBM's SPSS software. To calculate customer engagement, all likes, shares and comments for each social media platform was aggregated for the three restaurants.

The key implication of this study is the low level of customer engagement with the restaurants' social media platforms. Findings indicated no significant differences in social media engagement across the three restaurants, and that social media platforms contributed to limited engagement predominantly on the Facebook platform. Less than 10 percent of respondents reported being followers of individual social media pages, of which Facebook remained most dominant. When it came to reasons why customers use social media, "learning about drink specials" and "just being a fan" contributed for the highest engagement within the small frequencies captured across all three restaurants. Findings indicated that 75 percent of the sample said that family, friends and coworkers were highly influential in dining decisions when searching for new restaurants. This indicated that family, friends and coworkers have a significant impact on decision-making when looking for new restaurants, indicating Word-of-Mouth to be a strong factor in dining decisions. This indicates that social media has a relatively low mode of influence in restaurant decision-making, a domain still dominated by traditional word-of mouth. It is important for restaurants to be engaged with their customers on social media, but they cannot expect immediate returns on their social media marketing activities.

References Available Upon Request

AESTHETIC AND RESTORATIVE QUALITIES OF VACATION DESTINATIONS: HOW ARE THEY RELATED?

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Introduction

The potential of tourism destination to restore and rejuvenate is a major pull factor for prospective tourists (Pearce, 2011). Environmental psychologists have traditionally linked restoration to aesthetics, for beautiful objects tend to elicit positively colored emotional responses of tranquillity and preference (Daniel & Vining, 1983), and the very aesthetic experience is viewed as restorative (Nasar, 1997). This study aimed (1) to uncover how perceived restorative qualities of destinations affect tourists' aesthetic judgment, (2) to explore the inter-relationship between perceived restorative and aesthetic qualities of both nature-based and urban tourism destinations, and (3) to understand why nature-based destinations tend to be perceived as more restorative.

Methods

Four hundred forty-one questionnaires were administered with assistance of an on-line research company. The survey consisted of five sections: 1) trip characteristics of the most recent vacation such as duration, travel party size, number of repeat visits, and a setting type (urban vs. nature); 2) six destination's aesthetic qualities (Local Characteristics, Scope, Upkeep, Accord, Perceived Age, Shape) as measured by Kirillova and Lehto's (in press) scale; 3) Lehto's (2013) Perceived Destination Restorative Qualities scale with six dimensions (Compatibility, Extent, Mentally away, Physically away, Fascination, Discord) as based on the attention-restoration theory (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989); 4) tourist aesthetic judgment as measured by "Overall, I think the destination was beautiful;" and 5) socio-demographic questions. Data were analyzed by means of multiple regression and two canonical correlation analyses (one - for nature-based and one- for urban destinations).

Results/Discussion

The multiple regression model was significant ($F=81.59$, $p<.001$) predicting 56.20% of variance in tourist aesthetic judgment. It was found that tourists tend to judge a destination as beautiful when they feel a detachment from everyday life routine and experience an absorbing lure that is in accordance with their preferences and personal inclinations. For nature-based destinations, CCA yielded three significant functions (Wilk's $\lambda=.378$, $F(36, 916.15)=6.32$, $p<.001$). The results show that crowdedness, fast pace, loud noise, lack of space, unique and intricate designs facilitate the perception of a nature-based destination as being too busy and confusing while hampering the destination perceived potential to deliver a restorative experience. For urban destinations, CCA yielded two significant functions (Wilk's $\lambda=.29$, $F(36, 920.54)=8.13$, $p<.001$). It appears that the need to escape the routine in order to restore is salient than in the case of urban vacations. Altogether, in nature-based destinations, the most powerful aspect of perceived restorative qualities was fascination while, in the case of built environments, compatibility between tourists' goals, personal predispositions, and a destination was more robust.

References Available Upon Request

A REVIEW OF TRAVEL MOBILE APPLICATION FUNCTIONALITY AND FEATURES

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Introduction

A leading travel service firm brought to the student researchers the concept of the "Travel Life Cycle" which consists of five phases: Inspire, Plan, Book, Experience and Share. The firm engaged the student researchers to conduct empirical research on a selected list of 22 travel mobile applications (apps) for the apps functionality and features provided. Working from a list of 30 potential features and options that the app may possess conducted a content analysis of the app to determine if the feature was present and to what extend the functionality of the feature was available. During the research most of the applications demonstrated features targeted towards more than one of the phases of the travel life cycle as proposed by the sponsoring firm. Furthermore, many of the applications offer a web based version of the mobile application and the research found that the relation between the application and web site was a key factor taken into consideration as users weigh their opinions of the travel planning offering.

Methods

Two matrixes were designed for the trip planning app review: an (1) Application Description Matrix and (2) Application Quantitative Matrix. The matrixes were designed taking into consideration how each app covered each item of the feature list developed. The matrixes were completed using a variety of information available online (i.e. App Store, Google Play, etc.), and by actually downloading installing and using each of the apps simulating a real travel planning situation. The application quantitative matrix utilizes the "Feature List" developed where each feature provided was assigned a 1 and a 0 for each feature not provide with each app receiving a total score resulting of the percentage of 1s assigned based on the total number of features listed. Other information gathered included an overview of each app, likes and dislikes based on real user reviews.

Results / Discussions

Overall applications and web sites that offer a wide range of features may not be user favorites as the app and web site can be difficult to navigate and users value those applications that are updated on a regular basis. Based on the results, the following recommendations can be stated:

- Apps and web pages should be updated on a regular basis, should be user friendly and should offer parallel functionalities between web and mobile applications developed.
- The content offered must be current and extensive, and should be qualified or classified by user reviews and/or curated experts.

Examining the expert critiques and user reviews found for the research project, currently the following are considered as the most important features or "key features" that users value worldwide in a travel planning app (in no particular order):

1. Comparison shopping and Booking.
2. Share relevant information between users and syncing between devices.
3. Maps and directions with offline capabilities.
4. Recommendations and top list with high quality content.

References Available Upon Request

THE EFFECT OF SATISFACTION WITH CO-CREATION EXPERIENCE ON PERSONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL OUTCOMES

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Introduction

The concept of co-creation has been introduced among many industries since it is centered on the idea of the consumer as a creator of value, interacting with a company to “co-create” value (Prebensen, Vittersø and Dahl, 2013). The co-creation originally stems from the service-dominant logic proposed by Vargo and Lusch (2008). Under service-dominant logic, one service is exchanged for another service as parties contribute to the creation process by sharing knowledge and resources. Through this interaction a more beneficial product or service is co-produced, and value is added given that resources are shared by both parties. Vargo and Lusch (2008) have hammered at the theme that the customer is always a co-creator of value. In the context of this research, we pose the following questions: What is the consumer’s role in co-creation? If the consumer is now viewed as a producer, what is the role of the supplier/provider? How is co-creation different from standard customer service? As such, the purpose of this study is to examine the underlying dimensions of the construct of co-creation experience in the context of tourism and its effects on behavioral consequences such as satisfaction with travel experience, overall life satisfaction, and loyalty to the service provider.

Methods

Original items were adopted from past research and adjusted to the context of the current study Cova, Dalli, and Zwick, 2011; Lee, 2012; Vargo, Lusch, Akaka, and He, 2009; Woo and Uysal, 2013, Sirgy, 2013; Um, Chon, & Ro, 2006, and Huang & Hsu, 2009). The content validity of the measurement items were tested by four professors who are expert on the subject matter. Also, content validity was further tested using a pilot study. After the completion of the pilot test, data were collected using a marketing research company over a period of month in April, 2013. An online panel survey was conducted through the company’s website. This study achieved a final count of 561 completed questionnaires. In order to test the relationships between the latent constructs in the proposed model, Structural Equation Modelling is used.

Results/Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that satisfaction with co-creation experience collaborating with a travel professional to provide their own ideas, and express their needs and desires to ensure that the trip is tailored to their needs and desires can contribute satisfaction with the vacation experience. Moreover, satisfaction with vacation experience helps improve a tourist’s overall life satisfaction during a trip and after they return home. Thus, we argue that the findings of this study contribute to the growing body of knowledge in understanding the perceived value of tourism experiences by establishing a theory-based empirical link between satisfaction with co-creation experience and overall life satisfaction via travel satisfaction

References Available Upon Request

INTERNATIONAL TOURISTS IN BANGKOK: AN EXAMINATION OF PUSH AND PULL TRAVEL MOTIVATIONS

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Introduction

Tourism is an increasingly important component of the economies of many countries (Dwyer et al., 2004). Schubert et al. (2011) determined that there are significant advantages of international tourism. For example, it is a good chance for the country to develop its infrastructures, so that international tourism can bring potential growth to a country from foreign exchange earnings in the long-term. Also, it leads countries and travel agencies to discover new techniques and knowledge by understanding their international tourists. International tourists are the main target market that brings major income to Thailand (TAT, 2008). Bangkok is a capital city where international tourists need to fly before visiting other cities in Thailand. However, Bangkok does not have natural attractions, therefore, it is necessary to investigate other factors that attract international tourists to come to Bangkok before going to other provinces (Borwonnithidej, 2006). Hence, this research aims to identify and prioritize significant tourist motivations to visit Bangkok as a tourist destination.

Methods

This study employed a quantitative research design using the survey method. 400 international tourists visiting Bangkok were asked to complete a questionnaire of this study. This occurred at four locations in Bangkok due to the popularity of these locations (i.e., the Grand Palace, Wat Phra Kaeo, Wat Pho, and Khao San Road). To test the four hypotheses, the researchers used a chi-square ($\chi 2$) test to investigate the relationships between variables.

Results/Discussion

The respondents were tourists who visited Bangkok as their tourist destination. This study showed that there was no relationship between cost of travel and international tourists' decisions to choose Bangkok as a tourist destination ($\chi^2 = 10.810$, $p > 0.05$). On the other hand, there were signification relationships between available time and choosing Bangkok as a tourist destination ($\chi^2 = 28.776$, $p < 0.01$), between the physical attractions and choosing Bangkok as a tourist destination ($\chi^2 = 34.375$, $p < 0.01$), and between socio-psychological attractions and choosing Bangkok as a tourist destination ($\chi^2 = 28.776$, $p < 0.01$).

Time available can be explained as a significant push motivation, and physical attraction and socio-psychological attraction can be categorized as significant pull motivations for Bangkok tourists. The reason that "available time" is a factor motivating international tourists to travel to Bangkok is probably because they found the amount of time traveling in Bangkok matched their available time. Bangkok has a variety of physical attractions that motivate international tourists to visit, such as unique souvenir stores and famous old temples. Plus, Bangkok provides various forms of transportation as well. Additionally, tourists might be satisfied with the attractiveness of the attitudes of Thai people while participating in cultural activities, entertainment and nightlife, the novelty of Bangkok, accessibility, food, and accommodation. Thus, Thai government and travel agencies should develop infrastructure and facilities of physical and socio-psychological attraction to meet the level of tourist's satisfaction standards.

References Available Upon Request

PERCEIVED PREFERENCE OF CONVENTION TOURISM EXPERIENCE: A CASE STUDY OF SEOUL, KOREA

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Introduction

As one of the largest sects of the tourism industry, the economic pressure is on convention venues to generate business not only for themselves, but their host countries as well. In 2012, the meetings industry officially contributed more global domestic product, or GDP, than the air transportation, motion picture, sound recording, performing arts, and spectator sport industries (Convention Industry Council, 2014). With this in mind, it is important to understand the potential impacts could occur as planners offer potential tourism experiences alongside the regularly scheduled conference in order to become more alluring. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the perceived tourism experience preferences of individual attendees and their behavioral intention in terms of visitation. This study delves into the examination of this potential relationship tying perceived experience and behavior intention together, and whether or not it is significant enough to be a consideration for planners and their clients in the future. Moreover, this paper attempts to differentiate characteristics between convention attendee groups. Thereby, conference organizers or DMOs will be better prepared to communicate effectively with designated target market

Methods

Study population and data collection

A structured questionnaire was randomly distributed at the entrances of conference centers and hotels to attendees during a three-month period in 2009. A total number of 201 questionnaires were used in a multiple regression and clustered analysis to achieve the purpose of the paper.

Results/Discussion

The results of multiple regression indicates that ‘watching performance/show experience’ and ‘visiting historical places experience’ are found to be significant determinants of behavioral intention to attend a conference. In addition, the clustered analysis results show that cluster I (highly interested in tourism experience) consists of more females, a younger age group, and first-time visitors compared to the low interest group, cluster II. Since the proposed hypothetical model is tested with a sample of international visitors in Seoul, South Korea, the results may not be generalizable to other populations; therefore future research that replicates this study should target conference attendees in other locations. The conference organizers need to put more effort into coordinating with DMOs/CVBs to offer appealing tourism programs. Thus, conference organizers or DMOs will be better prepared to communicate effectively with their designated target markets.

References Available Upon Request

TRANSFORMATIVE TOURISM EXPERIENCE IN THE XPERIENCE ECONOMY 3.0: THE ESSENCE AND MECHANISM

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Introduction

Society is transitioning to the third-generation experience economy in which the values of experience co-creation and personal meaning-making are the key. An important tenet of the experience economy 3.0 is that both a provider and a consumer are transformed because of meaningful consumption (Boswijk et al., 2013). The transformative potential of tourism experience then must be re-thought as a contemporary economic offering. This conceptual research proposes a theoretical model of a transformative tourism experience and highlights its transformative mechanism.

Conceptual development

Tourism experiences are seen in sharp opposition to the everyday experiences (Turner & Bruner, 1986) with some being understood as "peak" experiences (Maslow, 1971). These emotionally charged occurrences are accompanied by the feelings of wonder and awe as well as extreme happiness, a sense of lightness, freedom, and a harmony with the whole world that arouse feelings of importance (Williams & Harvey, 2001). Occasionally, these are "likely to be experienced as a self-transformational shift in one's consciousness or spiritual perception" (Tsaur, Yen & Hsiao, 2013, p. 362). This transformation, however, does not occur in the vacuum and involves the context such as trip- and destination-related characteristics as well as the content of the experience such as activities, which underlines individuals' meaning-making system (Mishler, 1979).

Model

The proposed model of transformative tourism experience begins with motivation that determines the context and then the content of tourism experience. The triggers spontaneity and novelty act as facilitating agents to enhance the destination-tourist exchange and are contained within the context of experience. Through the process of co-creation as affected by tourists' personal predispositions, the immediate output of transformative experience includes sensations, cognition, and emotions. The transformational outcome is facilitated through active meaning creation on the part of a consumer. Thus, experience co-creation and meaning making are the driving forces behind a transformative tourism experience.

Discussion/Conclusion

The suggested theoretical model ties the context as well as the content of tourism experience and traces the process of intra-personal transformation, decomposing "the black box" of a transformative tourism experience within the parameters of the third-generation experience economy. In practice, the framework provides insights into a consumer experiential world and clarifies the experiential platform, on which meaningful tourism experiences are to be designed in order to achieve a destination's pragmatic goals while enhancing consumers' well-being.

References Available Upon Request

INVESTIGATING THE ROLE OF WEIBO IN TOURIST MOTIVATIONS IN THE APPLICATION OF SELF-DETERMINATION THEORY

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Introduction

Over the years, a number of attempts have been made to explore the relationship between social media and consumer behavior in marketing area (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2012; Greene & Kesselheim, 2010; Thackeray, el. at., 2008). Microblogging allows users to broadcast short messages via multiple platforms to friends and followers, ensuring frequent and immediate updates on their activities, opinions, and status (Barnes *el.at*, 2010). Since Facebook and Twitter has been blocked in China in 2009, microblogging which has similar functions with Facebook and Twitter came out which referred as "Weibo". This study filled this research gap using Self-determination theory (SDT). The study investigated the three components of SDT (self-determination, social comparison, & social influence) and satisfaction. In terms of practical application, the study also provides marketers strategies of using social media advices to tourism related companies on social media websites.

Methods

The questionnaire includes five sections, including self-determination, social comparison, social influence, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. The final questionnaire was posted the questionnaire on an online survey company in China. The total questionnaires collected was 263, with 198 in a usable format. The authors used Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with a maximum likelihood method to evaluate the relationships of the five motivations.

Results/Discussion

The findings of this study revealed that Weibo users' motivations based on self-determination and self-influence affect their satisfaction. Self-comparison in self-determination theory did not reach statistical significance on satisfaction. This study provides a foundation for future research in the context of tourism and social media and suggests practitioners with effective marketing strategies to ultimately enhance customers' satisfaction through enhanced their motivations based on self-determination theory.

Reference Available Upon Request

THE EFFECTS OF TOURISM ADVERTISING TYPES AND TELEPRESENCE ON TOURISM INTERESTS OF DIFFERENT AUDIENCE

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Using the U.S. tourism commercial ‘Land of Dreams’ as a stimulus, this paper empirically tests the influence of different advertising types on people’s tourism interests. In order to better understand the relationships between tourism advertisements and tourism interests of the audience, this paper combines advertising types, audience segments and telepresence for the first time, and tries to explain the influence of advertising types on tourism interests by subgroup analysis.

This study is conducted through Internet surveys and paper questionnaires. After showing the 4 types of tourism advertisements to different groups of participants, this paper collects 498 valid respondents with measurements for the pre/post tourism interest and telepresence. This study provides theoretical implications for the theory of tourism advertising and tourism interests of the audience, and practical suggestions for the precise application of tourism advertisements.

The results mainly suggests that: (1) tourism advertisements have significant influence on audiences’ tourism interests and different types of advertisements have different dimensions of influences; (2) the influence of advertisements on people’s tourism interests is mediated by audience segments; (3) the increase of tourism interests and telepresence of different audience segments are influenced by advertising types; (4) tourism advertising types, audience segments, the increase of tourism interests and telepresence have interaction effects.

References Available Upon Request

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SEASONAL DIFFERENCE IN THE PROJECTION OF DESTINATION IMAGE ON SOCIAL MEDIA: A CASE STUDY ON CHINA'S WEIBO

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Introduction

Social media enables DMOs to deliver real-time information about destinations, which may facilitate temporal changes of projected destination image. However, destination image is regarded as relatively static in previous studies. Temporal and seasonal changes of destination image have drawn little attention. This study focuses on whether and how projected destination image changes temporally on social media.

Methods

The researchers collected 12,063 microblog posts released by China's 25 provincial tourism bureaus in January and July, 2013 on *Sina Weibo*. Each microblog post was coded according to posted time, date, and content. The researchers then classified the content of all the microblog posts into 24 categories. Seasonal-characteristic words (SCWs) were selected based on the climate and characteristics of tourism resources in China. The frequencies of these words were identified from the microblog posts. Paired sample tests were conducted to identify significant differences between projected image in winter and that in summer for all destinations.

Results/Discussion

It was found that the destinations studied did project image with different contents in different seasons. Firstly, China's destinations were more active on social media in summer than in winter— they posted more about scenic spots in summer, but more tourism administration news in winter. Also, significant variances in the frequencies of words bearing seasonal characteristics or representing seasonal attractions (SCWs) also indicated that destinations projected their image through selected elements in different seasons. In winter, destinations relied more on attractions non-sensitive to seasonal change than on those sensitive to seasonal change. However, the frequencies of these SCWs were rather low in summer and winter months. That is to say, compared with the whole image projection efforts of destinations, seasonal differences in projected image were not particularly evident.

Acknowledgement

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References Available Upon Request

AN ANALYSIS OF KOREAN MEDIA FRAMES ON MEGA SPORTS EVENT: A FOCUS ON THE PYEONGCHANG 2018 WINTER OLYMPIC GAMES

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Introduction

Mega sports events bring positive and negative impact on hosting countries. Therefore, well-planned management and proper promotion of public understanding are necessary to enhance the positive impacts on tourism development. In this context, the role of media is significant as a social coordinator to shape public understanding. The media provide diverse perspectives on social interactions known as frames. As a result, media frames analysis has become a popular topic in media and tourism studies. Therefore, this study aims to analyze media frames on mega sports events using the case of the PyeongChang 2018 Winter Olympic Games in South Korea. Specifically, this paper identifies which criteria of the frames were adopted, and examines how the frames shifted alongside bid process periods.

Methods

Content analysis was used in this study and there were three steps in the analysis. First, five major newspapers were selected among Korean newspapers. Second, for the analysis, editorials from these newspapers were assembled as research contents. Third, 10 thematic frames were established for the analysis based on the general frames covered in previous research: social conflict frame, competitive conflict frame, capacity responsibility frame, procedure responsibility frame, economic frame, national & regional development frame, ethical frame, nationalism frame, environmental frame, and mutual understanding frame.

Results/Discussion

The results of this study revealed that the media frames had changed according to the periods of the bid process. In phase one, the emphasis of the media frames was placed on the attribution frame and situational frame mainly. In phase two, the attribution frame and background frame were more emphasized. In the phase three, media frames were enlarged to emphasize the value frame. Overall, the Korean media frames on PyeongChang 2018 were enlarged according with the period of the bid process, but still did not cover all the aspects of mega sports events in a balanced manner.

Theoretically, this paper established a set of thematic frames based on general media frames. Secondly, this study examined the changing patterns of media frames in parallel with phases of the bidding process. On a practical level, this study suggests that the tourism industry engage in increased efforts to provide the media with more accurate data and useful information about mega sports events in order to encourage more balanced perspectives. Moreover, the media should focus on developing higher capacities and greater expertise to better understand the international significance of mega sports events.

References Available upon Request

THE LAST 15 YEARS OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOR RESEARCH IN CRUISE TOURISM: A CONTENT ANALYSIS

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Introduction

Cruise tourism has grown enormously with an average compound growth rate of 7.2% since 1980 (Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association, 2012). The demand will continue to grow, as the total number of passengers on Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) members will grow to 21.7 million in 2014 (CLIA, 2014). However, compared to the amount of research published on other niche tourism segments, research on cruise tourism is still in its infancy and needs more empirical research to better understand cruise experience and post-consumption behaviour (Petrick, 2004). Thus, this study attempts to: 1) conduct a systematic review of consumer behaviour research on cruise tourism to better understand its present status; 2) to identify the major themes and constructs explored, and the research trends; 3) provide future directions for research in cruise tourism.

Methods

To identify consumer behaviour publications on cruise tourism, a systematic database search for relevant literature published between 2000 and 2014 (till April) was carried out with CAB Direct; ABI/INForm (Global, Trade/Industry); Hospitality and Tourism Index, focusing on English academic journals. We first identify research context in cruise tourism by searching “cruise” in the title or abstract, and then search keywords including passenger, visitor, tourist, behavior/behaviour, and experience in abstract. Initially, 1,578 publications were identified from 2000 to 2014. Each publication was briefly reviewed to ensure the articles were concerning consumer behaviour research. Irrelevant publications were eliminated based on the scope of consumer behaviour as identified by Bray (2008), Ekström (2003) and Pachauri (2002). A supplemental search using both snowball method and analysis on key figures was utilized to expand the scope. A total of 61 journal publications were finally identified and analyzed.

Results/Discussion

The articles were classified and analyzed in terms of publication year, journal, research methods, and research themes. The publication number displayed no frequency increase year over year, the number in 2012 (10), 2010 (9) and 2004 (8) accounts for 44% of total. Most articles appear in the major tourism journals, including Journal of Travel Research (11), Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing (7), and Tourism Management (6), accounting for 39% of all articles. Quantitative method (80.3%) was the dominantly used, followed by qualitative method (11.5%) and hybrid or mixed-method (8.2%). It conducted the word cloud analysis through Nvivo to identify frequent keywords and major themes. The most frequently keywords are intention, values, satisfaction, and loyalty, and 7 research themes were identified. Quality, perceived value and satisfaction (23%) and purchasing behavior (23%) were two dominant themes in the area, followed by loyalty (16%), decision-making (11%), social aspect (10%), segmentation (8%), and motivation (8%). This study will further discuss the research status, trends and priorities by examining each theme identified in the preliminary analysis.

IDENTIFYING TRIP PATTERNS OF CHINESE DOMESTIC LEISURE TRAVELERS: A CASE OF MOUNT FANJING

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Introduction

China's tourism industry is now booming in both domestic and international market. According to Tourism Industry Statistics Report (2013), Chinese domestic travelers were up to 2.96 billion in 2012 and the number increased by 12 percent compared to that of 2011. Moreover, Chinese government is paying more attention to the development of western China because of its huge economic potential (Western China Development Plan, 2012). Located in western China, Mount Fanjing (or Fanjingshan) is abundant in natural and cultural resources. The local government is making an effort to develop it as a tourism destination, thus it is selected as a case in this study. The current study is to identify tourist behavior characteristics and trip patterns in order to provide suggestions for the local government. The result of the study can help understand Chinese domestic leisure travelers and the knowledge of spatial behaviour.

Methods

A total of 220 questionnaires were distributed on Mount Fanjing in June, 2011, and 200 valid responses returned. There were five sections in the questionnaire. The first three sections were questions related with tourist behavior. In the fourth section, origins and the means of transportation were asked. The last part was to identify tourist spatial behavior and trip patterns. A simplified regional map with main destinations around Mount Fanjing was included for respondents to show their trips. Each route was categorized, coded, and frequency analysis was conducted in SPSS 17.0.

Results/Discussion

There are five trip patterns identified based on data collected, i.e. Single Destination Pattern (37%), En Route Pattern (18.5%), Base Camp Pattern (11%), Regional Tour Pattern (28.5%), and Trip Chaining Pattern (5%). The findings are consistent with the previous spatial pattern theory (Lue, Crompton, & Fensenmair, 1993; Stewart and Vogt, 1997). It is suggested that Mount Fanjing needs to address cultural and religious features in order to be distinguished from its competitors. Moreover, the local government should improve the facilities and surrounding environment, and meanwhile cooperate with other surrounding destinations and develop featured vacation packages in order to attract more long-trip travelers.

For future research, factors influencing each spatial trip pattern can be explored. For example, the distance between origins and the destination can be categorized, and then the relationship between the distance and the choice of trip patterns can be identified.

References Available Upon Request

TOURISTS` AUTHENTICITY PERCEPTION AND ITS IMPACT ON TOURIST SATISFACTION AND LOYALTY - A CASE OF THE WORLD CULTURAL HERITAGE SITE IN CHINA

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Introduction
Since Dean Mac Cannell firstly introduced the conception of authenticity in his study on tourists' motives and tourism experience in 1973, tourism authenticity has become a hot topic in tourism studies and aroused a wide attention of western tourism scholars from multiple angles. However, few scholars have ever cared about the authenticity research in world cultural heritage site and little studies have quantitatively explore tourists authenticity perceptions and its impacts on tourists' satisfaction and loyalty. To that end, the objective of the present study is to empirically test the relationship between the authentic perceptions of tourists and their satisfaction and loyalty by taking a world cultural heritage site in China as a particular research object.

Methods
To achieve the setting goals, a questionnaire survey was conducted in 2012 at the Earth Building - the unique residential architecture of Fujian Province in China. Tourism authenticity perception variable, tourist satisfaction variable and tourist loyalty variable was measured and adapted from the previous studies. And a Structure Equation Model was used to empirically test the relationship between tourists' authentic perceptions and their satisfaction and loyalty.

Results/Discussion
The results of model hypothesis test shows that most of the hypotheses are supported. To be specific, the objective authenticity perception of tourists directly affects tourist satisfaction and loyalty, 0.351 and 0.144 respectively, which indicates that the pure cultural heritage authenticity experience is the fundamental guarantee to improve tourist satisfaction and loyalty. The constructive authenticity and existential authenticity all significantly affect tourists' satisfaction, estimated value is 0.250 and 0.228 respectively, which suggests that the theatrical performances in the cultural heritage sites won't destroy the authenticity of heritage's culture, but will help the tourists to accept the heritage sites and get high satisfaction. however limited to the existing tourism activities and facilities, existential authenticity finally leads to a lower satisfaction compared to constructive authenticity. The post-modernist authenticity has a positive impact on their satisfaction and loyalty, 0.278 for satisfaction and 0.379 for loyalty. Therefore, it is recommended that the heritage site operator should improve the level of "hyper-reality" to meet the tourists' leisure, entertainment and other tourism purposes. Just as expected, visitors' satisfaction has a high positive influence on its loyalty, 0.719 to be exact, which is in accordance with the existing research.

References Available Upon Request

CHAIRMANSHIP IN KNOWLEDGE SHARING AMONG MULTISTAKEHOLDERS IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM: CASE OF UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Introduction

Successful sustainable tourism relies on supports of multistakeholders. To promote sustainability globally, knowledge sharing in international meetings, such as the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), is important to exchange experiences.

Methods

Focusing on chairmanship, this study applied content analysis to analyze the 7th CSD session. The chairman for the 7th CSD session was Mr. Simon Upton, prior New Zealand politician, Minister for the Environment, and chair of the Round Table on Sustainable Development in OECD. A total of 4 meetings in the 7th CSD session were recorded and translated into 365-page transcripts.

Results/Discussion

Findings from this content analysis revealed four dimensions of chairmanship: (1) regulating meeting process, (2) recognizing meeting participants, (3) integrating diverse information, and (4) directing issue flows.

References Available Upon Request

EXPLORING EXPERIENTIAL VALUE PERCEPTION OF CHINESE TOURIST'S RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES AROUND CITIES-A METHOD OF WEB TEXT MINING ANALYSIS

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Introduction
Recreation around cities is a hot tourism trend in China today. As a jaunt, it considerably differs from long-distance travel. However, a significant amount of research on tourists' experiential value and structural system of recreation around cities has not been conducted. There are still open questions about the problems: What are the main focuses of recreation around cities for tourists? What indicators can be used to measure tourists' experiential value? Therefore, there exists an urgent need to deeply understand the tourists' experiential value characteristics and measure the experiential value perception of recreational activities around cities.

Methods
In order to make the data better represent general Chinese tourists' comments, the researchers chose to study five large cities: Shanghai, Beijing, Wuhan, Guangzhou and Chengdu, with a total of 50 recreation scenic spots. The study used Rost Content Mining software analysed the original input, 3,938 comments, derived 500 high-frequency words as a first output and then refined those down to 109 high frequency words by eliminating redundant, disorderly, and wider meaning words or words without obvious expression. In other words, the software reduced 500 high-frequency words to 109 words, and this study classified those 109 high frequency words to derive indicators, which in turn generated five dimensions.

Results/Discussion
The study extracted 109 high frequency words and classified these high-frequency words into five experiential value dimensions. There were 5 indicators of functional value: service quality, efficiency, facilities condition, convenience, planning layout and accommodations; 10 of emotional value, happiness, comfort，interestingness, relaxation, freshness, excitement, attractiveness, leisure, enjoyment, and satisfaction; 5 of situational value, situational force, beautiful environment, attractive atmosphere, friendly, and theme experience; 3 of cognitive value, experiencing different life style, is educated, and learning culture; 4 of economic value, reasonable cost, economy, and save time and energy, and cost-effective. These indicators provide the basis for studying the recreation around cities experiential value structure system. This study contributes to the literature in two ways: it is based on tourists' spontaneously generated comments on recreation around cities, and it adopts the Holstic coefficient in Rost Content Mining for the qualitative analysis. However, the sample of this study is relatively narrow because this research focuses only on one website. The researchers conclude that a more accurate perception of the indicators' characteristics will provide for a better study on the experiential value structure system. A more extensive study of the experiential value structural system of recreation around cities should be conducted by a qualitative approach using focus-group interviews.

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THE IMPACT OF PERCEIVED BENEFITS, ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN, AND CONSERVATION COMMITMENT ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

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Introduction

Growing awareness on sustainable development has increased the research interest on sustainable tourism for the values of tourism competitiveness (Hunter, 1997). In particular, Iowa's wetlands have been touted as one of the great outdoor regions in the US with its efforts to promote conservation and outdoor recreation (U.S. Department of the Interior, 2011). Attitudes and behaviors towards sustainability on natural based tourism are important in developing sustainable tourism development (Bull & Lovell, 2007; Lee, Kang, Long, & Reisinger, 2010; Manyara & Jones, 2007). While wetlands can be a significant resource for natural based tourism, little research has been conducted to assess the effects of tourists' attitudes and behaviors regarding sustainable tourism management (Lee, 2013). The purpose of this study was to examine wetlands visitors' attitude toward support for sustainable tourism development in a hypothesized relationship among the perceived benefits, environmental concern, conservation commitment, and support for sustainable tourism development.

Methods

The survey consists of four variables: perceived benefits, environmental concern, conservation commitment, and support for sustainable tourism development. A five-point Likert scale was used to measure all the survey items (1: strongly disagree, 5: strongly agree). The study population consisted of license holders for fishing and/or hunting who have visited wetlands in Iowa. An online survey, using Qualtrics was distributed to 3,400 license holders from March 10, 2014 to April 13, 2014. Data analysis consisted of two steps: Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Structural Equation Modeling in order to examine the hypothesized relationships among the constructs in the study. The proposed model was analyzed through Amos 21 to estimate the theoretical relationships within the model.

Results/Discussion

A total of 670 people participated in the study. With a thorough examination, a total of 481 cases were used for data analysis while the rest responses determined to be either missing variables or outliers. The results indicated that perceived benefits of wetlands and environmental concern each influenced support for sustainable tourism development. Moreover, conservation commitment played a significant mediator role in connecting the links between perceived benefits of wetlands and support for sustainable tourism development and between environment concern and support for sustainable tourism development. This study contributes to the knowledge on the underlying mechanism of how an individual can sustain such environmental behaviors in the realm of tourism development. The results offer destination managers to recognize important values of wetlands and to promote Iowa as an environmentally conscious nature-based destination. The findings will aid local governments and community tourism developers in promoting sustainable tourism development.

References Available Upon Request

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF MOTIVATION TO TRAVEL A POPULAR RELIGIOUS SITE: AN ANALYTICAL QUALITATIVE APPROACH FROM A PUSH AND PULL PERSPECTIVE

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Introduction

As one of the oldest forms of tourism, religious tourism is still a significant form of travel (Jankowski & Smith, 1992). While past literature has suggested an international volume close to a quarter million (Jankowski, 2000), a very conservative figure from a recent report covering only the most popular sites suggests over 150 million global pilgrims travelling annually (Pilgrimage statistics, 2011). Contemporary tourism movement around religious or sacred sites, however, is not reducible to pilgrimage alone as many different types of tourists visit these sites with different motivations and interests. Despite the attempt to understand dynamics of religious tourism, literature still lacks a deeper understanding tourists' motivations to travel to such sites. Therefore this study broadly aims to have a better understanding of tourist motivations behind sacred site travels, Camino de Santiago as the focal site. This study ultimately aims to draw a general motivational map of the sacred travel to Santiago by utilizing the push-pull framework as a theoretical perspective to analyse tourists' motives.

Methods

Data was drawn from 'Trip advisor' (www.tripadvisor.com) and 'Pilgrim and Walking forum' (www.caminodesantiago.me.uk) in a random manner. User generated contents on the web were analyzed inductively following ground theory approach (Charmaz, 2006). Data were interpreted by the researcher's perspective of push and pull factors. The coding procedure followed three phases: open coding, focused, and theoretical coding. The first phrase yields 168 open codes and these open codes were condensed into focused codes such as challenge, accomplishment, spirit, adventure, train, silence, best holiday, achievement, camaraderie, health, life changing, learning. The thematic coding was employed to delineate the empirical story line and to relate to the push and pull theoretical framework.

Results/Discussion

In this study, religious travellers were found to be motivated mainly by push factors while non-religious travelers were motivated by both push and pull factors. Religious people were motivated by the spiritual benefits that they seek, supporting the view that the religious beliefs are the essential elements of the pilgrim experience (Belhanssen et al., 2008). On the other hand, non-religious people are motivated to travel for destination's natural/historic/physical attributes, in other words pull factors, as well as inner push factors, which are not necessarily faith-based (e.g. escape). The result is in accordance with Crompton's assertion (1979) that consumers motivated by socio-psychological motives seek for unique experience and exploration of self from a destination that are physically and socially different from the mundane environment. The result of the analysis also indicated that Santiago falls in between religious tourism and secular tourism on Smith's continuum. Further study is required to overcome existing limitations and explore the true identity of today's Camino de Santiago.

References Available Upon Request

TERROIR TOURISM: A VINE PERSPECTIVE

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Introduction

Terroir tourism has been recently recognized as a potential regional tourism strategy that commodifies the distinctiveness of a winegrowing region as a marketing product (Holland, Smit & Jones (2014). The French term Terroir, is derived from terre (land), denotes special characteristics of a particular place, interacting with plant genetics in agricultural products such as wine, coffee, chocolate, tea, and cheese (Trubeck, 2008). Vaudour (2002) developed a typology of viticulture terroir of grape growing, whereby terroir is characterized by four components: territory, plant growing, advertising, and identity. Furthermore, Holland et al., (2014) developed a framework of terroir tourism, including regional and rural economic development, wine tourism product, winemaking and viticulture, and regional identity. While Holland et al., (2014) has recently made a significant initial step to develop a framework of terroir tourism, their work has not been validated yet if the framework exclusively comprehends the concepts of terroir tourism. In addition, the authors missed to discuss the characteristics of terroir from a vine perspective and the concept of "place" as an important element in understanding terroir tourism. The purpose of this study was to identify the characteristics of terroir tourism from a vine perspective, using content analysis. This study is an initial step to explore terroir tourism and its characteristics.

Methods

Qualitative content analysis was used for this study. Data were collected and analyzed from June 15th to August 15th, 2014. Particularly, inductive category development was employed to interpret texts from the literature based on the frameworks of Vaudour (2002), Moran (2006), and Holland et al. (2014). The approach includes procedures in formulating a criterion of definition, derived from theoretical background and research question, which in turn, determines the aspects of the textual material taken into account. Following this criterion, the literature was thoroughly investigated to categorize findings into tentative groups. The reliability for the identified categories was evaluated.

Results/Discussion

This study revealed that terroir tourism has characteristics within the categories of territory, plant growing, advertising and identity. Terroir tourism from the vine perspective created four categories and revealed fifty nine characteristics. The finding indicates that such territory terms as region, land and place are important keywords to describe terroir tourism from a vine perspective. This study initiates the examination of the characteristics of terroir tourism from the tourism perspective, which is different from the Holland et al. (2014)'s study. The findings will help a destination to develop alternative tourism marketing strategies based on their terroir characteristics of region, place, and land for potential terroir tourists. Further investigation will be followed to identify different characteristics between terroir tourism and wine tourism.

References Available Upon Request

SAFETY AND TOURISM DESTINATION IMAGE: A CASE STUDY

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Introduction

As China is becoming the world's largest outbound tourism market (Wang, 2013), many countries have devoted greater efforts to solicit the vast potential market of Chinese visitors (Li & Stepchenkova, 2012). However, the deterioration of safety caused by terrorism in some destination countries makes Chinese tourists more cautious in their selections. This paper aims to explore how important safety perception is to tourism destination image as perceived by Mainland Chinese citizens at a between-country level (perceptions of different countries) and a within-country level (perception towards one country), as well as what affects their safety perception at the two levels.

Methods

An online survey targeting adult Chinese citizens was conducted between 2013 and 2014. A total of 214 valid responses was collected with a response rate of 80.5%. Most (59.8%) of respondents have visited other countries, and 52% of respondents have visited the U.S. Fifty two countries were selected based on multiple official resources. Respondents were asked to evaluate how ideal (operationalized as overall destination image), safe, and attractive each country is as a tourist destination, as well as to answer questions about outbound travel and U.S. travel experience. Each country's terrorism incident information, population, and development level were collected. PLS path modelling, mediation and moderation tests, independent-samples t tests, and simple linear regression, and tests for difference between two slopes were conducted using SmartPLS 2, SPSS 21, and Statistics Calculators 3.0.

Results

For Chinese citizens with outbound travel experience, safety perception was found to directly and indirectly (through attractiveness of tourism resources) affect destination countries' images at the between-country level. For those with no such experience, safety perception was found to directly, but not indirectly, affect destination image. Safety perception of a country is mainly affected by a country's development level (developed, developing, and underdeveloped), and then by the amount and intensity of terrorism incidents, but no evidence shows it is significantly affected by incident density among people. Further, analyses using the U.S. as a case demonstrates that safety perception indirectly (through attractiveness of tourism resources), but not directly, affects a destination's image at the within-country level. Safety perception is not significantly affected by whether a Chinese had visited a destination or not, but affected by the length of stay at the destination. People having visited a country like the U.S. tended to view the country significantly more ideal and attractive, but not necessarily safer. Longer staying time in a country can improve visitors' safety perception, but not their evaluation on the ideal degree and attractiveness of a destination. A statistical comparison of impacts of safety perception at between-country and within-country levels indicates that safety perception has greater impacts on different countries' images than on one country's image perceived by different people.

References Available Upon Request

STUDY ABROAD: THE IMPACT OF TOURISM EXPERIENCE FOR A DESTINATION

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Introduction

Educational travel is becoming a tourism niche market which educational institutions, employers, parents, and destinations have seen increasing in value. Research has shown that educational travel, if structured and planned well, can positively affect students' learning outcomes including their cross-cultural competency, functional knowledge and skills, and global environmental citizenship. While the significance of educational travel in student's learning has been well studied, little research has been conducted to understand its impact on destinations. This study takes a marketing perspective, and intends to understand how students' educational travel experiences affect their attachment to the destination, future visit intention, and positive storytelling behavior.

Methods

Based on the literature review, this study hypothesized that students' tourism experience positively affects their place attachment, which in turn positively affects their attitudinal loyalty and positive storytelling behaviors. The measurement items of all variables except storytelling were adapted from existing scales, and a new scale was developed to measure storytelling behavioral frequency. The study used a survey method for data collection, which was administered to a Singapore student group who had a one-month educational program at a large public university. The students spent most their daytime on campus, while they had evenings and weekends to explore the destination. The data was collected at the end of their educational program in 2013. A total of 201 usable surveys were collected. The collected data was subjected to exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and structural equation modeling (SEM).

Results/Discussion

Because the measurement items of all constructs were either combined from multiple sources or created, EFA was used to reduce the number of items and ensure uni-dimensiionality. The EFA results revealed a three-dimension structure for tourism experience (educational, escapism, and entertainment/aesthetic), a two-dimension solution for storytelling behaviors (online and offline), and a single-dimension structure for both place attachment and attitudinal loyalty. The EFA results (yielding seven constructs) were used in the SEM testing. Goodness-of-fit indices indicated that the measurement model fit the data reasonably well, and the seven constructs displayed good convergent and discriminant validity.

The structural model showed that escapism was the strongest predictor, among the three dimensions of tourism experience, for place attachment ($\beta = 0.709$, $p < 0.001$), followed by entertainment/ aesthetics ($\beta = 0.253$, $p < 0.001$). The effect of education on place attachment was not significant ($\beta = -.108$, $p > 0.05$). In addition, place attachment was a strong predictor for loyalty intention ($\beta = 0.778$, $p < 0.001$), online storytelling behaviors ($\beta = 0.423$, $p < 0.001$), and offline storytelling behavior ($\beta = 0.432$, $p < 0.001$).As educational travel has become an increasingly valuable tourism segment, this study contributes to the existing literature by understanding the unique experience of this under-studied niche market and examining how their experience influences their place attachment, loyalty and storytelling behaviors.

References Available Upon Request

EFFECTS OF ONLINE CUSTOMER GENERATED CONTENT, HOTEL STAR RATING AND ROOM SIZE ON HOTEL ROOM RATES SOLD THROUGH AN ONLINE TRAVEL AGENCY

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Introduction
Today, the online booking of hotel rooms has become a primary source of room reservations, and online travel agencies (OTAs) have increasingly had a major impact as electronic reservation intermediaries for hotel chains and independent properties. In this study, research was undertaken to measure the impact of online consumer generated content, such as the number and quality of customer reviews, hotel ratings and room size on standard king room rates found at Booking.com. The results of this study will benefit hotel owners and managers, as they will have a better understanding of the impact that such variables have on their room rates.

Methods
During the month of February 2014, data were collected from 102 hotels located in a large city from the southwestern region of the United States through an OTA named Booking.com. Researchers simulated a 7-night reservation of a standard king room for two adults. To analyze the influence of the five independent variables (number of customer reviews per hotel, average score of customer reviews per hotel, number of persons who added a hotel to their wish list, hotel star rating, and room size) on standard king room rates, a multiple regression analysis was performed using SPSS version 21.

Results/Discussion
Results show that 62% of the variation in room rates is explained by the model, and that the quantity of customer reviews is negatively related to hotels' room rates. This result is explained by the fact that 3-star properties, which typically charge lower room rates than 4 and 5-star hotels, had the most customer reviews in the investigated city.

All of the independent variables were statistically significant except hotel room size. This can be explained by the fact that many 3-star properties, which again charge lower room rates than 4 and 5-star hotels, offered more space in their standard king rooms than in the ones sold by 4 and 5-star hotel properties.The findings confirm the influence of online customer reviews on hotel room rates. Such result was agreed upon by several researchers and industry experts, who confirmed that hotel reviews and ratings drive hotel sales and revenue (Blal & Sturman, 2014). In this case, the quality (i.e., average review grade) and quantity (i.e., number of reviews; wish list clicks) of hotel reviews both had significant impacts on standard king room rates. However, it is important to note that the quality of hotel reviews had a higher influence on hotel room rates than the quantity of hotel reviews. Therefore, hotel managers need to continuously improve their customer service and encourage satisfied customers to post their online reviews in OTAs, as bad reviews can seriously undermine their hotel reputation and revenue.

References Available Upon Request

COMMON METHOD BIAS IN HOSPITALITY BUSINESS RESEARCH: A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE AND AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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Introduction

Behavioral researchers have long recognized the threat of method variance as a prevalent source of measurement error. Campbell and Fiske (1959) first acknowledged that mono-method designs allow for correlated errors that can lead to erroneous conclusions about relationships. Even after more than 50 years, common method variance is still a topic of discussion in disciplines as wide ranging as marketing, psychology, and management among others (e.g., MacKenzie & Podsakoff, 2012). This raises an important question for hospitality researchers: Is common method variance sufficiently controlled in hospitality research? Although this question can be answered with an assessment of the hospitality literature, to the best of our knowledge, no study exists evaluating the effort to control common method variance in hospitality research. Thus, the purpose of this study is to examine the current state of common method bias (CMB) in hospitality research (Study 1) and to suggest remedies to assist researchers in providing more accurate and sound conclusions (Study 2).

Method, Results and Discussion

Study 1: A Critical Review of CMB in Hospitality Research

In Study 1, we identify the current state of hospitality researchers' endeavors to control common method bias by providing a critical review of literature over last five years (2009-2013) in a peer-reviewed hospitality management journal, the *International Journal of Hospitality Management* (IJHM). Results reveal that for approximately 83% of survey-related publications in IJHM, CMB was not explicitly discussed or acknowledged making it unclear if actions were taken to minimize CMB. This finding raises concerns over erroneous conclusions caused by shared method variance among constructs. Moreover, only a limited number of techniques are being used to control method variance among hospitality researchers. Therefore, more rigorous effort is recommended to control for CMB in hospitality studies.

Study 2: An empirical investigation of techniques controlling for CMB

In Study 2, the effectiveness of procedural remedies and statistical controls are tested. Two separate groups completed the same questionnaire administered in two different ways: a cross-sectional (N=159) and a two-wave survey (N=144). Study 2 empirically demonstrates that the procedural remedy and statistical controls minimize the impact of CMB. A temporal separation with a one day interval between measuring independent (perceived service quality) and dependent (future behavioral intention) variables results in a lower correlation compared to that of a cross-sectional survey design. More interestingly, in the cross-sectional design, the correlation notably decreases (30%) when the unmeasured latent method factor was added in the model to control method variance. That is, method variance inflates the relationships between two constructs by about 30%—a difference powerful enough to make erroneous conclusions. Therefore, it is recommended that hospitality researchers actively embrace techniques to control CMB when conducting the behavioral research.

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELECTED HOTEL CHARACTERISTICS AND PERFORMANCE IN THE EXTENDED STAY HOTEL SEGMENT

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Introduction
As extended stay hotels gain in popularity across the United States, it is important to understand how certain hotel factors influence their performance. The purpose of this paper is to analyze the relationship between selected hotel characteristics (Location, Scale, Size and Operation arrangement) and its performance (RevPAR) in the U.S. extended stay market.

The findings of this study may shed some light on how to enhance property performance in the hotel industry. Hotel investors can utilize the findings to make wiser and more knowledgeable investment decisions by searching for good-value properties. Existing hotels can also use the findings to optimize their performance.

Methods
A multiple regression model was performed on a national data set. The monthly property data of the extended stay hotel market throughout the U.S. from 2010 to 2012 were obtained from Smith Travel Research. The following equation is proposed to explore the relationships among the selected characteristics (size, hotel scale, operation arrangement and location) as the independent variables and hotel performance as the dependent variable.

$HP=\beta_0 + \beta_1 S + \beta_2 HS + \beta_3 OA + \beta_4 L + \varepsilon$ (1)
Where
HP: Hotel Performance
S: Size; HS: Hotel Scale; OA: Operation Arrangement; L: Location
β_0: The intercept;
$\beta_{1,2,3,4}$: The beta coefficient or slope of each independent variable;
ε: The random error term or the residual portion;

Results/Discussion
The findings show that hotels located in urban areas perform the best among all location categories. Therefore, investors are still encouraged to invest in extended stay hotels in urban areas compared with other location types. Second, Upper-tier hotels are able to achieve better results than their lower-tier counterparts. When hotel investors intend to invest in an extended stay property, greater emphasis should be placed on upper-tier hotel categories to achieve a greater earning potential during a booming economy. In addition, larger hotels are associated with better performance. Investors should expand the hotels in the long term. Lastly, hotels are advised to adopt the franchise approach as the operation arrangement to achieve higher performance.

References Available Upon Request

THE TANGIBLES OF U.S. HOTELS: WHERE THE SERVICE QUALITY FAILS

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Introduction

The U.S. hotel industry as a whole has already been outranked by companies of other industries in customer service quality, despite the hundreds of millions of dollars spent on customer service training annually. While overemphasizing the intangibility of service, the hotel industry has overlooked the tangible element in service. In the quest for an answer to explain why hotels are losing the battle for service, this paper highlights the urgent reality that U.S. hoteliers already face.

Methods

This paper provides a context, an industry survey, and some analyses in the attempt to answer the question addressed. In describing the context of the situation, the study first illustrates that the taste of U.S. consumers are changing due to frequent exposure to high service quality overseas. Hence hotels do not only face domestic competition, but also pressures from abroad where service is delivered in a rich cultural context, especially in Asia. Then the paper argues that hotel rooms that have become a commodity force hotels to zealously pursue intangibility to differentiate themselves. However, hotel rankings conducted by TripAdvisor for example still consider tangibility an important aspect of hotel stays. Hence how hotels make efforts to construct a service experience is different from what consumers expect from the experience. In hope to understand what consumers really think of hotel stays, the study also conducted a survey at a Southern Californian resort to investigate how tangible and intangible elements contributed to the overall resort rating.

Results/Discussion

The survey results show that tangibles play an important and inseparable role in service delivery. The physical environment that consumers see, smell, and touch are no less crucial in their overall experiences. While lodging properties in the U.S. are trapped in the overemphasis of intangibility of service, hotels in other countries have aggressively achieved architectural and technological advancements. Also universally adopted by many other industries, service is no longer the specialty of hotels. Therefore, the hotel industry must awaken to the recognition that intangibles are a competitive advantage no more. When lodging consumers are in search of the totality of quality tangibles and genuine intangibles, hotels need to be ready to provide both to face the global competition.

References Available Upon Request

APPLYING GIS TO ANALYZE THE SPATIAL-TEMPORAL IMPACT OF HURRICANE IKE ON TEXAS LODGING INDUSTRY

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Introduction

This research uses Geographical Information System (GIS) technology to analyze the impact of severe weather on hotel businesses. GIS is a powerful tool in marketing practices and business analysis. GIS mapping enables the capacity to present phenomena in a wide range of regions, making it possible for businesses to identify a problem and make an appropriate decision regarding its resolution (Chen, 2007; Joerger et al., 1999). While severe weather such as storms and hurricanes are considered threatening because of the risk of damage and loss in the hotel industry, hotels also experience unexpectedly high demand because of evacuees and emergency and disaster relief workers. In this study, Hurricane Ike was selected as a case study. GIS mapping allows us to illustrate the impact of Hurricane Ike on business' performance. The research objective is to identify the spatial-temporal impact of Hurricane Ike on the hotel industry. The ability to analyze complex phenomena visually-facilitates understanding of the phenomena by a wide audience, making it a good candidate to assist in marketing and strategic planning activities.

Methods

Hurricane Ike hit the Gulf coast on September 13, 2008. To identify the temporal impact, four sequential periods are classified: 1) a forecast period (9/8 - 9/10); 2) an evacuate order period (9/11 - 9/13); 3) the immediate response (9/14); and 4) a one week recovery (9/15-20). Daily hotel performance of county level data was obtained from Smith Travel Research, including 2,541 hotel properties in 68 counties.

ArcGIS 10.1 was used for GIS analysis, presenting thematic maps of the Texas Hotel industry performance during Hurricane Ike. ANOVA was conducted to test the temporal and spatial effects of Hurricane Ike on performance. Spatial factors were classified as three distinct ranges: 1) the affected area, 2) near the area of impact (within 300 miles from affected area), and 3) far from the area of impact (more than 300 miles far away from affected area). The statistical model is

$$RevPar\ Change \sim Area_i + Period_j + (Area*Period)_{ij} + \varepsilon_{ij},$$
$$Where,\ i\ (Area) = 1, 2, 3,\ and\ j\ (Period) = 1,2,3,4.$$

Results/Discussion

The GIS map visualization showed that Hurricane Ike had both temporal and spatial industry effects. Statistical analyses confirmed a significant spatial *($p<0.001$)* and temporal impact *($p<0.001$).* Hotels located within 300 miles of the affected areas had dramatic increases RevPar increases during periods #1 – 4 of Hurricane. Conventional wisdom might have predicted revenue loses hotels in areas impacted by Hurricane Ike. On the contrary, hotels in these areas reaped increased revenues during the recovery period.

Reference Available Upon Request

HOW HOTEL RESPONSES TO ONLINE REVIEWS DIFFER BY HOTEL RATING: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

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Introduction

In the hospitality industry, online reviews have become a highly influential decision- making tool (Litvin, Goldsmith, & Pan, 2008; Park & Allen, 2013). It is easy for customers to obtain information from other travelers, however, it is difficult to know whether hospitality organizations have made improvements based on online reviews. Hotel managers need to be more aware of the reviews that previous guests post about their hotels on third-party websites (Ye, Law, & Gu, 2009). This study's aim was to investigate how hotel management responds to online reviews on third-party websites. This study identified distinctions in how hotels responded to online hotel reviews based on the hotels' star rating.

Methods

A comparative case study was conducted for this research. The data for this study consisted of publicly available information from the TripAdvisor website. This study compared the responses to online hotel reviews at five different levels of hotels based on a star rating system, which ranges from one star to five stars. Las Vegas hotels were selected for data collection because it is one of the most popular destinations in the United States. Based on the star rating system, two hotels were chosen from each level of the 176 Las Vegas hotels that were posted on TripAdvisor. Data were collected between August 2013 and January 2014 for the 10 Las Vegas hotels. The content analysis of the managers' responses paid particular attention to whether they responded to only specific reviews, such as negative comments. Qualified positive reviews were defined as reviews with ratings of 4 or 5 and negative reviews were defined as reviews with ratings of 1 or 2 on a 5-point scale. The rating of 3 as positive or negative was characterized based on the content.

Results/Discussion

The number of guest reviews totaled 3,495 from the 10 selected Las Vegas hotels. The number of positive reviews totaled 2,899, and the number of negative reviews was 618. The average rate of response from hotel managers to the guests' reviews was 68.21%. Most hotels' management (82.95%) responded to positive guest comments, but only 17.68% to negative comments. The managements' responses are remarkably low compared to the number of negative online reviews. Most hotel managers responded only to positive reviews, and only 5-star hotels paid attention to their guests' negative reviews. This study also noted the title of the person responding to the guests' comments with the majority coming from guest service managers. Only two out of the 10 hotels in this study responded on a regular basis to their guests' reviews. Even though 1-and 2-star hotels responded to their guest comments, the majority were simply excuses for the poor service. As an exploratory research project, this study expands our understanding of hotel managers' responses to their guests' online reviews in an attempt to identify best practices for the industry.

References Available Upon Request

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION, CUSTOMER SATISFACTION, ONLINE REVIEW RATING, AND HOTEL PERFORMANCE

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Introduction
Recently, social media has emerged as a phenomenon that is evolving into an important part of all businesses' marketing development strategies. Marketing that was previously achieved using only a traditional website must now be supplemented by a reactive utilization of social media tools. Despite the wide popularity of online reviews, limited research has been conducted to examine the impact of online reviews on firm performance in service industries such as hotel, restaurant, and airline. Therefore, this paper investigates the important link between employee satisfaction, customer satisfaction, subject customer review rating, object expert review rating (diamond rating), and objective hotel performance.

Methods
The researchers obtained data from all full-service hotels operated and managed by an internationally well-known hotel chain firm in the United States for one year. The data includes the company's internal databases, for example, its employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction scores as well as performance indexes such as ADR, RevPAR, and TrevPAR. The chain hotel purchased information on online hotel reviews from a leading social media consulting firm and provided that information to the researchers. The consulting firm collected online review information for each of the chain hotel's property from major online travel intermediaries and social media websites such as Trip Advisor, Priceline, Hotels.com, Expedia, and Yelp. As a measure of the objective review rating the researchers obtained the diamond rating of each property from the chain hotel. This study measured the research variables using a single-item five-point Likert-type scale for employee satisfaction, customer satisfaction, online review rating, and a diamond rating. The researchers identified RevPAR, ADR, and TrevPAR, which are most commonly accepted as performance measures in the hotel business. For this study, the researchers tested the hypotheses on structural equation modelling by using the partial least squares (PLS) method.

Results/Discussion
The relationship between employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction was significant and positive, which is in line with previous findings. Both subjective and objective online review ratings were significant predictors of hotel performance, and the relative magnitude of the impact of the objective diamond rating was stronger than that of the subjective customer review rating. Considering that most hotel revenue managers' primary strategic decisions, such as pricing and inventory control, are made by each property, it is important to understand the primary drivers of each property's financial performance. This study contributes to hotel marketers, sales managers, and revenue managers whose performance is evaluated by hotels' top line, which often depends on operational metrics such as employee satisfaction, customer satisfaction, and online review rating (eWOM).

References Available Upon Request

NO ROOMS OR HIGHER PRICE? IMPACT OF MINIMUM LENGTH OF STAY CONTROL ON PERCEIVED FAIRNESS

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Introduction

Revenue management (RM) research has focused on customers' fairness perceptions of pricing RM practices. While length of stay control (LOSC) is widely implemented into hotel RM systems, little attention has been given to customers' reactions toward the LOSC practice. Therefore, this study examines the effect of LOSC on customers' perceived fairness, negative WOM (NWOM), and willingness to book, while exploring the moderating role of the hotel loyalty membership status. In particular, we seek to understand how minimum LOSC practice influences customers' fairness perceptions and subsequent behaviors of their online reservation process in the hotel industry. This study also examines the moderating role of customers' hotel loyalty membership status between RM practices and perceived fairness. The proposed hypotheses are as follows:

H1: Customers perceive the LOSC practice as less fair than the pricing RM practice.
H2: The effects of LOSC practice on customers' perceived fairness are stronger for those with the hotel loyalty program membership than those with no membership.
H3: Customers' perceived fairness has a negative impact on NWOM intentions.
H4: Customers' perceived fairness has a positive impact on willingness to book.

Methods

This study employed a 2×2 between-subjects factorial design, with RM practices (pricing RM practice vs. LOSC practice) and loyalty membership status (member vs. non-member). A total of 80 participants were recruited from Amazon MTurk and were randomly assigned to one of the four written scenarios. A one-way ANOVA test was performed to check whether the LOSC practices were perceived as intended. To test hypotheses, Partial Least Squares (PLS) Structure Equation Modelling analysis was used. Internal reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity were assessed and all were satisfied. All the hypothesized relationships were examined by performing a bootstrapping re-sampling method (500 re-samples).

Results/Discussion

All the hypotheses proposed were supported. Findings indicate that customers perceive the LOSC practice as less fair than the pricing RM practice, such perceived unfairness increasing NWOM and decreasing willingness to book. Members of hotel loyalty program view the LOSC practice less fair than those who are non-members. While extant studies have focused on exploring effects of pricing RM practices, the current study addresses a gap in the literature on hotel RM by examining customers' reactions toward the hotel LOSC practice during the online reservation process. The proposed model suggests that setting high one- or two-day rack rates during the peak time would be a better way than hiding available rooms. Furthermore, hotel managers should implement the LOSC practice with a caution because customers who belong to hotel loyalty program would seriously view such a practice as much unfair than those who do not.

References Available Upon Request

THE AN IMPACT OF CULTRAL DISTANCE ON HOTEL GUESTS' EVELUATION – A BIG DATA APPROACH

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Introduction

Using Hofstede's national culture dimensions (1980, 1984, 2010) as the theoretical framework, this study attempts to examine the impact of hotel guests' nationalities on their evaluation of hotel experience by applying national culture distances between the destination country and guest's home nation. Specifically, the study aims to answer this question: How do the dimensions of cultural distance (namely power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, long term orientation, and indulgence) influence hotel guests' evaluations of their stay?

Methods

Using a web spider (Gerdes & Stringam, 2008), 60,396 guest reviews from 1,825 hotel properties located in Paris, France were collected from TripAdvisor website in March 2010. The reviewer identifier was typically a city or country, which was used to establish the reviewer's nationality. A total of 56 nationalities were included in the database for analysis. Culture distance between Paris (France) and reviewer's nation was calculated for each of the six cultural dimensions. Responses were spread among reviewers representing 56 nationalities. The study employed Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM), which includes both level-1 and level-2 predictors in the analysis. Level-1 predictors are TripAdvisor membership duration, age, and the reviewers' rating of value, room, location, cleanness, and service. Level-2 predictors include six dimensions of cultural distance. The cross level unit between level-1 and level-2 regression models is the reviewer's nationality.

Results/Discussion

Different dimensions of cultural distance influence the importance of different aspects of guest staying experience at a hotel. The importance of value rating increases if an individual comes from the masculine culture, whereas it decreases if an individual comes from the feminine culture. Room rating is more important for people coming from the individualistic culture rather than the collectivistic culture. Meanwhile, it is more important for individual comes from a culture that takes a more pragmatic approach and long term orientation. Long term versus short term orientation also influence the importance of service rating. People who live in a society that is short-term oriented care more about service than people from a culture that is long-term oriented. Furthermore, the importance of location rating increases if an individual comes from an indulgence culture. In addition, cleanness rating becomes more important if an individual comes from a culture that is intolerant of unorthodox behavior and ideas. Uncertainty avoidance also influences the importance of service rating. It increases if an individual comes from weak UAI societies, whereas it decreases if an individual comes from a strong UAI culture. The findings indicate that hotel guests' cultural background does influence their rating of hotel experience as they value different aspects during the stay. Hotel managers and employees should focus on promoting and providing individualized services and room features based on guests' cultural background so as to provide the best service to the customers from various countries/cultures, and achieve higher ratings from customers' perspective.

References Available Upon Request

THE IDENTIFICATION OF PRODUCT DEFECTS: SHOULD YOUR GUESTS PLAY A ROLE?

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Introduction
The objective of this study was to explore the phenomenon of guest initiated service calls related to product defects in order to determine how best guests might be motivated to actively participate to co-create a defect-free experience. Utilizing lessons learned from crowdsourcing, specifically principles on motivating a community to participate in co-creating solutions, the researcher's surveyed potential guests in order to determine what would incentivize and discourage them from participating in the product defect identification and reporting process.

Methods
This study employed an online survey methodology. Age, gender, and income level variables were collected, hypothesized to have an effect on the likelihood the participant will engage in the product defect identification process. Based on the service recovery literature, (Hess, Ganesan and Klein, 2003) the importance of service performance, the guests' perceived typicality of failure, and the frequency on consumption were also collected as control variables. The study sought to determine whether or not the participant had engaged in product defect reporting in the past, the participant's likelihood to report product defects, and the participant's reaction to becoming a part of the product defect reporting process. More in-depth questions sought to determine which forms of defect reporting would be preferable to the guest (e.g. text, email, mobile call, in-room call, comment card, front-desk). In addition the study sought to determine which incentives (Richard, 2013), both intrinsic and extrinsic, would be most effective in encouraging the guest to co-create a defect-free hotel.

Discussion
The findings of the study reinforce recommendations for firms in hospitality industries to integrate guest-centric product defect identification efforts into their respective businesses while minimizing the likelihood of guest dissatisfaction with the request. Perceived typicality of failure, in addition to the frequency of consumption were correlated with the guest's likelihood of reporting a potential product defect. Finally guests reported a wide-variety of incentives to reporting a defect, many of them non-monetary, including altruism, recognition and community involvement. Potential positive outcomes include improving the guest experience, improving guest loyalty, and increasing guest engagement during their leisure experiences. This study represents an empirical assessment of the impact product defects have on guests, the likelihood guests will report defects, and the factors that would encourage a guest to report a defect. By exploring the challenges and facilitating factors surrounding the product defect reporting process the researchers improve the validity of theoretical propositions related to the relationship between service failures, guest dissatisfaction and guest behavioural intentions.

DEVELOPING A CONSUMER COMPLAINING EFFORT SCALE

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Introduction
Service-oriented businesses are bound to experience service failures regardless of managers' attempts to perfect the service delivery process. The efficacy of firm's complaint handling process is not only mirrored by prompt responses but also by the *effort* taken by dissatisfied customers who complain to the firm. Customers are less likely to complain about a dissatisfactory experience if the complaining requires a vast amount of effort. This study attempts to examine the consumer complaining effort (CCE) devoted by dissatisfied hotel customers through developing a multi-dimensional scale. Four distinct facets of the CCE scale have been captured: *time-related effort, physical/procedural effort, cognitive effort, and affective effort*. Consumers' desire for convenience enforces them to place substantial value on time. *Physical effort* emphasizes the laborious facet that is devoid of intellectual exertions. The procedural hassles within the complaining process are likely to build a barrier that prevents dissatisfied consumers in complaining. Excessive *cognition* involved in a complaining process discourages consumers to vent their complaints directly to the company. Positive affect involves less effort, while negative affect requires regulated processing and thus is perceived effortful. Consumers are less likely to initiate a complaint when a significant amount of *affective effort* is induced.

Method
This study analyzed three sets of data. The first set was utilized to conduct a pre-test and two sets were used for finalizing the CCE scale. The first round of data was collected from college students and the second and third rounds of data were collected from two separate groups of hotel guests via an online survey. After refining the instrument using student data (n = 211), an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) using Varimax rotation method was conducted among the first round of consumer data (n = 215). The second round of consumer data were used for confirming the four factor structure (n = 327).

Results/Discussion
A total of 41 items featuring four distinct dimensions were developed from the literature and a focus group discussion with seven industry professionals. The proposed scale was pre-tested and further modified, yielding a scale with 31 items. An EFA was conducted to uncover the underlying structure of the 31-item CCE scale using the first-round consumer sample, which yielded a 25-item four-dimensional structure of CCE scale. A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA, LISREL 8.7) was conducted to confirm the 25-item scale utilizing the second round of consumer sample. This yielded a purified and more parsimonious model, including four factors with 16 items. The 16-item CCE scale exhibited considerable construct validity and reliability. This study further tested a one-factor model to exclude the possibility of common method bias. This study serves as the first and vital attempt in exploring the multi-dimensional nature of this concept. Managers can use the 16 items as a checklist to identify possible weaknesses in complaint management and capture loyal patrons. A variety of strategies should be developed to simplify the complaint handling process by reducing consumers' physical, cognitive, time-related, and affective effort.

References Available Upon Request.

THE IMPACT OF PERSONALITY TRAITS AND CONGRUITY ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND BRAND LOYALTY: EVIDENCE FROM THE FRANCHISING COFFEE SHOP AND INDEPENDENT COFFEE SHOP

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Introduction

Brand loyalty studies have focused on its antecedents from service perspectives including service value and customer satisfaction since it has been regarded as a core determinant of long-term business success (Hu, Kandampullu, & Juwaheer, 2009; Lai, Griffin, & Babin, 2009). Relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty has been studied; however the impact of personality traits and congruity on this relationship has not been studied in the context of hospitality industry. Therefore, researchers examine the effects of personality traits and congruity on brand loyalty to fill the gap in hospitality marketing research.

Methods

The data was collected using a cross-sectional survey on customers both franchise coffee shops and independent coffee shops located in Korea. Copies of questionnaire were delivered to owners of coffee shops after they agreed to participate in the study. A total of 780 questionnaires were collected in the month of 2014. 743 samples were used for further analysis since 37 questionnaires were not usable due to missing information. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences 18.0 and AMOS 20.0 were used for data analysis.

Results/Discussion

In the case of franchising coffee shops, the effects of personality traits on congruity (β=.724, t=11.663, p<.001), customer satisfaction (β=.538, t=6.095, p<.001), and brand loyalty (β=.153, t=1.985, p<.05), the effect of congruity on brand loyalty (β=.603, t=10.232, p<.001), and the effect of customer satisfaction on brand loyalty (β=.603, t=10.232, p<.001) were statistically supported. In the case of independent coffee shops, the effects of personality traits on congruity (β=.666, t=7.016, p<.001) and customer satisfaction (β=.523, t=4.542, p<.001), the effect of congruity on brand loyalty (β=.293, t=3.399, p<.001), and the effect of customer satisfaction on brand loyalty (β=.598, t=7.781, p<.001) were statistically supported.

As personality traits construct has directly positive influences on congruity and customer satisfaction and an indirectly influence on brand loyalty, coffee shop marketers should study personality traits of their brands from the consumer’s point of view and develop a brand image to match with the coffee shop consumer’s ideal self-concept. As consumers choose coffee shop beyond satisfying their immediate needs, brand personality traits can be used for positioning coffee shop brands in competitive markets.

References Available Upon Request

NEGATIVE TRAVEL EXPERIENCE ON TOURISTS' FUTURE CHOICES

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Introduction

This work examines the influence of a single negative travel experience on tourists' judgment in future destination selection. Past travel experience is recognized as an influential determinant of tourist behavior in relation to destination selection, re-visitation intention, destination evaluation and future travel experience evaluation. Accumulated past travel experience represent the foundation of travelers' judgment. Empirical research supporting this point mostly addressed past travel experience in terms of number of previous trips. However, consequences of positive or negative experiences naturally influence the individual differently. Evidence on how one single negative travel experience shapes future generalized decisional behavior is lacking. While abundant literature has shown that the most forthright consequences of a negative experience at a destination include initiating negative word of mouth and jeopardizing re-visitation intention, the effects on visitors might reach further. This point becomes especially relevant once it is appreciated that negatively perceived events tend to be more salient than positive ones. Thus the hypothesis guiding the study is: (H) a negatively evaluated travel experience at a destination influences tourists' future vacation destination selection. Future destination selection behavior is represented in this work by criteria' importance when selecting a vacation destination.

Method

The sample group was constituted of 110 master students on a nine-day teaching sailing trip along the Mediterranean coast, including a one-day excursion to Albania, which was the selected destination. Mostly identical questionnaires, with two lists of matching attributes, were administered before and after visitation. Respondents were asked to rate the importance of criteria generally important when selecting a vacation destination, and subsequently to evaluate the destination on those criteria. A mean comparison between the destination evaluations shows a more negative evaluation after visitation. The important criteria' ranking display the variable cleanliness (p=.001) climb the ranking from 7th to 3rd on the importance scale previously dominated by safety, locals' friendliness, pleasant weather and natural environment as top four criteria.

Results/discussion

Criteria' importance rating changed after visitation, establishing a relationship with the recently negatively evaluated visitation experience. Results suggest that this visitation made participants aware of the value they attach to certain characteristics: mindful of the influence some characteristics had on their visitation, these seem to have gained importance in future destination selection. These results show that one negative visitation experience influences tourists' judgment potentially extending to affect future destination selection.

References Available Upon Request

THE EFFECTS OF PERCEIVED VALUE AND EMOTION ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND LOYALTY: A CASE OF ASIAN RESTAURANT

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Introduction
Despite the growing popularity of ethnic restaurants in the US, few researchers have examined what determines American customers' satisfaction and loyalty in the ethnic restaurant context. Given that customer satisfaction appears to be very low in this restaurant sector (Technomic, 2012), this study attempted to shed light on customers' choice behavior in the ethnic restaurant context with the case of Asian restaurants. Accordingly, the primary purposes of this study were to propose and test an integrative model that investigates interrelationships among perceived value, consumption emotions, customer satisfaction, and loyalty as well as to provide implications to restaurant researchers and marketers, particularly in the Asian restaurant sector.

Methods
The target population was frequent American travelers whose email addresses are included in a public email database purchased and who have visited any Asian restaurant within the previous 30 days. A self-administered questionnaire was designed to measure the study variables. All measurement items were developed on the basis of previous literature (Ha & Jang, 2010; Jang & Namkung, 2009; Yi & Baumgartner, 2004; Oliver, 1980; Hutchinson et al.,, 2009; Jones et al., 2006), but they were revised slightly to fit the ethnic restaurant circumstance. For data collection, an online survey was employed by using a convenience sampling approach. A total of 435 valid responses were collected and analysed by utilizing confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), structural equation modelling analysis (SEM), and descriptive analysis with SPSS 21.0 and AMOS 21.0.

Results/Discussion
Overall, the findings indicate that the customers' perceived value and emotional responses were both critical predictors of customer satisfaction, which managers, in turn, can follow to enhance customer loyalty. Specifically, the findings revealed that utilitarian value induced American customers' satisfaction and loyalty more than hedonic value did. In addition, consumption emotions appeared to play an important role in determining customer satisfaction in the proposed model, because the findings signified that customer satisfaction was not only significantly affected by emotions but also mediated by the emotions that were generated by perceived value rather than mediated by perceived value itself.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributed a more comprehensive view of the customer decision making process in an ethnic restaurant context. Ethnic restaurant managers can study these findings to learn the importance of the emotional responses evoked from evaluations of dining experiences in order to predict the subsequent consumption behavior of their customers.

References Available Upon Request

THE INFLUENTIAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PERCEIVED CONSUMER EFFECTIVENESS, GREEN MARKETING ATTITUDES, AND CONSUMERS' BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS

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Introduction

Green marketing as a salient marketing platform with its own web pages has become a standard marketing practice in the hotel industry (Polonsky, 2011; Tse, 2013). Hotels' green marketing activities are based on the belief that today's customers are ecologically conscious of the environmental impact of their purchase and use of products and services (Han, Hsu, & Sheu, 2010). Because of the intangible nature of hotel services, hotels should accentuate positive brand images to customers, as each brand image allows customers to differentiate that hotel from its competitors (Lee & Jeong, 2014). To date, the impact of customers' innate beliefs or desires to solve ecological problems has received scant attention in research on the hospitality green marketing arena. To fill this void, this research examines the relationship between customers' belief, attitudes, and behavioural intentions in the context of hotel green marketing.

Methods

A web-based survey was conducted by an online marketing research company in the United States. The company randomly distributed our questionnaire to its panel members, and 526 surveys were collected. To measure consumers' responses about a hotel's green marketing, we selected Marriott International's CSR webpage. Most respondents were aged 20 to 39 (78%), 39.2% were four-year university course graduates. Using *Mplus* Version 6.11, the robust maximum likelihood (MLM) was used to control non-normality and to determine influential relationships among suggested constructs.

Results/Discussion

The overall fit indices showed that the proposed model was well-fitted with the hypothesized variables (CFI = .952; TLI = .943; RMSEA = .061). Perceived consumer effectiveness (PCE) positively influences green brand image, and the image positively impacts green trust. The image and the trust positively affect WOM and visit intention. We unexpectedly found that PCE does not directly influence green trust. From the bootstrap bias-corrected percentile method, the total indirect effects of green brand image between PCE and WOM ($\beta = .172$; $p < .019$; 95% CI: 0.06, 0.29) and between PCE and visit intention ($\beta = .108$; $p < .025$; 95% CI: 0.03, 0.19) were significantly positive. Further, the result shows that brand image can mediates the relationship between PCE and green trust ($\beta = .213$; $p < .014$; 95% CI: 0.08, 0.36). The results of the study show that PCE plays a significant role in directly explaining consumers' green behaviors in the hotel marketing context. Due to the important role of PCE and green brand image in generating positive WOM and visit intention, hotel marketers who want to maximize the effectiveness of their green marketing should consider materials emphasizing that consumers' ecological behaviors can be helpful in improving our natural environment.

References Available Upon Request.

EXAMINING THE INFLUENCE OF CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE ON DELIGHT, SATISFACTION AND LOYALTY IN THEME PARKS

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Introduction

In hospitality and tourism industry, understanding customers' emotions, such as delight, is integral to develop customer satisfaction and loyalty because customers constantly interact with the physical and social environment during the consumption experience (Ali et al., 2014). The concept of customer delight is new to the literature and thus requires further research to affirm its effect on loyalty as well as its relationship with other determinants to customer loyalty. A number of theoretical and empirical studies have discussed customer satisfaction and delight with different conceptualisations (Loureiro, 2010). However, a recent study by Kim et al. (2013) called for a research on satisfaction and delight as predictors of customer loyalty in a hospitality and tourism context. Therefore, this study investigates customers' experiences in Malaysian theme parks by empirically examining the relationships between customer experience, delight, satisfaction, and loyalty.

Methods

This study measured the research constructs using a five-point Likert-type scale and multiple items. All measurement items validated in previous studies were borrowed for this study (Jani & Han, 2011; Kim et al., 2013). The researchers used a self-administered survey to collect data from customers at two theme parks in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor, Malaysia. Based on convenience sampling, of the distributed 410 questionnaires 301 were returned and 292 were deemed fit for further procedures. The data were subjected to structural equation modelling using the Smart PLS M3 version to test the hypotheses.

Results/Discussion

The results indicated that physical settings, interaction with staff, and interaction with other customers have a significant impact on customers' delight and satisfaction. Customer delight impacted customer satisfaction and both of these impact customer loyalty. The results suggested theme parks need to pay attention to maintaining a good physical setting, managing its human resources well, and managing the behaviour of other customers in order to ensure customers' delightful experiences.

References Available Upon Request

THE ROLE OF CONSUMER-ORGANIZATION RELATIONSHIP NORMS IN SERVICE RECOVERY

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Introduction

Theoretically based on a social relationship framework, this study proposed that consumers' inference mechanisms regarding service recovery processes differ depending on which norms govern consumer-organization relationships. This study employed different relationship norms (communal versus exchange) and investigated its role throughout relationships among service failure dissatisfaction, economic and social recovery and service recovery satisfaction.

Methods

This study used a scenario method. Two hypothetical scenarios were developed to illustrate different relationship norms (communal and exchange) in a restaurant service recovery encounter. First, respondents read a description of relationship norms and were presented with a service failure and recovery. This study used previously validated measurements. A 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1(strongly disagree) to 7(strongly agree) was used for all measures except demographic information.For data collection, a web-based nationwide survey was conducted. A total sample of 204 usable responses were split into two groups (communal group: n=103; exchange group: n=101), based on the scenario assigned. For analyses, structural equation modeling (SEM) was conducted using Analysis of Moment Structure (AMOS).

Results/Discussion

The results showed that under a communal relationship, both social and economic recovery were the reliable predictors of consumers' service recovery satisfaction whereas only economic recovery enhanced consumers' service recovery satisfaction under an exchange relationship. Moreover, the results of moderating effect suggested that consumers in an exchange relationship were more sensitive to economic recovery than those in a communal relationship.By employing a normative perspective for viewing service recovery encounters, this study broadened the scope of the previous literature, which mainly focused on consumer-organization relationship quality in a service recovery encounter. The results revealed that differences throughout recovery processes exist across norms while holding relationship quality at the same levels. The findings imply that consumers do not use the same standards when they evaluate their relationships with organizations even if the relationships are high quality and trustworthy. Thus, managers need to understand the embedded values that consumers seek in their relationships with service organizations and fulfill them in service encounters.This study found that not all perceived recoveries were the reliable predictors of consumers' satisfaction with a service recovery. Although economic recovery was a reliable predictor of service recovery satisfaction for both groups, social recovery worked only for the communal group. The findings suggest that for some consumers, their relationship with a service organization can be viewed purely from an exchange perspective in a service recovery encounter regardless of the amount of time spent together or the accumulation of quality service. Thus, this study provides insight for managers to view relationships from a normative perspective and develop effective recovery strategies depending on norms appreciated by consumers.

References Available Upon Request

THE IMPACT OF OPTION POPULARITY, SOCIAL INCLUSION/EXCLUSION, AND SELF-AFFIRMATION ON CONSUMERS' PROPENSITY TO CHOOSE GREEN HOTELS

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Introduction

We investigate the impact of social exclusion, self-affirmation and option popularity on consumers' willingness to choose a green hotel. Based on Crocker, Niiya and Mischkowski's (2008), Shrira and Martin's (2005) findings that self-affirmation tends to enhance people's confidence in their choices, we suggest that when a green hotel is portrayed as a popular option (i.e., preferred by most consumers), socially included consumers are more likely to choose the green hotel than socially excluded consumers. Such effects should occur when consumers engage in self-affirmation. Conversely, socially included consumers are less likely to choose the green hotel than socially excluded consumers when self-affirmation motive is absent.

Methods

We employed a 2 (social inclusion versus social exclusion) X2 (with self-affirmation versus control) X2 (distinctive option versus popular option) between subjects factorial experiment to test our predictions.

Results/Discussion

An ANCOVA of WTB revealed significant three-way interaction ($F [1,237] = 17.80$, p-value=.000), and a two-way interaction of self-affirmation*social inclusion/exclusion ($F [1,237] = 5.93$, p-value=.016). To better understand the three-way interaction, the data set was split by "portrayed popularity of the green hotel option," and a separate ANCOVA test was run for each data set. For the popular option, the results of an ANCOVA table show that when the green hotel option was portrayed as a "popular" option, the two-way interaction of "self-affirmation" and "social exclusion/inclusion" was significant ($F [1,104] = 19.27$, p-value=.000). A simple effects analysis further indicates the directions of each group's choice propensity.

This research contributes to the growing literature on green hotels by combining social factors and option popularity in explaining consumer willingness to choose a green hotel. First, we begin to delineate the specific social factors influencing consumers' green hotel choices, including message framing of the popularity of a green hotel, consumers' social relationships with others they travel with, and consumers' self-affirmation. Second, the results from the current study reconcile with the stream of literature supporting the theory that socially included consumers choose a popular green option to signal their in-group identities with others, while socially excluded consumers choose green to build new social connections with others. Finally, regardless of the ample past research on how self-affirmation helps consumers cope with identity threats, we highlighted the argument that even in absence of any threat (i.e. social inclusion), people are still motivated to seek options (e.g. choosing a green hotel) to reinforce their personal values. The current research provides green hotel managers with insights into their CSR campaigns and help hotel operators to better understand how social context and individual characteristics influence consumer responses to CSR marketing efforts.

References Available Upon Request

CONSUMER BRAND BEHAVIORS: THE ROLE OF IDEAL-SELF ATTAINABILITY, FACE AND SELF-BRAND CONGRUENCE

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Introduction

As social needs are inherited in human nature, face, referring to the favorite self-image that a person wants be perceived by others, is important to understand consumers' brand behavior, such as engaging in luxury-brand consumptions to signal a prestigious self-image. Extending the traditional face literature focusing primarily on luxury brand consumption in the cross-cultural context, this research positions "face" as a universal phenomenon and aims to understand how it drives consumers to match their self-concepts with their favorite brands, and to act as the brand advocate to spread positive word-of-mouth and avoid negative information regarding the brands. Drawing upon the regulatory focus theory, consumers' desire to gain face and their fear to lose face are proposed to be the analogies of promotion and prevention focus respectively. As a person's self-concepts tend to influence his/her adoption of the regulatory focus type, ideal-self attainabity is proposed to positively influence consumers' desire to gain face and to negatively influence consumers' fear to lose face. In addition, because brands can serve as means to signal one's desirable social image, the fear to lose face and the desire to gain face are hypothesized to affect consumers' perception of the actual and ideal self-brand congruence. Lastly, we further examine how face and self-brand congruence drives consumers' behavioural outcome of positive word-of-mouth and negative avoidance.

Methods

Data from 308 surveys completed by consumers recruited through M-turk were used to investigate the research issues. Participants were first asked to rate their personal values, including ideal-self attainbility, desire to gain face and fear to lose face measures. Then, they were instructed to identify one of their favorite restaurant brands and answer the actual and ideal self-brand congruence measures, followed by the behavioral measures of positive word-of-mouth and negative avoidance. Using SAS JMP Pro version 10, sturcture equation modeling was utilized to test the research model.

Results/Discussion

Consistent with the regulatory focus theory, the results of structural equation modelling suggest (1) that face is driven by ideal-self attainability, (2) that the desire to gain face functions as a promotion mechanism that encourages brand behaviour through actual self-brand congruence, and (3) that the fear to lose face functions as a prevention mechanism that discourages consumers' self-brand congruence and brand behaviours. This study contributes to the face literature by considering "face" as an individual variable influenced by ideal-self attainability from the regulatory-focus perspectives. The study also extends the self-brand congruence literature by identifying the differences between actual and ideal self-brand congruence. Moreover, it offers managerial implications for restaurant brand management. We recommend restaurant managers portray the brand image as socially desirable to appeal to consumers who wants to gain face and design the menus matching consumers' current eating habits to encourage the brand advocate behaviour of positive word-of-mouth and negative avoidance through actual self-brand congruence.

References Available Upon Request

THE EFFECTS OF CUSTOMERS' PERCEIVED FAIRNESS AND EMOTIONS ON BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS: A CASE OF RESTAURANT SERVICE RECOVERY

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Introduction
This study examines the effect of emotions on the relationship between customers' perceived fairness (distributive fairness, procedural fairness, and interactional fairness) and customers' immediate reactions (desire to condemn and desire to praise) in the context of service recovery in casual dining restaurants.

Methods
A scenario-based survey was employed, and a total of 402 valid responses were collected for the data analysis. Structural equation modelling was used to test the conceptual model.

Results/Discussion
The introducing of desire to condemn and desire to praise in customers' behavioural intentions provide insights into the understanding of service recovery. The results also suggest that restaurants should pay attention to customers' immediate react in service recovery.

References Available Upon Request

THE MODERATING EFFECTS OF SERVICE RECOVERY EFFORTS ON RESTAURANT CUSTOMERS' PERCEIVED FAIRNESS, EMOTIONS, AND BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS

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Introduction
This study examines the moderating role of levels of service recovery in examining the effects of perceived fairness and emotions on customers' behavior in restaurant industry.

Methods
A scenario-based survey was conducted and a total of 402 valid responses were collected for the data analysis. Multi-group invariance was used to assess the moderating effect of the degree of service recovery.

Results/Discussion
The results suggest that a moderating effect of levels of service recovery in the relationship between distributive fairness and emotions, distributive fairness and word-of-mouth, and emotions and revisit intention. Theoretical and practical implications were provided and the results confirmed the critical role of service recovery in casual dining restaurant context.

References Available Upon Request

CUSTOMER ENVY AT HOSPITALITY SERVICE ENCOUNTERS

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Introduction

This study explored the subjective experience of customer envy at service encounters in order to better understand how customers respond to unflattering comparisons with an envied customer. In order to do so, the study aimed to accomplish four objectives: 1) Examine the cognitive appraisal patterns of customer envy; 2) Investigate the affective experience of customer envy; 3) Evaluate the role of the service provider in customer envy experiences; and 4) Evaluate the interpersonal and organizational consequences of customer envy. Envy is a complex emotion which can produce a variety of both negative and positive experiences. This study will pinpoint the key features of how customers experience envy, in order to determine the impact on customers and service organizations.

Methods

An online questionnaire was distributed via the Amazon Mechanical Turk website. A total of 311 valid responses were collected and used for analysis. The questionnaire began with a brief definition of envy, followed by instructions for the survey participant to recall a time when they experienced envy as a customer. Proceeding this were questions regarding that particular envy incident, which measured cognitive appraisals, emotional responses, and its consequences. An open-coding analysis was conducted on the participant's shared customer envy incidents, in order to derive a typology of customer envy triggers. In addition, a series of MANCOVAs were performed on the cognitive appraisals, emotional responses, and interpersonal/organizational consequences in order to identify any differences among the customer envy triggers found in the open-coding analysis. Finally, two sets of canonical correlation analyses were conducted to assess the relationship among the following: cognitive appraisal variables to emotional response variables and emotional response variables to consequence variables.

Results/Discussion

The study's results revealed key findings which addressed the objectives. First, due to the open-coding analysis, five different triggers of customer envy were identified and labelled as 1) "The Favorite" (envy triggered by unfair preferential by service provider); "The Lucky One" (envy triggered due to luck of other customer), "The Freebies" (envy triggered by other customer receiving free/discounted service); "The Royals" (envy triggered by fair preferential treatment); and "The Joneses" (envy triggered by wealthy customers). Secondly, customer envy during service encounters can be appraised in very different ways. The emotional responses of a customer envy experience will differ depending on how the trigger of envy is appraised. Thirdly, customer envy was found to be a "hybrid" emotional experience. While customer envy emotional experiences are underlined by envy, it is other co-occurring emotions which can produce three different "shades" of envy: "Red Envy", "Blue Envy", and "Green Envy". Fourth, the service provider can be a major cause of most customer envy incidents, and spark dynamic three-way emotional interactions. Finally, although envy itself was a pre-dominant emotion experienced in customer envy incidents, it was the other co-occurring emotions, and not envy, which triggered both interpersonal and organizational consequences.

References Available Upon Request

SERVICE FAILURES WITH ANTHROPOMORPHIC SELF-SERVICE TECHNOLOGY: THE JOINT IMPACT OF MACHINE VOICE, OTHER CONSUMERS AND POWER

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Introduction

To enhance customer experiences, hospitality firms are increasingly adding human-like features to their self-service technology machines (SSTs). The purpose of the present study is to examine customer interactions with an anthropomorphic machine in a service failure context. Specifically, we investigate the joint effects of machine voice, an individual's sense of power, and the presence of other customers in influencing customers' switching intentions following an SST failure.

Methods

In this study, we employed a quasi-experimental design in which we manipulated voice type (anthropomorphic vs. robotic) and the presence of other customers (present vs. absent) in video-based scenarios while measuring customers' sense of power. The scenarios reflected a service failure experience with a self-service kiosk at an airport. We tested the hypotheses using PROCESS analysis and the Johnson-Neyman technique.

Results/Discussion

This study is the first to examine customer responses to service failures in an anthropomorphic SST context. The findings from the current research demonstrate the joint impact of SST machine voice type, customers' sense of power, and the presence of other customers on customers' switching intentions from SST to the more traditional interpersonal service mode. Powerful customers exhibited higher switching intentions when the SST machine had an anthropomorphic (vs. robotic) voice in the absence of other customers, yet exhibited the opposite switching tendency in the presence of other customers. While the presence of other customers moderated the voice type effects on powerful customers' switching intentions, embarrassment mediated such effects. Conversely, powerless customers demonstrated lower switching intentions when they experienced a service failure with a human-like (vs. robotic) SST, regardless of the presence or absence of other customers. In other words, the human-like voice triggered their sociality motivation, thus leading to lower switching intentions. Moreover, we found that embarrassment is the mechanism driving powerful customers' switching intentions. Taken together, our findings suggest that hospitality businesses targeting powerful consumers should consider the social presence of others as they implement anthropomorphic SSTs. Hospitality firms, such as luxury hotels, that target such powerful clienteles can either change the machine voice to neutral to maximize customer satisfaction in both public and private service settings, or alter customers' power perceptions in the service context. Cognitive priming or physical embodiment can influence whether people feel more or less power. Consequently, hospitality providers might be able to use the servicescape to temporarily alter customers' power perceptions on the service site.

References Available Upon Request

DIFFERENTIATION AND PARITY IN ASSORTMENT PRICING: THE MODERATING INFLUENCE OF HEALTH CONSCIOUSNESS AND SENSE OF POWER

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Introduction

Product assortments have been studied across various disciplines, including economics, marketing and social psychology. Despite the topic's managerial importance, very little research on assortments has been done in the context of pricing (Diehl et al., 2003). Service providers have two basic options in setting prices for their services: 1) they can list all the items in the same category, for example, entrees at the same price (parity pricing) or 2) they can have their prices reflect the actual cost of a product or a service (differentiation pricing). Pricing research shows that the impact of differentiation pricing and parity pricing is contingent upon the degree of uncertainty with non-price attributes (Chernev, 2006). To extend prior literature on assortment pricing, we examined the impact of two pricing strategies (parity pricing and differentiation pricing) on consumers' satisfaction judgments in a series of two studies. In study 1, we investigate the impact of an individual level factor, namely the consumer's health consciousness on their reactions to parity vs. differentiation pricing. In study 2, we examine the moderating role of sense of power in influencing consumers' satisfaction with the two types of assortment pricing.

Methods

The study 1 used 2 × 2 between subjects quasi-experimental design. Assortment pricing, our independent variable, was manipulated as either differentiation pricing or parity pricing. We measured health consciousness (a moderator) and assortment satisfaction (a dependent variable). In study 2, we conducted a 2 × 2 between-subject experiment. Both power and assortment pricing were manipulated.

Results/Discussion

The results from study 1 suggest that consumers high in health consciousness are less likely to use item prices as a cue to evaluate the assortment. Such consumers are more motivated to consider the healthiness of the options, and therefore, they preferred parity pricing that enabled them to focus on the menu items and their ingredients. In contrast, consumers with low levels of health consciousness used menu prices to judge the assortment. As a result, they were more satisfied when the assortment involved differentiation pricing. In study 2, consumers with low sense of power preferred assortments with parity pricing. Such a pricing scheme minimizes the risk of choosing a high-priced item that might not live up to the individual's expectations. Powerful people, on the other hand, have confidence in their choices (e.g., Fast et al. 2012) and consequently they are likely to choose based on their true preferences rather than price information. Accordingly, assortment pricing type failed to influence powerful consumers' satisfaction with the two menus.

References Available Upon Request

IMPACT OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND CUSTOMER LOYALTY

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Introduction

It is crucial for hospitality management to understand the role that engaged employees play in customers' perceptions of the service provided by the organization and how it is linked to customer satisfaction and loyalty (Ott, 2007). Examining and adding to the Service Profit Chain aids in this understanding (Schlesinger & Heskett, 1991). Accordingly, the study had three objectives: to identify and validate dimensions of employee engagement in the hospitality context, to develop service scenarios that represent the dimensions of employee engagement, and to analyze the effects of employee engagement on customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Methods

Previously established measures of dedication (Schaufeli et al.,, 2002), absorption (Rothbard, 2001), and energy (Rich et al., 2010) were the dimensions of employee engagement investigated in this study. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was utilized to provide further validation. Nine scenarios were created to represent each of the three dimensions. Respondents (N= 125) evaluated how the scenarios related to the employee engagement constructs of energy, absorption and dedication. The two most representative scenarios of each engagement construct were used in a 3 (dimension) x 2 (scenario) within-subjects experiment to determine how engagement affects customer satisfaction and loyalty. Participants (N=175) evaluated the six scenarios and rated their satisfaction (Oliver, 2010) and loyalty (Zeithaml et al., 1996) using established scales.

Results/Discussion

Findings revealed that hospitality patrons did not perceive the engagement scenarios as pure representations of each construct. The dedication scenarios represented a combination of energy and dedication, without absorption; the energy scenarios represented energy alone; and the absorption scenarios represented all three dimensions of engagement. It was further found that the combination of dedication and energy provided the greatest amount of customer satisfaction (M=8.433) and loyalty (M=8.401). Energy by itself yielded the next highest amount of customer satisfaction (M=8.264) and loyalty (M=8.389) and the scenarios representing all three engagement dimensions were found to elicit the least amount of customer satisfaction (M=7.780) and loyalty (M=7.886). An important implication for managers is the finding that employee demonstration of absorption through work detracts from customer satisfaction and loyalty.

References Available Upon Request

THE EFFECT OF PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTS ON CUSTOMERS' POSITIVE WOM BEHAVIOR

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Introduction

Recently, the concept of customer engagement has emerged as a management perspective and is gaining popularity because of its beneficial outcomes (Verhoef, Reinartz, & Krafft, 2010). This study focused on customers' positive WOM behavior and its antecedents. Customers often depend on tangible evidence in the physical environment in their evaluations of service (Bitner, 1992; Zeithaml & Bitner, 1996). Physical environment was chosen as the focal antecedent to customer engagement for this study, and incorporated satisfaction as a mediator between the effects of the physical environment and customer engagement. This research proposed that physical environments influence customer satisfaction and create positive WOM.

Methods

Upscale hotels with at least a 4 star rating were selected as the research context. For this study, an online survey was administered though "Amazon Mechanical Turk" (MTurk) (www.mturk.com) by linking survey respondents to an external online survey tool, Qualtrics. Total 310 responses were used for the study. The survey consisted of sets of measurement items for questions on physical environment elements (social, design, and ambience factors), customer satisfaction, and WOM behavior. The data were analyzed in two steps, first CFA, then SEM.

Results/Discussion

The results of the CFA for the measurement model was found to have a good fit ($X2 = 220.052$, d.f. = 125, normed $X2 = 1.760$, $p < 0.000$; RMSEA = 0.05; IFI = 0.97; NFI = 0.94; CFI = 0.97, and TLI = 0.97). The criteria for both reliability and validity were met. The goodness-of-fit statistics showed that the structural model fit the data very well ($X2 = 225.373$, d.f. = 128, normed $X2 = 1.760$, $p < 0.001$; RMSEA = 0.05; IFI = 0.97; NFI = 0.94; CFI = 0.97, and TLI = 0.97). The results indicated that each element of the physical environment contributed differently to customer satisfaction. The "social" element made the greatest contribution to customer satisfaction, followed by "ambience" and ""public". In addition, WOM behavior is influenced by customer satisfaction, indicating that when customers are more satisfied, they are more likely to make positive remarks to others about the hotel. Therefore, upscale hotels should focus on the social, ambience, and public design elements of the physical environment to better appeal to hotel guests, and have more satisfied customers making positive remarks about the hotel to others. Through doing this, firms can cut their costs of investment in unnecessary elements that do not engage customers, and still have satisfied customers who will be happy with service that meets or even exceeds their expectations.

References Available Upon Request

SENIORS' DINING-OUT CONSTRAINTS: UNDERSTANDING THE ROLES OF PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND ECONOMIC HEALTH

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Introduction
The aging of the world's population has created increasing interest in senior consumers among researchers and marketers. Yet previous research efforts have produced little knowledge to help explain current seniors' dining behavior later life. Much of the previous consumer research has treated the senior market as a homogeneous segment of the population and has painted a stereotyped picture of aging consumers as mentally and physically limited, lonely, dependent, and financially poor. However, today's senior market differs greatly to those of the past generations (Gonzalez et al., 2009). As average life expectancy increases, seniors perceive themselves as considerably younger and healthier than their actual age (Chen et al., 2014). Thus, when it comes to analyzing and proposing strategies for senior consumers, we suggest that self-perceived healthiness should be added to categorize seniors in the marketplace rather than only identifying their actual age. This study aims to achieve two main objectives: 1) to compare the dining-out frequency/pre-decision information processing between age groups (e.g., senior group and younger group) to identify whether senior consumers have a tendency to consider fewer restaurant options when dining out and, accordingly, dine-out less frequency regardless of any health-related factors and 2) to investigate whether senior consumers' dining behaviors are impacted by their self-perceived physical, mental, and economic health status.

Methods
The current study conducted a series of two-way ANOVAs on dining-out frequency and the number of considered choice sets (dependent variables) with AGE (young vs. old) × Mental/ Physically/ Economic Perceived Health (good vs. bad) as independent variables. Before conducting ANOVA analysis, the respondents were divided into two groups in each model, mental health (good vs. bad), physical health (good vs. bad), and economic health (good vs. bad), by using mean split.

Results/Discussion
This research provides an important opportunity to apply a multidimensional framework to assess the senior consumer market. To some extent, the results provide evidence that seniors with positive self-perceived health, both mentally and physically, had significantly more active restaurant behaviors (e.g., dining-out frequency and variety seeking) than those with poor self-perceived health. Research on seniors that includes self-perceptions of health has made useful conclusions about the mindset and behaviors seniors who feel healthy versus seniors who feel unhealthy. In sum, restaurant marketers should avoid stereotypes and misleading information from the past and instead rely on more recent and accurate information regarding today's senior consumers. They should also make efforts to target the "young at heart" senior market.

References Available Upon Request

FACE AND GUANXI IN HOSPITALITY SERVICE FAILURE RESPONSE

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Introduction

Face and guanxi are two significant cultural values of Chinese society as well as important social resources of Chinese people. Despite the significant impact of these two interrelated values on consumer behavior, their effects in hospitality service management are not yet clear. The main objective of this research is to examine the independent effects as well as interactive effects of face concern and guanxi on Chinese customers' behavioral responses to hospitality service failure. Process failure was the service failure type that discussed particularly in this study because it causes loss of social resources and is assumed to be more associated with face and guanxi according to previous studies. This research hypothesized that self-face and other-face have different influence on behavioral responses while existence of guanxi between guest and hotel can moderate the influence. Guanxi itself also guide the response approaches of guest toward service failure.

Method

Scenario-based quasi-experiment was conducted to address the research objectives. Guanxi and face concern treated as independent variables in the experiment while different behavioral responses to the service scenario were measured. Person Correlation and independent sample T-test were conducted to test the hypotheses

Results

The study identified that concern for self-face can increase the intention of direct voice complaint, negative word-of-mouth, negative online word-of-mouth and exit behavior after experiencing service process failure in hospitality setting. Concern for other-face also had positive influence on direct voice complaint intention which is against the assumption of many previous studies about complaint behavior. Moderate effects of guanxi on the impact of face concern are also found. When guanxi existed between hotel staff and Chinese customers, intentions of word-of-mouth and exit behavior could be increased by consumers' concern for others' face which would otherwise have insignificant impact. In addition, existence of guanxi can mitigate the intention of posting negative online review about the hotel service. The result of this study is significant for hospitality service management. It implied that service process failure should be given extra attention in Chinese market in which consumers are highly face concerned and businesses are widely built on guanxi.

Reference Available Upon Request

PRICE VERSUS REVIEWS: WHICH IS A STRONGER INFLUENCE ON TRAVELER DECISIONS?

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Introduction

While price is a well-established determinant of purchasing behavior (Zeithaml, 1988), it is not the only factor influencing consumers' decisions. Research has determined that price, in relation to traveler reviews, has a decreased influence on consumers' choices and evaluations (Noone & McGuire, 2013a, b). Research has yet to determine if there is a price point where the influence of price overrides the influence of reviews. The current study applied classic theories of social influence (Asch, 1956) to provide insight into the effect of price and customer reviews on purchase likelihood, evaluation, and perceptions of quality and value for travel purchases.

Methods

Subjects (n = 210) completed an online questionnaire containing descriptions of two resorts and made hypothetical decisions for a 3-day weekend trip to Las Vegas. The design was a 2 (unanimity) x 3 (price) between-subjects experimental design. Participants compared two Las Vegas resorts, of which the base resort had consistent pricing and neutral reviews in all conditions. The target resort had negative reviews that were either unanimous (5 of 5) or non-unanimous (4 of 5), and price that was either 10%, 30% or 50% lower than the base resort. Participants rated likelihood to choose each resort and rated each resort on three attributes (appealing, good choice, positive impression) using Likert scales. Additionally, each resort was rated on price, quality, and value.

Results/Discussion

All analyses were done with a 2 x 3 ANOVA. A significant main effect for unanimity was found ($F_{1,209=}$6.92, p=.009) whereby likelihood to choose the target resort was higher when reviews were not unanimous (μ=3.43) versus unanimous (μ=2.66). All three resort ratings were significantly more favorable in the non-unanimous condition. Means for appealing were 2.72 unanimous and 3.67 non-unanimous; means for good choice were 2.70 unanimous and 3.60 non-unanimous; and means for positive impression were 2.70 unanimous and 3.41 non-unanimous.A main effect of unanimity was significant for both quality ($F_{1,209}$=12.61, p=.000), and value ratings ($F_{1,209}$=11.97, p=.001). Results also indicated a significant interaction between price and unanimity for both quality ($F_{2,209=}$ 3.34, p=.037), and value ($F_{2,209}$=3.11, p=.047). Simple effects tests revealed that the effect of price on perceived quality was significant in the non-unanimous condition ($F_{2,101}$=4.44, p=.014), but not the unanimous condition. At a 50% lower price, the resort was perceived to be higher quality when reviews were not unanimous (μ=4.59) versus unanimous (μ =2.57). The effect of price on perceived value was again significant only in the non-unanimous condition ($F_{1,101}$=5.84, p=.004), such that perceived value increased at a 50% lower price with mean ratings of 2.88 (unanimous) and 4.81 (non-unanimous). This research contributes to the hospitality and tourism literature by identifying the effect of price and social influence, in the form of negative reviews, on travel purchase decisions in an online context. The findings suggest that hotel management should consider the impact of customer reviews carefully when developing hotel pricing strategies.

References Available Upon Request

WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF BASIC EMOTIONS ON THE THEORY OF PANNED BEHAVIORN IN PREDICTING CASINO GAMBLING INTENTIONS

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Introduction
Among one of the more popular models to predict gambling behavior is the theory of planned behavior (TPB). TPB states that the intention is determined from three cognitive inputs (attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral controls (PBC)). Moreover, TPB gambling studies have focused their attention on modifying the influential variables of the cognitive determinants. To the author's knowledge, studies that applied TPB to predict gambling actions have assumed that the intentions have no emotional inputs. Even though numerous studies have shown emotions to significantly influence individuals' cognitive abilities. Furthermore, TPB struggles with predicting behaviors with significant emotional input, with gambling being one such behavior. Given the popularity of the TPB to predict gambling behavior and its struggles with predicting emotional influenced behaviors, this study looks to answer the following questions. Can the widely used TPB be augmented to improve predictability of casino gambling behavior? In addition, which emotion is likely to influence either the gambling intention or the attitude?

Methods
The descriptive statistics includes typical frequency counts along with exploratory factor analysis to verify the segments of positive and negative emotions. Next, hypotheses testing were first done through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) for validity and reliability testing of the constructs. Next, structural equation modeling (SEM) was utilized for testing the casual relationships between the constructs. Covariance Based SEM (CB-SEM) via maximum likelihood method is utilized as opposed to Partial Least-Squares SEM (PLS-SEM).

Results/Discussion
The SEM results indicated that attitudes and PBC are significant predictors of intentions at 0.05 level and subjective norms are significant predictors of attitude at 0.05 level. Furthermore, positive emotions are both significant predictors of the intentions at 0.10 level and of attitudes at 0.05 level. On the opposite end, the results show that negative emotions are significant predictors of intentions at 0.10 level, but are not significant predictors of attitudes.

This study's foremost theoretical contribution is that basic emotions predict casino gambling intentions when added into the framework of TPB. Furthermore, emotions can help simplify extensions to TPB with emotions being the basis for many behaviors. In addition, assistance programs may want to concentrate on positive emotional messages as opposed to campaigns that concentrate on the psychological toll of problem gambling. This is due to positive emotions influencing the attitudes while negative emotions did not. The negative campaigns may turn off problem gamblers as societal norms have put a more positive spin on gambling.

References Available Upon Request

THE EFFECT OF VARIOUS MEETING PLATFORMS ON ATTENDEE RETENTION, SATISFACTION, AND REVISIT INTENTION

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Introduction

The meetings and events industry represents one of the fastest growing segments of the tourism industry (Opperman & Chon, 1997). From an employer's perspective, meeting attendance should be about learning and networking, not necessarily travel. This viewpoint, paired with lingering effects from the recession, led organizations to explore the Internet (Litvin, 2003). The Internet caused major shifts in thinking during the late 1990s and 2000s. Virtual shows started in the United Kingdom as early as 1995 with Virtex, quickly followed by RMR and Expocentric in 1999 (Edgar, 2002). The purpose of this research is to analyze whether attendee satisfaction, retention, and revisit intention differ across traditional and contemporary forms of meetings, to include face-to-face meetings, live meetings with broadcast speakers, and virtual meetings with and without a moderator.

Methods

This research used a 4-cell experimental design consisting of four meeting platforms: face-to-face, live broadcast, virtual with chat, and playback. To create the experimental conditions, the researchers conducted a live face-to-face meeting that was recorded by a professional audiovisual company. The format of the meeting was similar to a large conference in a general session environment. Four speakers were selected who spoke on various topics including time management, diversity, leadership principles, and living with passion. This study specifically analyzes the variables of satisfaction, intention to revisit, and content retention. These variables are considered along with whether there is a live speaker or not, whether there is audience engagement or not, and whether the meeting attendees meet in a live room together or not.

Results/Discussion

There were 89 completed attendee surveys across the four platforms. None of the group comparisons resulted in a significant difference in satisfaction, though there was a marginally significant difference between the face-to-face and live broadcast platforms. All of the group comparisons analyzing intent to revisit resulted in non-significant results with the exception of the live speaker face-to-face and the live broadcast. These results suggest that when the speaker is live, an attendee's intent to revisit increases. None of the group comparisons were significant when analyzing content retention except the open-ended category between the face-to-face meeting and the virtual meeting with a moderator. These results suggest that having this engagement during the speaker session increases un-aided content recall of the material. In summary, this study examined the potential effect of satisfaction, intention to revisit, and content retention across four meeting platforms. Two significant differences were found: intention to revisit increased when the speaker is live and un-aided recall of material increases with engagement from a moderator throughout the session.

WHERE DO SATISFIED AND EMOTIONAL CUSTOMERS TAKE YOU? THE OUTCOME OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND EMOTIONS IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

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Introduction

Despite servicescape and social elements are found to be crucial in lodging industry, few research have looked into the relative importance of these factors on consumers' word of mouth (WOM) intentions mediated through their satisfaction and emotion. This research focuses on the influence of guests' evaluations of hotels' ambiance, room and public space and social elements on their satisfaction and emotions towards their stay which lead to their WOM intentions. Additionally, this comprehensive model which integrates servicescape and social elements provides an opportunity to evaluate the relative influence of these elements on consumers' satisfaction and emotion.

Methods

310 responses were collected from an online survey administered though "Amazon Mechanical Turk" (MTurk) (www.mturk.com) by linking survey respondents to an external online survey tool, Qualtrics. The data were collected from March 12–March 19, 2014. Each item for the constructs studied was rated on a five-point Likert scale. Items used to measure these constructs were adapted from previous literature. One focus group interview and two pilot tests were conducted to ensure the clarity of wording and to statistically test the reliability of items. A structural equation model was developed to test the theorized causal relationship between identified constructs.

Results/Discussion

The results indicate that guests' subjective ambience, space (room and public) and social evaluations of hotel facilities lead to their reported levels of satisfaction and emotions with their stay at hotels. Additionally, customer satisfaction and emotions lead to guests' intentions for WOM recommendations. Our results contribute to the theory and practice of hospitality management mainly in two ways. Frist, it is important for hotel managers to be aware of the fact that customers subjectively evaluate the hotel facility during their stay, which in turn lead to their satisfaction and emotions, consequently influence their WOM intentions. This provides important implications for hotel brands, trying to create an active group of brand followers who have higher likelihood of promoting brands through WOM recommendations. The results also contribute to the extension of theory in hospitality management by identifying the causal relationship between the important constructs in relationship marketing and consumer behaviour. Future research can aim to test the identified model using a different sample such as patrons of limited budget/economy hotels.

References Available Upon Request

THIRD-PARTY CUSTOMERS' REACTIONS TO FAMILIAR SERVICES BETWEEN TARGETED CUSTOMERS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS: GENDER ROLES IN SERVICE-INTERACTION TRIADS

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Introduction

A service-encounter milieu most often features not only a server and customer, but also "bystander" customers waiting for their turns at service. These waiting customers become, in effect, third-party observers of the service interactions between providers and the currently targeted customers receiving familiar and close service. Despite a rich conceptual background in the hospitality literature, empirical examinations testing how this observer perspective affects these customers remain scant within the hospitality context. Hence, this study investigates customer-employee interactions with observers (third-parties) present and their effects on individuals' responses (i.e., attitude toward service employee and the service quality evaluation). At the same time, this research examines the specific interactions related to both gender of employees and targets and gender of the observers while injecting the element of familiarity in service encounters.

Methods

To test the research hypotheses, this research adopted a 4 (four different gender combinations of server and targeted customer) × 2 (observer's own gender) quasi-experimental design using a scenario-based experiment. Each participant was exposed to two conditions of scenarios randomly ordered: familiar service to the observer and non-familiar service to the observer. As dependent variables, this study used attitudes toward the server drawn from Söderlund's (2013) study and the service-quality evaluation measured from the study of Brady and colleagues (2002).

Results/Discussion

The results indicate that statistically significant differences occur across the familiar and non-familiar service conditions for attitude toward the service employee and the service-quality evaluation. Furthermore, in the condition of a non-familiar service encounter, customers had the lowest attitude toward service employees and service-quality evaluation when observing familiar interactions between a server with different gender and a customer with the same gender. This empirically tested study contributes to the research arguing the importance of a "balance of service" that the industry needs, one that is sensitive to the feelings of third-party observers who stand by when providers serve targeted customers. This research also indicates the role of gender in triad interactions within the service context. Therefore, it is important for managers to understand how observing consumers perceive frontline service employees and to preserve third parties' goodwill to avoid fostering feelings of alienation and to encourage favorable images and perceptions toward organizations and employees.

References Available Upon Request

CHOOSING A RESTAURANT FOR YOURSELF OR FOR OTHERS: THE EFFECTS OF TEXT VS. PICTURE-BASED MENU PRESENTATIONS

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Introduction

The main goal of this study is to examine how making decisions for others affects an individuals' preference for visual stimuli. In particular, we attempt to investigate the joint effects of presentation format (text- versus picture-based menu) and choice task (self vs. others) in a context of restaurant menus. Studies on information processing indicate that visual-based stimuli is processed faster (Hsee & Rottenstreich, 2004; Lee, Amir, & Ariely, 2009; Lieberman, Gaunt, Gilbert, & Trope, 2002) due to the automatic and unconscious nature of visual processing (Luna & Peracchio, 2003). Thus, consumers intuitively prefer visual stimuli. This tendency is called a "picture-superiorly effect" (Childers & Houston, 1984) or a "visual preference heuristic" (Townsend & Kahn, 2014). Previous research suggests that people who are choosing for others take into consideration more information than people who are making their own choices. However, prior research in self vs. other decision making has ignored the role of presentation format of the information. If consumers who are making choices for others seek more information, they might prefer descriptive and detailed information presented in a verbal format which induce slower and less automatic access to information, thus leading to more deliberative information processing (Carr, McCauley, Sperber, & Parmelee, 1982; Luna & Peracchio, 2003).Therefore, we expect that consumers who choose a restaurant for others will show a greater likelihood to visit the restaurant when the menu is presented in text-based format than when in picture-based format.

Methods

A 2 (menu stimuli: picture-based vs. text-based) X 2 (self-other decision making: self vs. other) experimental between-subjects design was used to test the hypotheses. The self vs. other decisions making task was manipulated using scenarios. Participants were randomly directed to view one of the Thai restaurant menus (picture-based vs. text-based). Menu labelling and prices were held constant across the two conditions. We instructed participants to consider a couple of menu items to order (vs. recommend). After browsing the Thai food menu, participants were directed to answer a series of questions including some unrelated questions.

Results/Discussion

We conducted an ANCOVA to test the moderating effect of self-other decision making on the relationship between menu presentation format (picture-vs. text-based) and choice likelihood. Product category involvement was added as a covariate. The results indicate a significant interaction effect of menu presentation format and self-other decision making ($F(1, 147)=6.26$, $p=0.01$). Specifically, in the text condition participants showed a greater likelihood to choose the restaurant when the decision task involved others rather than themselves. We demonstrate that consumers opt for verbal rather than visual menu information when choosing for others. When consumers make decisions for others they want to maximize the amount of information, thus leading to a preference for verbal stimuli rather than visual stimuli.

References Available Upon Request

WHY DON'T THEY EAT? A STUDY OF THE FOOD CONSUMPTION OF CHINESE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN THE UNITED STATES

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Introduction

International students contributed vastly to restaurant revenues in the U.S.. However, they often prefer their own ethnic foods. In addition, there is a lack of research on international students' food consumption behaviors. Thus, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is assumed to better explain this behavior. Additionally, food neophobia, a food-related personality trait, defined as not willing to try unfamiliar or novel food, could also influence intentions to try food people are not familiar with. Students from China largely drove the growth of international students in the U.S. The enrollments of Chinese students increased by 21% to a 235,597 students total during the academic year 2012/2013. This study attempts to verify the applicability of TPB to Chinese international student food consumption behaviors in the U.S., and to understand the role food-neophobia plays in international students' food consumption intentions.

Methods

This study adopted several questions based on previous research (Sparks and Pan, 2009; Padgett, Kim, Goh, & Huffman, 2013). The scale of food neophobia was adopted from Ritchey, Frank, Hursti and Tuorila (2003). This research used attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavior control (TPB) and food neophobia as independent variables. The dependent variable was the intention of consuming unfamiliar ethnic foods. The survey used a 7-point Likert-type scale (1="strongly disagree", 7="strongly agree") to measure participant agreements on each statement. Exploratory factor analysis and multiple regression analysis were used in this study. Ninety-eight valid surveys were completed by Chinese international students from several universities in the U.S.

Results/Discussion

The results of this study show that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control have significant positive impact on subjects' intentions to consume unfamiliar ethnic foods. Thus, this study confirmed and added to previous findings that the Theory of Planned Behavior is able to explain behavioral intentions. This study also filled a gap in the existing literature by using TPB to understand the behavior of consuming unfamiliar ethnic foods in different environmental settings. Food neophobia has a very strong negative impact on intentions to consume unfamiliar ethnic foods. This result differed from the findings of Hafiz, Zainal, Nizan and Shahariah (2013), who did not obtain a significant predicting effect of food neophobia on intentions to consume food after surveying tourists in Malaysia. However, this result was consistent with the study by Kim, Eves and Scarles (2013) in terms of the important role food neophobia plays in human food choice in a different cultural setting. Finally, this study offers several suggestions to non-Chinese food restaurant managers who would like to attract Chinese customers.

References Available Upon Request

THE EFFECT OF DECOY PRICES ON CUSTOMER CONSUMPTION CHOICES

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Introduction

Service firms aim to increase profit by implementing variety of revenue management strategies. Decoy pricing (providing alternative choices for consumers) is found to be an effective method to increase revenue. On the other hand, the application of decoy pricing in food service industry can increase people's overconsumption of food. This research aims to demonstrate how decoy prices can influence people's food choices, and consequently lead to overconsumption and offer more revenue to service providers. Specifically, we identified the effect of decoy prices on consumers' choice of more expensive menu item and consequently, the influence of the choice of more expensive menu item on their higher willingness to pay for following food purchase decisions.

Methods

First, two focus groups, each with 8 students from a large South Eastern university, were conducted in order to select a menu items and their consecutive prices. The results indicated that most of the participants were most familiar with "burger menus" that include bundle items. Second, for the pilot study, 30 students from a large South Eastern university were asked to write the expected price next to each menu item. The average price of each menu item was calculated and rounded to the closest full dollar. Finally, 1 cent was deducted from the price to make it more realistic for quick service context (e.g. $3.99). For the main study, 82 students from a large South Eastern university were presented with two separate vignette scenarios (with and without decoy prices) and their choice of menu items was the dependant variable. Next, participants were presented with a photo of a steak meal and asked how much they would be willing to pay for it. A Chi-square test of the differences in proportions for two different groups was conducted to test the significant difference in choice of more expensive menu items in the two scenarios. The influence of the more expensive menu choice on consumers' willingness to pay for the following steak purchase was tested using ANOVA and ANCOVA.

Results/Discussion

This research provides a set of theoretical and practical results. From a theoretical stand point, this research shows that there is a significant effect of decoy bundle pricing on consumers' decisions to choose a more expensive menu item. From a practical perspective, it is relevant to know in what contexts consumers over consume things. Future research can focus on extending the findings to a more generalizable sample.

References Available Upon Request

CUSTOMER DELIGHT: IMPORTANCE-PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS REVISITED ON RESTAURANT CUSTOMERS

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Introduction

In order to survive amid increasing domestic and global competition, restaurants must adapt themselves to retain loyal customers and attract new business from their competitors. Merely enhancing customer satisfaction is insufficient to secure customer repurchasing intentions (Deming, 1986). Customer delight has been found to be tightly related to customer repurchasing intentions and positive word-of-mouth (Torres and Klines, 2006). However, the attributes leading to the distinction between restaurant customer delight and customer satisfaction are not well classified. This empirical study aims to 1) identify and differentiate the key restaurant attributes of customer satisfaction and customer delight; 2) apply Importance-Performance Analysis to customer satisfaction and customer delight attributes; and 3) examine the impact of customer delight attributes on customer repurchasing intentions and word-of-mouth in a restaurant context.

Methods

A convenience sample was utilized for this study from a university dining place. Paper-based questionnaires were distributed. The participants were asked about their most recent dining experiences in other restaurants. This study follows three steps to analyse sample data. First, sample reliability and validity were tested separately by Cronbach's alpha and factor analysis. Second, an Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) was conducted to identify the distinctions between restaurant customer satisfaction attributes and delight attributes. Third, multiple regression was used to test the hypotheses and verify the findings from IPA.

Results/Discussion

IPA results provide business operators with a general perspective on resource allocation in a particular unit. Aside from this point, this study explored key attributes leading to customer delight in a restaurant setting. Our results suggest that the perceived performance of service-related attributes is important to delighted restaurant customers. The well-performed service-related attributes may generate the surprising and gleeful emotions of restaurant customers by implementing certain customer delighting strategies. Once the service-related attributes are well performed, the perceived importance increases and service-related attributes become the key drivers of customer delight. Hence, the study results recommend that restaurant operators improve service-related attributes' performance in order to enhance customer delight. The customer delight strategies need innovations to improve service-related attributes' importance and performance. We believe these mediating roles significantly influence the effectiveness and efficiency of customer delight strategies in transforming customer satisfaction to customer delight.

References Available Upon Request

FACTORS INFLUENCING PURCHASING OF COUNTRY CLUB MEMBERSHIPS

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Introduction

The private country club business is an important sector in the hospitality industry as the club provides its users with products and services (e.g. Food and beverage, lodging, and leisure activities). A typical club loses members each year, resulting in a business need to recruit new members. Although membership is vital in operating the club business, little research has focused on the important factors in the purchasing process of membership sales. The purpose of the paper is to investigate what factors are important for club members to make a decision to purchase a membership.

Methods

In order to identify the factors, this study employed a framework of purchase decision making process in real estate developed by Gibler and Nelson (2003) which was applied to the country club business. The study chose a country club in the southern part of the United States. The club is composed of multiple golf courses, multiple clubhouses, multiple restaurants, fitness, and tennis operations. Two focus group interviews were conducted using a semi-structured format to examine important factors in each phase of the decision making process. Members were asked to describe the factors influencing their decision to join the country club. A coding based upon potential factors for joining the country club was developed for both the focus groups.

Results/Discussion

The two focus groups included 29 members, consisting of 15 women and 14 men. This study revealed motivation factors in the decision making process with the three phases: 1) *gathering of information, 2) evaluation of alternative*, and 3) *decision rules*. In the *gathering of information,* motivation factors included the location of the club, the exposure to the club through friends, business associates, and realtors as important factors. Additionally, location to work, home, and the weather were important factors in this phase. The *evaluation of alternatives* identified factors of a desirable state in the United States, followed by the city, and then the specific location in the city. The home purchase factor of inside or outside of the club community, new or resale home purchase, or a rental decision is motivators in this stage. The evaluation of alternative also involved evaluating the different country clubs factors in a specific location by amenity package and satisfaction. The *decision rules* involved deciding between membership categories such as golf or social, the membership joining fees, dues, and usage fees at various clubs. Finally, the culture of the club was identified as an important factor in the decision rule stage and was positively appreciated by friendly staff and members, the reputation of the property, the social programming, and the welcoming feeling for new members. This study highlights important motivation factors in the country club corresponding to the purchasing decision making process. The findings add the conceptual understanding of the membership purchase process to the body of literature available to clubs. The results will help the country clubs to better understand what factors are important in each decision making stage which will improve the membership purchase process.

References Available Upon Request

GOODWILL INTENDED FOR WHOM? : CONSPICUOUS CONSUMPTION AS A SIGNAL FOR PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOR IN CAUSE-RELATED MARKETING (CRM)

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Introduction

The hospitality industry is actively engaged in corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities (Lee & Heo, 2009) because of the potential benefits of CSR initiatives such as favorable consumer evaluations, differentiating from competitors, and purchasing intention (Gupta & Pirsch, 2006). There is a specific form of strategic CSR, cause related marketing (CRM), which refers to as a strategic marketing tool, which relates a sponsoring company with a relevant social cause for mutual benefits (Pringle & Thompson, 2001). Although a variety of studies on CRM have considered the influence of support for a cause on consumers' purchase behavior, the social-oriented drivers leading to the success of CRM have yet to be investigated empirically in hospitality context. To bridge this gap, this study examines the influence of status, recognition, and guilt on consumer behavior in a CRM setting. Emphasizing the social oriented motives of prosocial behavior may offer a unique perspective that can enrich CRM-research. Moreover, by determining whether or not the extent to which consumer goodwill is recognized by others is effective depending on the specific situation and type of person targeted, this study provides important evidence for companies wishing to develop optimal CRM strategies.

Methods

Participants (*N*=832) in this study were faculty and employees at a university in the Midwestern United States. Surveys had a response rate of 12.02%. A 2x2x2 between-subject scenario-based survey design was used with a combination of status motive (activated vs. not activated), guilt (guilt vs. no guilt), and recognition (public vs. private). Respondents' attitude and intention to participate in the promotion were measured as a dependent variable.

Results

A custom factorial model was run with analysis of variance. Significant interaction effects were found between status motive and recognition on attitude towards CRM (F=11.96, df=1, p<0.01) and intention to participate in CRM (F=6.58, df=1, p<0.01). In addition, significant interaction effects were observed between guilt and recognition on attitude towards CRM (F=10.82, df=1, p<0.01) and intention to participate in CRM (F=9.82, df=1, p<0.01).

Conclusion

Most importantly, our results found that recognition of prosocial behavior, depending on the specific situation and type of person targeted, is an important determinant of success for the promotion. In particular, for the hospitality industry, this might mean recognition of CRM participants on the hotel's home page, or a separate dedicated check-in desk for them in the lobby with a prominent label so that other guests will notice it.

References Available Upon Request

SMALLER PORTION, SAME PRICE: THE MODERATING ROLE OF HEALTH CONSCIOUSNESS

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Introduction

As obesity is becoming a rising concern, restaurants have started to offer downsized menu items for their consumers. This research examines how the consumers' health consciousness influence price sensitivity of the downsized menu items. In particular, this research focuses on how parity pricing and discounted pricing strategies of the downsized menu influence consumers' satisfaction with the menu item and their attitude towards the restaurant. In this paper, we posit that perceived healthiness of a menu will also influence consumers' attitudes towards downsized menus. Perceived healthiness of a menu item is shown to be positively associated with perceived value and satisfaction (Kim, Park, Kim, & Ryu, 2013). Health-related claims tend to increase customers' attitude toward the restaurant and result in higher purchase intentions. We argue that consumers with strong motives to be healthy will have a more favorable attitude towards downsized menu items than consumers with low in health consciousness. Moreover, price strategy (parity vs .discount pricing) will be less important in driving satisfaction and attitude towards the restaurant among consumers high (vs. low) in health consciousness.

Methods

Participants from Amazon Mechanical Turk were asked to imagine that they were at an Italian restaurant ordering a pasta dish. The pasta dish was available in two portion sizes and the price was either the same as the regular portion (parity pricing) or less than the regular price (discount pricing). After reading the scenario, participants were asked to fill out a survey. We conducted an ordinary least squared regression using PROCESS (Hayes, 2012) in which consumers' attitude and anticipated satisfaction are estimated from price condition, health consciousness, and their product.

Results/Discussion

The regression coefficients for the interaction are negative and statistically significant for both anticipated satisfaction and attitude. Thus, the effect of pricing on consumer's attitude towards the restaurant depends on their health consciousness. Similarly, the effect of pricing on consumer's anticipated satisfaction is contingent upon their level of health consciousness. Our findings suggest that consumers are not always sensitive to pricing of downsized menu items. Our findings indicate that when consumers are highly motivated by health consciousness, they are less sensitive to pricing issues. In this study, participants high in health consciousness were equally happy with their downsized portions and showed similar levels of favorable attitudes regardless of the restaurant's pricing strategy (parity vs discount pricing). Obviously, price fairness concerns were more salient with consumers low in health consciousness and such consumers preferred discounted pricing for downsized menu items. The findings of this article have some important managerial implications for service providers who are offering downsized menu items.

References Available Upon Request

EXAMINING THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG GAMBLING INVOLVEMENT, GAMBLING PASSION, AND PATHOLOGICAL GAMBLING BEHAVIOR

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Introduction
The opportunities to participate in legalized gambling have grown in recent years. Many medical studies have agreed that behavioral gambling involvement, such as gambling frequency and betting wagers, is significantly associated with pathological gambling behavior. However, others controvert that behavioral gambling involvement is nothing but the outcome of psychological gambling behavior. A paucity of research has illuminated the structural relationship between psychological gambling involvement and the propensity for pathological gambling behavior. Moreover, literature on gambling involvement is limited and mixed, often conflating gambling involvement versus the internalization of gambling involvement. Previous research on addictive behavior showed that the way of internalizing the activity into the self is the critical factor to the one's balanced life. The dualistic approach of passion was applied in this study. When an activity is internalized autonomously into one's identity, harmonious passion occurs as a form of motivational force, which leads an individual to freely engage in the activity. On the other hand, obsessive passion is the result of controlled internalization, which accompanies internal compulsion and conflict with other activities. Therefore, understanding how psychological gambling involvement is internalized will contribute toward mitigating pathological gambling behavior and developing a sustainable gambling industry.

Methods
660 casino visitors participated in the on-site survey in 2013 in Korea, and 599 valid responses were used in the analysis. Males were dominant (64.8%), and most of respondents were between 30 to 59 years old (82.8%). 78.4% of respondents achieved higher education, and 71.4% of them were married. This study employed three facets of gambling involvement to describe psychological gambling involvement: pleasure, self-expression, and centrality; while the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders' (4^{th} ed.) [DSM-IV] criteria for pathological gambling was employed to measure the propensity for pathological gambling behavior. A structural equation modeling was employed to examine structural relationships among gambling involvement, gambling passion, and the propensity for pathological gambling behavior. Mplus 7.11 was used to analyze the data.

Results/Discussion
This study found that all three facets of gambling involvement affect harmonious gambling passion significantly, whereas only centrality has a significant effect on obsessive gambling passion. Harmonious gambling passion was shown to significantly mitigate the propensity for pathological gambling behavior, while obsessive gambling passion was found to have a significant and positive effect on the propensity. The findings of this study emphasize the different approaches with respect to the facets of gambling involvement in order to mitigate the propensity of pathological gambling behavior.

References Available Upon Request

IMPROVING COMPETITIVE SET SELECTION IN THE HOTEL INDUSTRY THROUGH AN INTEGRATION OF DIFFERENT APPROACHES

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Introduction

In many empirical studies, the hotel industry in different countries has been described as either monopolistic or oligopolistic competition due to the heterogeneity of customers and the seemingly (un)differentiated product and services (Chung, 2000; Davies, 1999; Ellerbrock et al. 1984; Matovic, 2002). In Hong Kong, the hotel market is no different. The market is even characterized by a problem of overcapacity (Tsai and Gu, 2012) which heightens the degree of competition. As hotel markets grapple with competition, competitive set (simply comp set) selection has become more important for managerial decision making and effective revenue management. Precisely, hotel industry practitioners are currently using their comp set(s) for performance benchmarking, competitive pricing decision, and determination of bonuses for some employees (Lederman et al., 2014). Meanwhile, the question of how to identify and select true competitors continues to exist even though some attempts have been made to address this question (Mohammed et al., 2014; Li and Netessine, 2012). So far, the existing approaches have suggested that comp set can be selected with recourse to product/hotel type, rate and product similarities. Yet, a comparative evaluation of the predictive accuracy of existing methods is still very limited (Kim and Canina, 2011; Baum and Lant, 2003). To contribute to this area of research, this study aims to demonstrate the relative accuracies of three methods, namely, product type, rate clustering and product similarities that are commonly used in the hotel industry and to propose a strategy that can usefully combine these methods to achieve better outcomes.

Methods

The study will employ a novel strategy to crawl data from a meta-search engine for all listed hotels in Hong Kong on best available rate, existing facilities and amenities, as well as location characteristics such as distance to central business district, proximity to popular tourist attractions and transportation facilities like the train station. Other data points will include, size of hotel in terms of number of rooms, age of hotel in terms of years/months, and quality ratings in terms of star classification and online reviewers' ratings. These data will be analysed using cluster analysis and logistic regression techniques.

Results/Discussion

The results of the data analysis will demonstrate that the three approaches may have their individual biases (error of inclusion and exclusion) which need to be recognized by academics and industry practitioners. In other words, the findings of this study will suggest that relying on one approach to identify comp set(s) could potentially lead to miss-identification or incomplete identification of competitors. Thus, a better and holistic way to identify comp set(s) will be to usefully combine the different approaches into one method which can synergistically achieve fairly desirable results. Proposing such an integrated method would be the main contribution of this study.

References Available Upon Request

ANALYZING A COMPETITIVE MARKET ENVIRONMENT: THE CASE OF THE U.S. HOTEL INDUSTRY

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Introduction

There is fierce competition among today' hotels, all trying to grab a piece of the modern lodging market. This hospitality industry is competitive, global and technologically driven. This study employs a market structure-conduct-performance model (SCP), based on industrial-economics studies. The SCP paradigm is a framework for the analysis of competition between providers in commercial markets. The SCP paradigm can investigate the competitive conditions of the a market in which firms operate, delineate how those conditions affect the behavior, and assess what the economic effects of both individual and collective behavior are.

Although SCP plays an eminent role in decision making, there is a lack of empirical studies in that area. Most prior studies have solely explored the correlation of SCP. There are but a few studies on the application of SCP in the hospitality industry. This study examined the relationships among three factors: changes in the market structure of the hotel industry, the operational conduct of the hotel industry, and the performance of the hotel industry.

Methods

Using the SCP hotel model, this paper utilizes three endogenous hotel variables: market share, advertising, and profitability. The sample used in this study is comprised of U.S. hotel firms with the data having been collected form COMPUSTAT covering the years 1991 to 2014.

The sample used for the analysis included 90 hotel observations. The assumptions were checked using a multiple linear regression model for the ordinary least squares method. Ordinary least squares (OLS) estimation of system equations creates subjective and varying estimators due to correlation between independent variables and the disturbance term of equations. This research uses a simultaneous-equation system to provide an example of the above relationship with a SCP framework.

Results/Discussion

To test the relationship among the three targeted factors, this research utilizes the SCP of industrial economics. This research creates three equations for market structure, conduct and financial performance, and uses ordinary least squares regression analysis to pinpoint important factors affecting the equations.

There is a causal relationship among market structure, conduct, and financial performance. Empirical evidence indicates that this relationship is more than a single direction connection. This study anticipates that its findings can offer researchers and practitioners broader and more useful references for policy development and decision making. Managerial implications as well as directions for future research are discussed.

ROLE OF FRANCHISING ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEVERAGE AND GROWTH

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Introduction

Successful franchise system generates more cash flow. Therefore, companies that actively adopt franchising would be able to significantly grow without external financing. In this case, managers would like to keep the leverage ratio low since they are less pressured by the debt payment and low debt payment provides more room for management to use the free cash flow to grow and seize growth opportunities. To the companies with low degree of franchising, however, such negative relationship between leverage and growth may not work since with limited contribution of cash flows from franchisees, raising money through debt financing may be more viable option to minimize cost. This study aims to empirically test the dynamics of franchising, leverage, and growth.

Methods

This study will use a panel dataset for the main analysis. Data collection will utilize two main sources: the Compustat for restaurant companies' annual financial data and 10-Ks for restaurant companies' degree of franchising. The sample period will be from 1994 to 2013 for twenty years, which is enough to cover economic downturns and upturns. The hypothesis proposed for this study is:

H1: Franchising has a negative moderating effect on the relationship between leverage and a firm's growth.

To test the hypothesis, the study will examine the following model:

$$(1)\ GROWTH_{it} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 LEV_{it} + \beta_2 DOF + \beta_3 LEV_{it} \times DOF + \beta_4 SIZE_{it} + \beta_5 PROFIT_{it} + \varepsilon_{it}$$

where, GROWTH represents a restaurant firm's annual sales growth; LEV represents a firm's leverage, measured by debt-to-total assets ratio; DOF represents degree of franchising, measured by the proportion of number of franchised properties by the number of total properties; Lev x DOF represents the interaction term between Lev and DOF; SIZE represents a firm's size, measured by the log of total assets; PROFIT represents a firm's profitability, measured by return on sales; and ε is an error term.

Results/Discussion

The results demonstrate significant and negative moderating effect of franchising between the relationship between leverage and restaurants' growth. Findings of this study would enrich the literature by empirically showing how franchising make a play in a company's financing behaviour to grow.

References Available Upon Request

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND CORPORATE FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE: THE MODERATING ROLE OF GEOGRAPHICAL DIVERSIFICATION

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Introduction

The increasing attention from the public and corporations toward CSR trends and issues has caused the hospitality industry to expend resources to implement and promote CSR initiatives. Many precedent studies examined the effects of CSR initiatives on corporate financial performance (CFP) in the restaurant context. However, those studies fail to reach a consensus regarding the effects of CSR on CFP. Early hospitality CSR-CFP studies (e.g., Kang, Lee, & Huh, 2010; Yuhei & Lee, 2011; Lee and Park, 2009) focused on a general relationship between CSR and CFP using different performance measures (e.g., Tobin's q, stock returns, accounting profitability such as ROA and ROE) while paying little attention to moderating factors that might better explain the relationship between CSR and CFP. For example, the Lee, Singal and Kang (2013) examination of a moderating role of economic conditions on the CSR-CFP relationship is one rare study in the hospitality context.

Firms are increasingly diversifying the geographical scope of their business for the sake of competitive advantage (Lu & Beamish, 2004) and many restaurant firms implemented geographical diversifications (Park & Jang, 2012). When restaurant firms geographically diversify, the tendency is to expose business to more regions and people leading to improved exposure that enhances consumers' and markets' awareness of the company. The current study, consequently, proposes that the increased level of consumers' awareness of the firm can help the firm to increase the magnitude of the effect of CSR on CFP. In other words, the current study aims to address the degree of geographical diversification as a moderating factor for the relationship between CSR and CFP in the restaurant context.

Methods

The publicly traded U.S. restaurant firms' performance is this study's sampling basis for the period 2000 to 2013. This study uses several data sources to measure variables: KLD STATS measures CSR; hand-collecting the number of restaurant units per state from restaurant firms' 10-Ks measures the degree of geographical diversification (GEODIV); firms' annual financial data from Compustat database measures other variables. To test the moderating role of geographical diversification, this study creates an interactional term to represent the relationship between GEODIV and CSR. The dependent variable is Tobin's q, widely used to test the effect of strategic choices on shareholders' value. This study considers five control variables: firm size, leverage, accounting profitability (ROA), systematic risk (Beta), and dividend payout per share (DIV). This current study performs panel data analysis to avoid problems of estimation caused by unobserved effects of firms and time. Based on the Breusch-Pagan Lagrange Multiplier Test and Hausman Test, this study selects the most appropriate model from among pooled-OLS, random-effects model and fixed-effects model.

References Available Upon Request

IMPACT OF GEOGRAPHIC DIVERSIFICATION ON U.S. RESTAURANT FIRMS' RISK: DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC DIVERSIFICATION

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Introduction
As US restaurant firms implement geographic diversification as a competitive strategy (Kang & Lee, 2014), academic research of diversification has increased concomitantly (Hitt, Tihanyi, Miller, & Connelly, 2006). However, in the hospitality context, previous research on diversification have focused mostly on impacts to firm performance (Choi, Kang, Lee, S., & Lee, K., 2011; Chen & Chang, 2012; Park, 2010; Rhou & Koh, 2014). Without accounting for the risk, the effect of diversification on firm value provides an incomplete picture (Madanoglu, 2005). Since risk and returns significantly affect processes for managing investments (Morris 1958; Madanoglu, 2005), assessing the performance of a firm's investment should consider the level of risk (Kim & Gu, 2003).

The effect of risk reduction from a geographic diversification strategy has gained support from the modern portfolio theory, which suggests that investing in a diversified portfolio of multiple assets can lower the level of a firm's exposure to risk (Markowitz, 1952; Sharpe, 1964; Lintner, 1965). However, although a positive relationship for the risk-reduction effect of diversification appears to be appropriate for other hospitality sectors, empirical investigations that test and support the theory remain scarce for the restaurant setting. Furthermore, considering idiosyncrasies in the restaurant industry such as cultural gaps (Kim, Wen, & Doh, 2009), distinctive findings are expected to obtain. Eroglu (1992) expressed concern that a larger cultural gap may increase the perception of risk and lower benefits from a restaurant's internationalization strategy. Therefore, this study investigates the influences of domestic and international geographic diversification on restaurant firms' risk; internationally diversified operations are likely to increase risks due to the wide cultural risks, while domestically diversified operations are likely to lower risks following the modern portfolio theory.

Methods
With the sample period from 2000 to 2013, publicly traded US restaurant firms represent the sample in this study. Data for geographic diversification is collected from restaurant companies' 10-K and other financial data arise from the Compustat database. The dependent variable is restaurant firms' risk (measured by the standard deviation of daily stock returns). Two independent variables are the degree of domestic and international geographic diversification, measured by Herfindalh Index using the number of restaurant units in each state and each country. Nine control variables in the current study are: firm size, leverage, dividend, capital intensity, liquidity, profit, growth opportunity, restaurant types, and franchising (Kang et al., 2012). This study employs a panel regression analysis to account for unobserved effects of firms and time (Wooldridge, 2002). Breusch-Pagan Lagrange Multiplier Test will select the appropriate model from among pooled-OLS and Two-Way Random-Effects Model. The Hausman Test chooses the more appropriate model from between Two-Way Random-Effects Model and Fixed-Effects Model (Wooldridge, 2002).

References Available Upon Request

THE IIMPACT OF MACRO, LOCAL ECONOMIC AND COMPETITIVE CONDITIONS ON CASINO REVENUE: A CASE STUDY OF DETROIT CASINOS' CRISIS

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Introduction

American economy sharply rebounded in the second quarter of 2014 (the GDP increased by 4% and the unemployment rate decreased to 6% in the U.S., according to the data from the Department of the Treasury). Correspondingly, the casino revenues surged as well almost across the industry in the first half of 2014 (Federal Reserve Bank). These greatly validated the conclusion of Flanegin, Racic and Rudd (2012) that some macro-economic indices, such as the GDP, the unemployment rate and the stock market returns, largely account for the quick increase of casino revenues. However, the casino revenues of Detroit, ever was ranked the forth place in 2012, were going through a setback, although the whole industry was growing quickly (Michigan gaming control board). It thereby implies the more significant impacts of Detroit local economic conditions on its casino revenues, besides the macro-economic impacts. Thus, the purpose of this study is to investigate the impacts of the conditions of the macro, local economy and of the nearby competition on the casino revenues in the case of Detroit casino's crisis.

Methods

Multivariate time series analysis approach will be chosen to analyze the correlations among different variables. The variables are to be included in an autoregressive integrated moving average (ARMA) model, and obtain an ARMA model with eXogenous variables (ARMAX). Eight monthly time series will be used in this study. The sources of the data respectively are from the department of treasury, Yahoo finance, Federal Reserve Bank, Ohio casino control commission, and Michigan gaming control board.

Implications

To the knowledge of the author, this study is a first attempt to analyze the impacts on casino revenue from an integrated perspective in Detroit's case. It has significant implications for the academe and policy makers. From the academic perspective, relatively few studies have conducted estimations considering the overall economic effects on casino performance. Therefore, the results of the current study will be of great significance because the relationship between economic impacts and casinos revenues will be identified. Moreover, this study can provide rationale to marketing developers, investment deciders and policy makers who are working in casino legalization at state-level estimates of casino performance. Second, the findings of this study will provide some insights to casino management, some academics and business owners through verifying the relationships among casino revenue and other factors, such as housing price and investigating the influence of urban economies and real estate market on casino industry.

References Available Upon Request

PEER EFFECTS ON INVESTMENT IN THE RESTAURANT INDUSTRY

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Introduction

This study purports to examine the peer effect on corporate investment in the restaurant industry. Three questions are to be explored: whether a firm's investment is affected by its peers' investment activities; if so, when is the peer effect getting stronger?; is it always rewarding to behave like others? Gilbert and Lieberman (1987) argue that firms make investment to protect market share. In the information cascade model, managers are likely to rely on majority's decision ignoring their own information because their single piece of information would not be enough to reverse the decision of crowd (Bikhchandani, Hirshleifer, & Welch, 1992). Taken together, it is expected that a restaurant firm's investment is positively affected by its peers' investment. Economic downturns increase uncertainty, making it more difficult for managers to assess the full range of possible situations and predict the consequences of their decisions (Lieberman & Asaba, 2006). Thus, we predict that the peer effect would be stronger during recessions. Lastly, we examine the effectiveness of following peers. Herding behavior suppresses the use of own information and thus causes reduction of informativeness, harming social welfare (Banerjee, 1992). Inspired by this idea, we will investigate the value of resisting the herd.

Methods

1. Estimating peer effect on investment

The specification can be represented by the following investment regression:

$$CapEx_{i,t} = \alpha_1 Q_{i,t} + \alpha_2\, CF_{i,t} + \sum_{k=1}^{n} \alpha_{2+k}\, \overline{CapEx}_{-i,t-k} + \mu_i + v_t + e_{i,t}$$

where $\overline{CapEx}_{-i}$ is the average of the investment ratio of peers excluding that of the focal firm

2. The impact of economic status

$$CapEx_{i,t} = \gamma_1 Q_{i,t} + \gamma_2\, CF_{i,t} + \gamma_3 CapEx_{i,t-1} + \gamma_4 \overline{CapEx}_{-i,t-1} + \gamma_5 ECON_{t-1} + \gamma_6 \overline{CapEx}_{-i,t-1} * ECON_{t-1} + \mu_i + v_t + e_{i,t}$$

where *ECON* is a continuous variable representing the economic status.

3. The asymmetry of the effectiveness of investment

$$MS_{i,t} = \rho_1 CapEx_{i,t-1} + \rho_2 RI_{i,t-1} * CapEx_{i,t-1} + \mu_i + v_t + e_{i,t}$$

$$Relative\ investment\ (RI)_{i,t} = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } \Delta CapEx_{i,t} - \Delta\overline{CapEx}_{-i,t} > 0 \\ 0 & Otherwise \end{cases}$$

Contribution

The findings shall deepen our understanding about how firms accommodate external forces beyond their control into their investment policies. Furthermore, investigating peer effect on investment contributes to the body of knowledge about competition and its implications in the restaurant industry.

References Available Upon Request

THE IMPACT OF LAST-MINUTE MOBILE APP HOTEL BOOKINGS ON DEMAND UNCERTAINTY AND FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

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Introduction

This study aims to demonstrate the significant impact of including last minute hotel booking apps on the accuracy of forecasting short-term lodging demand. ERevMax (2014) predicts that hotel bookings generated from mobile devices will surge in 2014 to contribute over $26 billion. Hotel Tonight© has reinvented the reservation process by providing consumers with last minute discounted hotel rooms that can be reserved for the same day through the mobile app's "10-second 3-tap" booking process (Hotel Tonight, 2014). However, concerns within the lodging industry have been expressed in terms of the loss of control over inventory and consumers being re-educated to cease advance booking in order to capitalize on better deals (Carrington, 2013). Chen and Yeh (2012) found that demand uncertainty had a positive and statistically significant effect on hotel failures by decaying the hotel's financial performance due to revenue loss from the lack of lodging patrons and excess capacity cost. Accurate demand forecasting is instrumental for the establishment of appropriate controls in the optimization function of hotel revenue management systems (Gayar, Saleh, Atiya, El-Shishiny, Zakhary, & Habib, 2011). Increasing the complexity of demand uncertainty may be the rise in last minute bookings on mobile devices. Therefore, this study will address the hypothesis that including last-minute same day hotel reservation mobile apps will have a positive significant impact on the accuracy of short-term demand forecasting.

Methods

Utilizing historical data obtained from Orlando hotels listed on Hotel Tonight©, this study employs the short-term unconstrained demand forecasting method proposed by Rajopadhye et al (2001). Short-term demand forecasts are defined as daily forecasts, since hotels utilizing revenue management systems typically update their demand forecasts on a daily basis (Weatherford & Kimes, 2003) and Hotel Tonight© allows consumers to reserve rooms for the same day. Daily forecasts will be made for January 1 to December 31, accounting for the high degree of seasonality (Weatherford & Kimes, 2003). The accuracy of the demand forecasts will be measured utilizing mean absolute percentage error (MAPE) and the mean absolute deviation (MAD).

Results/Discussion

The results are expected to corroborate prior findings that collecting and analyzing data from different sources is beneficial to companies' performance (Danese & Kalchschmidt, 2011). As reported by Chiang, Chen, and Xu (2007), a reduction in the demand forecasting error of 20 percent can be translated into an incremental increase of 1 percent in the revenue generated by the hotel revenue management system.

References Available Upon Request

LINKAGE OF OWNERSHIP CONFIGURATION, ECONOMIC CONDITION, AND PERFORMANCE IN THE RESTAURANT INDUSTRY

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Introduction

As franchising has been considered a key growth strategy in the hospitality industry, researchers have studied the impact of franchising on firm's performance, using an outcome measure (Combs, Ketchen, Shook, & Short, 2011; Ehrmann & Spranger, 2007). However, the impact of franchising is still being debated, and franchising activities are not simply explained by an outcome measure. Franchising can be implemented in various ways: opening new properties through internal development or mergers/acquisition, closing properties, or converting franchises to owned locations and vice versa. However, no existing franchising study has examined such a process of property ownership changes. The different ways of franchising configuration may be motivated by different reasons and affect a firm's financial performance differently. Moreover, we believe economic conditions determine the effectiveness of different franchising decisions. Thus, this study aims to examine: (a) how the ownership configuration influences a firm's performance, and (b) whether the ownership-performance relationship depends upon economic conditions.

This study develops a set of hypotheses to test the relationships between 6 ownership configuration variables, four performance variables, and an economic variable. The two overall hypotheses are:
H1: The method of forming ownership structure is related to a firm's financial performance.
H2: Economic condition moderates the relationship between ownership and firm performance.

Methods

Ownership and financial data during 2000-2013 is collected from 10Ks and Yahoo Finance. Ownership configuration is measured by using the proportion of properties under each form. Specifically, there are six variables: 1) Entry of owned, 2) Exit of owned, 3) Entry of franchised, 4) Exit of franchised, 5) Conversion of owned to franchised, and 6) Conversion of franchised to owned-units Additionally, four-types of performance measures are used: cash flow per unit, return on sale, cash flow per share, and Tobin's Q. A dummy variable is used for measuring economic conditions based on the data from U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. Hierarchical multiple regression analyses are conducted to examine the associations, while controlling other important factors that could affect firm performance.

Results/Discussion

The results reveal that ownership configuration is important to explain financial performance and contribute to understanding how the structure should be changed to attain competitive advantages. Thus, it helps restaurant executives understand and make appropriate decisions for configuration of their ownership structure with the consideration of economic conditions

References Available Upon Request

ANATOMY OF FINANCIAL OLIGATIONS TO HOTEL OPERATION PEROFRMANCE: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON CALIFORNIA HOTEL TRANSACTIONS FROM 2008 TO 2013

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Introduction

Hotel transaction volume reached the third-highest record in history in 2013. The total transaction volume was 22 billion, a 35% increase over 2012 (Hartmann, 2014). Hotel transactions uniquely mingle with hotel investor, developers, owners, operator and brands. It is a complex procedure that requires a special set of expertise in commercial lending, market feasibility study, legal aspect, franchising, and hotel management etc. Despite its unique and important nature, studies on hotel transactions especially on the non-public traded lodging firms and REITs are limited in publication. This paper will closely analyze the current active buyer, financing sources and debt structure for hotel transactions in California from 2008 to 2013.

Methods

We are going to investigate the relationship between hotel financing obligation and its operation performance, with an empirical study on closed small to middle scale hotel deals in California from 2008 to 2013. In particular, market interest rate, financing time horizon (short-term vs. long-term), financing term (fixed rate vs. floating rate), management company rating, brand affiliation (branded vs. independently operated), debt-service coverage ratio (DSCR) and loan to value (LTV) will be utilized to see their impacts on property performance (RevPAR).

Results/Discussion

The results and discussion portion summarizes the findings and general conclusions of the study. Poster submissions should include anticipated results and potential contributions. This paper will discuss factors that impact buyers from obtaining a loan and a guide for current active buyers, private equity, real estate investment trusts (REITS) and public market (CMBS) for their lending solutions. The findings of this study may help hotel investors choose appropriate capital providers, enhance financing smoothness and optimize capital structure, thus boosting hotel operation results and lessening debt delinquency risks.

References Available Upon Request

ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF CASINO GAMBLING ON PERIPHERAL HOUSE SALES AND PRICES IN IOWA

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Introduction

The commercial casino industry is an important part of the U.S. entertainment industry. In total, 48 states have some forms of legal gaming since Nevada first legalized casino gaming in 1931. However, casino gambling is still controversial due to the problems it brings for both the host community and society (Perdue, Long, & Kang, 1999; Safire, 1996; Walchak, 1996). Then, does casino gaming industry have a positive or negative economic impact for local economy and community grow? This issue will be illustrated in this study by examining the case of housing price around the location of casino in Iowa, and the purpose of this study is to better understand the economic impacts of casinos on the local community in terms of housing prices in Iowa. Iowa who has drawn 21 million visitors in 2013 (Iowa Gaming Association, 2014) may serve as a laboratory, illustrating the economic impact casino gambling on property price of Iowa.

Methods

The purpose of this study aims to answer the open question of whether casino causes a substantial effect on its peripheral housing prices in Iowa. Till now, there are 20 casinos in Iowa, and we will collect monthly data of the housing prices located in the area of 50 miles of the casino companies operating in Iowa. The period of data we used in this study will begin at the 2 years before each of the casino company opened till 2013. Using monthly data enables empirical methods that control for unique physical and locational differences across properties and casinos in Iowa. Then, in order to explore the differences and changes, if any, resulting in opening casino in the local community, this study will use the Box-Jenkins procedure, a mathematically sophisticated time series analysis technique, which can take into consideration lagged dependent variables and estimation errors. Data are collected from the web site of Iowa Racing and Gaming Commission and Iowa Association of Housing Official.

Results/Discussion

This study is going to find changing pattern of house price affected by opening casino company in local community and try to draw a conclusion on the economic impact of casino gaming industry on local economy.

In contrast to previous work, this study will provide an original examination of the influence of casinos on housing property values in state-level. This study just focuses on a single market, thus eliminating the bias introduced by casino and economic heterogeneity across the U.S. The major contribution of this study is the first attempt to study the real estate markets of Iowa. There have been no previous empirical studies on Iowa's real estate markets. The results of this study will provide some new strategy or thought of way of economical development for policymakers in the similar states.

References Available Upon Request

GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS (GMO) IN FOOD SERVICE OPERATIONS: AN EXAMINATION OF CHEFS' OPINIONS AND ATTITUDES

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Introduction

In 2014, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) reported 90% of cotton, 87% of corn and 92% of soy beans planted in the U.S. were genetically engineered (USDA, 2014). These and other genetically modified organisms (GMOs) have been in the U.S. domestic food supply for over 20 years, however there are still debates and concerns about this practice (FDA, 2014; Hsin, 2002; Myhr & Traavik, 2003; Pascalev, 2003). Despite the widespread acceptance of GE crops from major agribusiness and the neutral position taken by the federal government there are still concerns from other industries affected by the use of GMOs, such as the food service sector. Although the FDA has taken a neutral stance on the subject, it does recognize there are diverse views about GMOs from the agriculture industry, food manufactures and the general public (FDA, 2014).

Culinary professionals are on the front lines of the food service industry. Chefs are continually exploring new culinary products and methods, creating menus and starting trends (ACF, 2014). With continued public concern about GMOs Chefs are in a unique position to influence restaurants to either embrace or reject this technology. The purpose of this study is to bridge a gap in extant literature by exploring the opinions of chefs towards genetically modified food items and their use in commercial kitchen operations by examining: (a) their familiarity with GMOs; (b) concerns (e.g. food safety); (c) labeling practices; and (d) acceptance of the technology.

Methods

This study will utilize an online survey to gather information from the sample population. Chefs, professional culinarians and head cooks will be targeted via a convenience, snowball sampling method through social media posts (i.e. Facebook and Linkedin) and e-mail. Survey responses will be either 5-point Likert scale, dichotomous or categorical in nature. Once collected, the data will be entered into SPSS 21 and analyzed using mean variance, t-tests and ANOVA.

Potential Implications

By identifying the opinions of chefs about GMOs, the results of this study could be utilized by academic researchers, government institutions, private organizations and marketers. In addition, this study aims to fill the gap in the current literature by providing insight regarding GMO usage in the food service sector.

References Available Upon Request

EXTRAVERSION AND TEAM EFFECTIVENESS IN THE RESTAURANT INDUSTRY

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Introduction

The foundation of any successful restaurant is seldom any one individual, but rather the management team and its ability function effectively. Therefore an individual's ability to work within the team structure is paramount. While there is ample evidence to indicate that personality is a valid and reliable predictor of individual performance, the relationship between personality and team performance is less straightforward. Good team players are often defined in trait terms and several studies have attempted to define the relationship between the Big Five traits and team performance. Extraversion is of particular interest when considering prospective managers in the restaurant industry due to the high level of customer contact inherent in the role; highly extroverted individuals prefer interpersonal interactions. Although this body of research has supported the proposition that personality traits are relevant to team effectiveness, the results regarding extraversion have been mixed and suggest that extraversion affects team performance differently than the other Big Five traits. This study proposes that this difference is due to the lower-level facets that make up the extraversion dimension. Literature has viewed extraversion as a combination of assertiveness/dominance and sociability/affiliation, and theorists' conflict as to which is the primary component. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between these extraversion facets and team effectiveness in the restaurant industry.

Methods

A cross-level study using an online survey will be conducted among front-line managers from one region of a national upscale-casual restaurant chain. The region consists of 16 restaurants and employs approximately 150 managers. The managers will be asked to complete an online survey that assesses the Assertiveness and Affiliation facets of Extraversion as well as a number of control variables. Since the total survey is approximately 120 items, two versions of the survey will be constructed that counterbalance the order of the survey items for the purpose of avoiding order bias. The effectiveness of each team member will be assessed by the team leader, in this case the General Manager, of each participating restaurant. In following with the common practice of previous literature, a measure of current team performance will be developed based on a job analysis and will consist of eight to ten items related to the dimensions of team performance such as quality of work, quantity of work, task completion, interpersonal skills, and commitment to the team. The data analysis technique used for this study is hierarchical multiple regression.

Results/Discussion

Much of the research exploring the relationship between personality traits and team performance has examined only the high-level Big Five traits and has not delved into the lower-level facets that comprise the five factors. The implication of this study is that instead of setting a single benchmark for the desirable level of extraversion when using personality tests in the selection process, results may need to be analyzed at the facet level in order to determine if the candidate possesses the facets of the extraversion trait that will have a positive impact on the team.

References Available Upon Request

THE IMPACT OF VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT, ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT, AND INTENTION TO REMAIN IN A HOME-DELIVERED MEAL PROGRAM

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Introduction

With an increasing life expectancy, nutrition is one of the most important issues for maintaining quality of life. Meals on Wheels (MOW) is a non-profit organization providing nutritious, home-delivered meals to both senior citizens and persons with disabilities. These individuals often are unable to prepare well-balanced meals on a daily basis. MOW was introduced to improve senior recipients' dietary intakes (Roy & Payette, 2005) and lower their emotional stress (Gollub & Weddle, 2004). Despite the positive impacts of MOW programs, there are long waiting lists, often due to a shortage of volunteers. To encourage voluntary participation in a non-profit organization, it is fundamental to study the motivation of volunteers to participate, what keeps them volunteering, and the consequences of volunteer engagement. The purpose of this study is a) to examine the motivations of volunteers to begin and continue to volunteer; and b) to investigate relationships of volunteer engagement, volunteer satisfaction, organizational commitment, and intention to continue participation in a home-delivered nutrition program. Previous studies suggest that highly motivated volunteers are frequently involved and more satisfied with their work (Millette & Gagné, 2008). The Three-Stage Model proposed that the volunteers' intention to continue as volunteers differ and vary depending on the stage of the process of the volunteers (Chacon et al., 2007). While satisfaction is strongly associated with intention to remain for the volunteers in the first stage, commitment is more important for those who are in the second stage of volunteer engagement. Thus, this study seeks to predict a differing relationship of volunteer engagement with respect to satisfaction and organizational commitment explaining the intention to remain a volunteer for new vs. veteran volunteers.

Methods

The sample will be comprised of volunteers in a West Texas MOW region over a six months period. A questionnaire will be distributed to volunteers online. The survey requests demographics (age, gender, and education level), the tenure of volunteering for MOW, and other variables (motivation, engagement, satisfaction, commitment, and intention to remain) identified in previous studies (Pelletier, Tuson, Green-Demers, Noels, & Beaton, 1998, Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006, Vecina et al., 2010, Mowday et al., 1979). Additionally, structural equation modelling method will be used to test the models, and test paths relating independent to dependent variables.

Results/Discussion

This study is expected to suggest different relationships of engagement with respect to satisfaction and organizational commitment explaining intention to remain a volunteer at the 3 stages of volunteerism. The results will hopefully aid directors and managers of non-profit foodservice organizations to implement effective strategies encouraging people to volunteer and continue their participation.

References Available Upon Request

DEVELOPMENT AND ASSESSMENT OF VISUAL-BASED FOOD SAFETY TRAINING WITH CHINESE-SPEAKING FOODSERVICE WORKERS IN INDEPENDENTLY-OWNED CHINESE RESTAURANTS

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Introduction
Every year, contaminated food causes a significant number of illnesses and deaths in the United States (U.S). Research has shown that restaurant food is one of the major contributors to foodborne illnesses (Jones & Angulo, 2006) in the U.S. With the increasing popularity of ethnic cuisines in the U.S., maintaining safety of the food served at ethnic restaurants is critical for preventing foodborne illnesses. However, providing food safety training to an audience belonging to different cultures and whose native language is not English can be challenging. One method by which food safety training can be provided is by using minimal-text visuals. (Rajagopal, 2012, 2013). Appropriate translation (Po, Bourguin, Occeea, & Po, 2011) and visuals can help overcome language barriers and relay critical food safety messages in a short and easy to understand manner. The purpose of this study is to develop and test the effectiveness of visual-based, minimal-text food safety training materials when training Chinese-speaking foodservice workers employed in independently-owned Chinese restaurants in Central Iowa.

Methods
This study will consist of two phases. Face to face interviews will be conducted in phase one with food safety inspectors (n=6) who have experience with conducting food safety inspections in independently-owned Chinese restaurants in Iowa. The interviews will provide an in-depth understanding of the food safety needs of Chinese-speaking foodservice workers, which will guide the development of food safety training materials that will be used in phase two. In phase two, Chinese-speaking foodservice workers (n=50) will participate in on-site food safety training and complete questionnaires that will assess food safety attitudes and knowledge before and after training.

Results/Discussion
Findings from this study will aid foodservice operations, food safety inspectors, and educators in communicating critical food safety messages to Chinese-speaking foodservice workers. It is hoped that the visual-based, minimal-text training method will contribute towards improving food safety attitudes and knowledge, thus resulting in improved food handling practices among Chinese foodservice workers and reduced incidence of foodborne illness.

References Available Upon Request

CONSUMERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE FDA'S NEWEST RECOMMENDED RESTAURANT INSPECTION FORMAT

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Introduction

FDA has proposed a new restaurant inspection system that incorporates three categories of violations: Priority, Priority-Foundation, and Core, instead of the system currently used by many states (including Indiana) that designates critical and non-critical violations. It is uncertain whether interested consumers will value the more in-depth information or become more confused. The purpose of this study is to assess consumers' perception of the FDA recommended inspection system. Research will address the following research questions:

RQ1: Will the newest system be more confusing or easier to understand?

RQ2: What are consumer perceptions of risk associated with the different violations under the current Indiana and FDA recommended inspection formats?

RQ3: How would consumers like information to be made available and how much explanation of violations should be given (simple score, description)?

RQ4: How do the responses vary based on consumers' demographic characteristics, such as gender, age, education, foodborne illness experience, interest in food safety, number of children in the household, frequency of dining out, and household income?

Methods

Using a review of the literature, this study has developed a self-administered questionnaire for consumers asking their interests, perceptions, and preferences for the current Indiana and FDA recommended inspection systems. The questionnaire will be sent to the Indiana State Health Department for feedback on the accuracy of the descriptions of the inspection systems and the questions asked about them. After conducting a pilot study to test validity of questionnaire, data will be collected using both online and paper-based surveys from two different locations. Total targeted sample size will be 200. To compare consumers' responses for each inspection system, collected data will be analyzed by series of t-test and one-way ANOVA using SPSS.

Results/Discussion

Projected implications are in three areas. First, this study will determine customers' preferences among inspection reporting systems. This could provide useful information for policy makers such as the FDA. Additionally, results may help health departments gain insight into consumer interests and how to communicate health inspection results so they can better serve the public's interest in restaurant food safety information. Finally, this study will shed light on consumers' perception of risks in restaurants and offer knowledge for future studies.

References Available Upon Request

DO GREEN PRACTICES AFFECT CONSUMERS' WILLINGNESS TO PAY IN THE RESTAURANT INDUSTRY?

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Introduction

Many industries are realizing the ecological, financial, and social benefits to implementing green practices in business. The restaurant industries have begun to approach environmental issues strategically because of corporations' recognition of the growth of consumers' green awareness and expectations for products and companies to be truly green. The study is designed to answer three research questions: 1) Do customers' characteristics impact green practices in the fine dining restaurant sector, 2) Do fine dining restaurants' environmentally friendly and sustainable practices affect customers' willingness to pay more for their products and services, and 3) What is the relationship between fine dining restaurants' green practice levels and their financial performance?

Methods

The sample of this study is will be collected from a population of restaurants, particularly from the fine dining sector, in the U.S. The study sample frame will consist of customers of 10 fine dining restaurants in the Midwest that have adopted green practices. The recruitment of participants aims to mirror the population demographics of fine dining restaurant visitors in the U.S based on quota sampling. The questionnaire will be developed based on existing literatures in foodservice contexts. After the initial development, the instrument will be pilot-tested by researchers and graduate students in a university's hospitality management program to ensure the items' relevancy and wording accuracy. The developed questionnaire will be distributed to customers of the chosen restaurant during restaurant business hours in four weeks. Descriptive statistics and structural equation model will be used to analyse the collected data.

Significance

The results of this study will provide researchers and restaurant practitioners with a better understanding of consumers' perception toward green practices in the restaurant industry and its potential relationship with fine dining restaurants' financial performance.

References Available Upon Request

COMPARE CUSTOMERS SELECTION OF LOW SODIUM ITEMS WHEN LABELED ON THE MENU VS. NOT LABELED ON THE MENU OF THE RESTAURANT AT KELLOGG RANCH (RKR)

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Introduction

About 90% of Americans eat more sodium than is recommended for a healthy diet. Eating too much sodium is a leading risk factor for high blood pressure, which can lead to heart disease, stroke, and other cardiovascular diseases. The aim of this study is to observe and compare whether customers' food choices would be influenced by putting sodium content on the menu at the Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch (RKR), the restaurant operated and managed by The Collins College of Hospitality Management's students, serving public both lunch and dinner. Also, this research will show how well customers know about sodium and the result of over-intaking sodium foods for a long time. Meanwhile, providing nutritional information on restaurant menus may become more important and essential to help customers make healthier eating choices.

Methods

In order to find out whether customers' food choices would be influenced by putting sodium content on the menu at the Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch, we adopt the following steps for data collection and analysis:

1. Get RKR Fall quarter's menu and recipe.
2. By using ESHA online nutrition analysis program and nutrition analysis information book "Food Values of Portions Commonly Used", analyze the sodium content information on fifteen items, including five appetizers, five entrées, and five desserts, on RKR dinner menu.
3. Implemented the menu without labeled sodium amount at RKR for three weeks, get the numbers of orders of each dish.
4. Implemented the menu with labeled sodium amount at RKR for another three weeks, get the numbers of orders of each dish.
5. Compare the differences of the order amounts between three weeks menu with sodium content and three weeks without sodium content via Independent T-test.
6. Get the result.

Results/Discussion

This proposed study is expected to get the results by comparing the differences of the order amounts between three weeks menu with sodium labels and three weeks without sodium labels. It's going to provide new information whether customers' food choices would be influenced by using sodium labels on the menus. Another implication of this study is to find out customers' knowledge and reactions to the sodium food. In addition, for restaurant management, these findings will help restaurants decide if it is needed to provide nutritional information on restaurant to help customers make healthier eating choices.

References Available Upon Request

RISK COMMUNICATION WHEN SERVING CONSUMERS WITH FOOD ALLERGIES IN RESTAURANTS IN THE U.S.

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Introduction

Food allergies, abnormal immune responses to food, appear to be increasing in the U.S. Fifteen million Americans are estimated to have food allergies, and accommodating these consumers has become a challenge for the restaurant industry. Considering the fact that 33% of the fatal food allergy reactions from 2001 to 2006 occurred in restaurants, it is important for the restaurant industry to properly manage and communicate the food allergy risks with their customers. Miscommunication between and among restaurant employees and consumers with food allergies was one of the major causes of food allergy reactions in restaurants. Risk perception and communication play an important role in controlling and preventing negative consequences such as food allergy reactions in restaurants. Even though completely eliminating food allergy risks is unachievable, reducing such risks may be attainable through training that focuses on risk management when serving consumers with food allergies. To establish such training protocols to enhance food allergy risk communication and management, identifying the current status of food allergy risk perception and communication of restaurant staff may be one of the most important steps in preventing food allergy reactions in restaurants. However, limited research has investigated how restaurant staff perceive and communicate the food allergy risks with their customers. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore the perceived risks and risk communication behaviors of restaurant staff when serving consumers with food allergies.

Methods

Both qualitative (individual interviews) and quantitative (online survey) approaches will be used. A convenience sample of 20 restaurant managers or operators will be recruited for individual interviews to identify their beliefs and perceptions about food allergies and risk communication procedures at their restaurants, if established. Individual interviews will be audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim and coded using thematic analysis. Based on results of interviews and literature review, an online survey instrument will be developed, pilot-tested, and sent out through an online marketing company to the restaurant service staff member panel to obtain 400 usable responses. Appropriate quotas and filtering questions will be used to include participants from different types of restaurants (e.g., chain, independent) in different states (e.g., with or without food allergy legislations). Instrumental manipulation check will be used to detect and exclude those participants who do not read the questions. Data analyses including descriptive statistics, independent samples t-test, ANOVA, exploratory factor analysis, and regression analyses will be conducted using SPSS to summarize data and identify associations between and among variables.

Potential Implications

Findings from this study may contribute to current literature by identifying relationships between restaurant employees' risk perceptions and risk communication behaviors. Recommendations for minimizing food allergy risks through proper risk communication will be developed for the restaurant industry based on findings.

USING HIERARCHICAL LINEAR MODELING (HLM) TO EXPLORE VARIATIONS IN RESTAURANT CONSUMERS' WILLINGNESS TO PAY FOR SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

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Introduction

Despite the increase in consumer demand (Hartmann, & Apaolaza-Ibanez, 2012) and the efforts made by the restaurant industry to incorporate more sustainable practices into its operations (Choi & Parsa, 2006; Peregrin, 2011), a major challenge still remains: getting consumers to increase their sustainable behavior (Barr, Gilg, & Shaw, 2011). In order to design marketing strategies that can capitalize on potential benefits or increase behavior, it becomes increasingly important to understand which consumers value sustainability initiatives or "green" restaurant practices and how they value it. There are several restaurant practices that can be considered sustainable, such as the use of local, organic, or Fair Trade products, composting and recycling, philanthropic actions, fair treatment of employees, and use of energy and water efficient equipment or design.

Numerous studies have profiled the "green" consumer (Nie & Zepeda, 2011), or investigated how consumers perceive sustainable restaurant practices and their willingness to pay for them (DiPietro & Gregory, 2012; Dutta, Umashankar, Choi, & Parsa, 2008; Schubert, Kandampully, Solnet, & Kralj, 2010). However, much of the research is conducted within a single restaurant segment and a specific geographic location. This makes it challenging to obtain a comprehensive view of the American restaurant consumer and how they vary by region and restaurant type. Therefore, the primary goal of this study is to examine whether restaurant-consumers' willingness to pay for sustainable restaurant practices varies by geographic region, and if their level of willingness differs based on restaurant type in the U.S.

Methods

To explore the variations in individuals' willingness to pay for sustainable restaurant practices given their geographic location and level of environmental consciousness, and how or if those variations differ based upon the restaurant type they are in, a quantitative, survey-based method will be employed. Surveys will be administered to randomly selected restaurant guests dining at randomly selected restaurants, specifically in quick-service, casual dining, and fine dining segments, located in different regions throughout the U.S. Because the data are manifested in a hierarchical structure—restaurant consumers nested in restaurants nested in regions—hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) will be used.

Results/Discussion

The proposed study can be used as a market segmentation tool to identify where and how consumers' value sustainable restaurant practices, and if they vary by restaurant type and geographic location. By identifying the characteristics of individuals who either possess or don't possess pro-sustainable attitudes and behaviors, and in what context, more focused and direct marketing strategies can be pursued. Additionally, the proposed study presents a model that can be adapted to fit many research contexts and can provide further insight into behavioral and managerial hospitality research.

References Available Upon Request

THE EFFECTS OF LOCAL FOOD DESCRIPTIONS AND RELATED MENU INFORMATION ON CONSUMERS' PURCHASE BEHAVIOR AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS A RESTAURANT

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Introduction

Recognizing increasing consumer demand and acknowledging its own environmental impact, the foodservice industry is incorporating more sustainable initiatives into its operations (Choi & Parsa, 2006; Peregrin, 2011). However, barriers still exist preventing the widespread adoption of sustainability practices into foodservice operations. Though they vary considerably, one obstacle that practitioners face when deciding to engage in sustainability is getting consumers to act in accordance with their demand, and support sustainability initiatives when they are available. To make matters even more challenging for operators, communicating the use of sustainable practices can be difficult, and often go unnoticed by the consumer (DiPietro & Gregory, 2012; Schubert et al., 2010). One sustainable restaurant practice that is both relatively easy for operators to implement and in high demand amongst consumers is the use of local food.

Methods

Using the theoretical framework surrounding the "attitude-behavior gap," or the phenomenon whereby an individual's values and intentions to act are not materialized into behaviors (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002; Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006), the purpose of the proposed study is to determine if marketing the use of local food on a menu can influence a consumer's purchase decision and their perceptions of a restaurant, and to investigate if consumers' attitudes, values, and intentions regarding sustainable practices are actualized into behaviors.

This study intends to use a survey and experimental research design. Survey data will be used to measure and assess both the independent latent variable constructs and the outcome variable of purchase decision and perceptions of a restaurant. Survey questionnaires will be distributed randomly to guests dining at an independent, fine-dining restaurant in the southeastern U.S. To more accurately determine if using local-food descriptions and related information on a menu can affect consumers' purchase decisions, an experimental design will be employed. In the same restaurant where survey data will be collected, menus will be adjusted over a six-week time frame to feature the use of local food. After a control period, menu items will have unique written descriptions and other related marketing tactics, such as the use of imagery or identifying a farmer/producer by name, and tracked for sales movement.

Discussion

Understanding how or if consumers value local food is an increasing priority for operators. As we continue to research and better understand consumers' behaviors and attitudes towards sustainability, marketing and operational strategies can be focused to meet consumer demands and increase profitability. This study seeks to close that gap in understanding, and provide industry with important information to aid in the decision to engage in sustainable restaurant practices.

References Available Upon Request

THE DARK SIDE: CAUSES, CHARACTERISTICS, AND EFFECTS OF WORKPLACE AGGRESSION IN THE FOOD AND BEVERAGE INDUSTRY – A QUALITATIVE STUDY

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Introduction
While any number of daily human interactions can prove frustrating, it has been noted that the workplace is one of the most interpersonally frustrating experiences of our daily lives (Allcorn, 1994; Benismon, 1997). This pervasive frustration can lead to negative incidents in the workplace, which have a direct, significant, and negative impact on one's emotional and mental states, as well as physiological responses (Berkowitz, 1989, 1994). These negative incidents can lead to coworker aggression, which can in turn reduce job performance (Glomb, 2002). The literature will demonstrate that workplace aggression can have a detrimental effect on employee job performance and job satisfaction leading to reduced productivity, work quality, and increased turnover. It then becomes important for the hospitality industry to explore how this affects customer satisfaction and consequently behavior or behavioral intention.

Methods
Workplace aggression is not a new area of research (Glomb, 2002); however, it is a relatively untapped arena of exploration in the hospitality industry. Given the lack of literature and the exploratory nature of the research at hand, the authors propose to use a qualitative approach, more specifically, a phenomenological approach.

Through personal and faculty contacts, the authors will identify and contact local food and beverage industry connections representing 4 types of operations: fast-casual, casual, fine dining, and non-commercial (institutional). Once management has given approval, the authors along with management will determine the preferred method for initial communication to their employees. The interviews will last approximately 30 to 60 minutes, in a neutral location, while being recorded on paper as well as with audio for depth and accuracy.

Results/Discussion
This research will have a significant impact on both academia and industry. In academia this research should provide the start of a new research stream for both workplace aggression and hospitality through their convergence. For industry, this research will start the process of developing human resource and managerial tools that would aid in preventing and coping with workplace aggression.

References Available Upon Request

DEMAND FOR BEER MADE ON SITE IN RESTAURANTS

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Introduction

Over the past five years, craft breweries have rapidly increased across the country with every state, in the U.S., seeing a growth in brewing facilities, including brew pubs. In 2012, there were 2,456 total breweries in the U.S., including 2,401 craft breweries As of June 2014, there are over 3,000 breweries in the U.S., including over 2,768 craft breweries and there are an additional 1,000 breweries estimated to be in the development stage. With the increased popularity of beer in the hospitality industry, The Culinary Institute of America (The CIA) in Hyde Park, N.Y., is building an on-campus brewery, in partnership with Brooklyn Brewery. For the brewery to be successful, The CIA must understand who their beverage consumers are. This research will attempt to investigate the demand for beer in The CIA public restaurants, beer consumption habits of the guests, and beer price elasticity.

Methods

The hypothesis are that, there is a greater demand for beer in full-service restaurants, and that guests are willing to pay more for beer when the beer is made onsite. The study will be conducted on legal drinking patrons, dining in the Bocuse and the American Bounty restaurants on The Culinary Institute of America's Hyde Park, N.Y., campus. Study participants will be selected at random at the end of their meal and will be asked to fill out a questionnaire. The questionnaire will be completely anonymous. Nominal questions to obtain data on consumption patterns, demographics, age, gender, level of education, and household income will be included in the questionnaire. Ordinal data will be collected by ascertaining zip code. Utilizing a Likert scale, twelve questions will be asked to learn the guests' beer purchasing habits. Since purchasing habits can be different between the meal period and day of the week, the questionnaire will be offered concurrently between the two restaurants during a week of service. This will provide five continuous days of research sample and will include choices being made for both lunch and dinner service. The targeted sample is 200 questionnaires.

Results/Discussion

When the research is administered, and the information is examined, the researcher anticipates that the research will find that beer made on The CIA campus will increase the demand for beer in the on-campus restaurants. In addition, guests will be willing to pay more for a beer made on-site versus beers not made at the location. The researcher also anticipates that the data will show that beer made on-site will increase in a brew pub setting. From this research, a valuable insight into purchasing habits of beer will be provided for use in academia and the hospitality industry at large. This research is not only valuable to restaurant operators, but also brew pub specific operators. In addition, the research will give restaurants information on brand loyalty of beer made on-site.

References Available Upon Request

AN INVESTIGATION OF TOURISTS' PERCEPTIONS OF KOREAN FOOD TOURS

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Introduction

In accordance to the recent international awareness of Korean culture, a relatively new culinary tourism product has emerged; namely, packaged food tours that show a more indigenous side of Korea. A food tour is a product prepared by a tour agency in which participants experience the destination mainly through the local food culture and dining customs. The objective of this study is to lay the groundwork in identifying and delineating underlying dimensions of what consumers expect most from Korean food tours. Moreover, market profiling to find segment clusters based on the importance of service factors will be executed. This will aid the industry to improve their food tour products, meet the diverse needs of clients, and ultimately heighten customer value.

Methods

Survey measurements were developed from candidate service attributes of food tours that were identified through an extensive literature review. The measurements were then distributed to an independent panel of experts to enhance the content validaty. Subsequently, a pilot study was conducted in which the reliability and internal consistency of the measurement items were tested.Purposive sampling will be used to target foreign tourists who have participated in Korean food tours. With the cooperation of a major Korean food tour company, invitations to the surveys will be sent through email to tour guests after tours are completed. The survey will be distributed online through Qualtrics. The proposed population will be 300 tourists with an anticipated response rate of 66.66% for a final sample of 200 participants.The data collected from the survey will be subjected to data coding through SPSS. Any missing data and outliers will be found through a data screening process to ensure the potential usefulness and validity. The main data analysis will be carried out in three stages. First, an exploratory factor analysis will reveal and delineate any underlying dimensions associated with Korean food tour service attributes. Secondly, a cluster analysis will be performed with the mission of finding homogenous segments regarding the dimensions and importance of food tour service factors. Finally, if significant segment clusters are found, a discriminant analysis will be performed to identify the differences among the groups based on importance of the associated food tour service factors.

Results/Discussion

Anticipated results will identify separate dimensions of service attributes related to food culture, contextual features, product variety and diversity, service delivery, product flexibility, and tour operator services. Significant differences are expected between groups of tourists who each value food culture, authenticity, and tour operator services the most. Finally, significant differences in importance of attributes are anticipated between various nationalities of tourists.This study has the potential for immense contribution to the food tour industry. As the field is very young in nature, this research will provide fundamental information for the future growth of the industry. Specifically, marketing data derived from this study can be utilized to accurately target products to appropriate countries or diversify tour products to better meet customers' needs regarding cost, content, or types of food consumed on the tours.

References Available Upon Request

SOCIAL MEDIA IN RESTAURANTS: A STUDY OF INDUSTRY PRACTICES AND CONSUMER PREFERENCES

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Introduction

The use of social media in the foodservice industry is relatively new but rather influential in shaping the industry's competitive landscape. The introduction of Web 2.0 revolutionized how business is conducted in the hospitality industry. Studies have shown restaurant operators believe that social media should be incorporated in their business models (DiPietro, Crews, Gustafson, & Strick, 2012; Needles, 2013). Although many companies have begun to develop social media programs, the industry has yet to fully explore the opportunities this evolving data and communication platform has to offer (Leung, Law, van Hoof, & Buhalis, 2013). The purpose of this research is to examine how restaurants are using social media, and investigate the extent to which consumers are using social media to obtain information about restaurants. The results will be compared to determine whether there is a gap between restaurateurs' practices and consumers' preferences, or in other words, whether operators' practices of using online (marketing) outlets are in alignment with customer preferences. To be more specific, this study will attempt to answer the following questions: 1. Why consumers use social media and what sources they use to select restaurants? 2. What are consumers' preferred means of communication, and what type of information do they want to receive? 3. At what stage of consumption do consumers want interaction (e.g. improve on site experience, or advance planning)? 4. What are the general trends and/or patterns in consumer preferences, and are there gaps between consumers' preferences and restaurant practices?

Methods

In order to examine the usage of SNS by consumers, an online questionnaire was developed. The questionnaire contained four sections that correspond to the researches questions listed above: 1) consumers' goals and intentions; 2) consumer preferences as regards communication channel, form, and style; 3) consumer expectations of restaurant online information and their desired interaction time; 4) customer socio-demographic information including age, gender, education, dining hobbits, and household income. In addition, the online presence of different restaurants will be examined and recorded. Restaurants will be selected based on their profile (independent vs. chain, segment, and market share etc.) to achieve a better representation of the industry. Comparisons will be made between restaurants' online presence and consumers' preferences.

Results/Discussion

After the data collection, general trends of consumer preferences will be identified. And restaurants' online presence and their social media usage patterns and/or strategies will be compared with consumers' preferences. Potential gaps will be identified and analyzed, and recommendations will be provided. Previous studies have shown that restaurant operators are expecting to increase their investments in social media, this study will shed light on some best practices and thus help restaurants better direct their efforts in social media usage and possibly improve business results.

References Available Upon Request

FOOD SERVICE DESIGN: ARE RESTAURANTS PROVIDING WHAT OLDER CONSUMERS PREFER?

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Introduction
The U.S. Census Bureau projects that the biggest population growth in the next 10 years will happen among senior citizens, age 65 and older. By 2056 the older population (age 65 and over) will - for the first time - outnumber those 18 years of age and younger (Bureau of the Census, 2012a). This population shift presents special opportunities for the foodservice industry if operators can accommodate the older consumer. This study investigates the extent to which restaurants are addressing the dinning preferences of older consumers, and examine if there are any gaps between consumers' needs and restaurants' practices.

Methods
A survey instrument was developed to collect data on the physical aspects of restaurants. A pilot study was used to improve and fine-tune the survey. Six researchers collected data from 50 different restaurants. Sixteen national brands in five states were included. To control for variations, collection procedures were standardized and general trends were identified. The data were analyzed with frequency analyses, t-tests and ANOVAs using SPSS. Additionally, results were compared with consumer preference studies conducted in 2000 and 2012 (Almanza, Ghiselli, & Jaffe, 2000; Ghiselli, Lee, & Almanza, 2014) to see if restaurants, especially ones that are commonly patronized by older customers, are indeed providing features desired by consumers.

Results/Discussion
Generally accessibility is acceptable. Most restaurants have curb cuts or ramps available for easier access, lights in the parking lot for safer night access, and wide traffic aisles for wheelchairs to pass through easily. The vast majorities do not have automatic door openers, and most do not have a seating area for customers waiting for a table. As for seating, most restaurants only offer booths (which can be hard to get in and out of) and chairs with no arms, rollers, or swivel action. Moreover, the chairs tend to be rather small and seating can be tight. The restroom is one area that greatly fell short of consumer expectations. Even though 97% of the locations have at least one handicap accessible restroom, a little over half of the restaurants leave too little space for non-handicap accessible stalls (less than or equal to 36 inches). While the majority of the menus or menu boards are easy to read, some aspects of menu design still need to take into consideration the needs of older customers (e.g. larger fonts).

Acknowledgement
The authors wish to thank Jooho Kim and Haeik Park for their contributions in data gathering.

References Available Upon Request

EXPLORATORY STUDY OF THE BIG THREE SHOTS AGAINST FAST FOOD GIANTS: THE CHALLENGE OF CHICK-FIL-A, PANERA BREAD, AND MEXICAN CHIPOTLE.

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Introduction

This study investigates the current critical issues affecting the traditional fast food industry and identifies the different strategies used in the fast-casual dining restaurants. The authors utilized Chick-Fil A, Panera Bread, and Chipotle as exploratory cases. In 2013, the sales of the total U.S food & beverage restaurant industry were &683.36 billion and 55%of the total sales came from the top 50 fast food restaurant (Fast Food Marketing, Incorporated, 2013). Revenue has grown from $6 billion in 1970 to $160 billion in 2013 (Franchise Help, Incorporated, 2014). However, the fast food industry has been facing many serious issues. McDonald's, their annual sales has been decreased 3.5% in the U.S. and 7.3% in Asia, Middle East, and Africa over the last 7 months (Choi, 2014). In addition, food safety scandals in China caused a significant decrease in sales and brand image (Choi, 2014). In this dramatically changing environment, fast-casual dining segment is rising in the food & beverage industry. Even in such a dramatically changing economic situation, some of the fast-casual dining companies have seen an extraordinary profit growth. Chick-Fil-A, Panera Bread, and Chipotle have grown more than 40% in recent years (Fast Food Marketing, Incorporated, 2013).

This study explores the current fast food industry's trends and investigates the three leading fast-casual restaurant companies, Chick-Fil-A, Panera Bread, and Chipotle. In addition, their implementation of differentiation strategies to maintain their competitive advantage and analyze the companies' strategic approach to red oceans to demonstrate how these key factors are aligned with their specialized market strategy. Moreover, this study's results will benefit the fast food restaurant management for better use of strategies to build up their competitive advantage.

Method

For the purpose of this study, multiple sources will be used to derive useful information that represents each company's strategy and performance result. The authors plan to use a secondary data analysis to probe the core strategies that these successful fast-casual dining restaurants use to react to the current issues faced by fast food restaurants as a whole and how those strategies enable them to achieve a competitive market share in the U.S traditional fast food market.

Results/Discussion

The results will identify the different strategies that should be implemented and adjusted within restaurant operators' own business model to build a sustainable competitive advantage. We will also analyze how these three leading fast-casual dining companies implement their business strategies to build their own brand equity.

Reference: Reference Available Upon Request.

BEER AND FOOD PAIRINGS: IMPACT OF KNOWLEDGE LEVELS ON SENSORY EVALUATION

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Introduction
While wine and food pairing trends continue to grow, the nature of beer and its interactions with food is not as commonly considered (Pettigrew & Charters, 2006). Little academic research exists on beer and food pairings. Yet numerous books exist, indicating a strong interest regarding beer and its ability to pair with a multitude of foods (Regan, 2003).

Previous research identified impacts of knowledge regarding wine (Barefoot et al., 2002; Dodd, Laverie, Wilcox, & Duhan, 2005; Hammond, Velikova, Dodd, 2013; Johansen et al., 2006; Taylor, Dodd & Barber, 2009). The amount of knowledge held has been used to categorize people as either an expert or novice (Johnson & Bastian, 2007). It could be assumed that experts will have different purchasing and consumption patterns than novices. However, further research is needed to identify customers' knowledge levels of beer and food pairings. Research on the expertise of consumers and their knowledge levels could potentially increase marketability of restaurants and beverage companies as well as increase the overall gastronomical experience.
RQ_1: Is there significant differences between subject groups in terms of subjective and objective knowledge level?
RQ_2: Is subjective or objective knowledge more influential on participants' intention to pair beer and food?
RQ_3: Are expert choices more appropriate than novice choices?

Methods
A sample population of students from a large southern university having little to no industry experience and meet legal drinking age requirements will supply novice subjects. Experts will be selected from trained industry professionals. Data differences in knowledge levels will be collected using a survey comprised of questions based on previous research (e.g. Hammond et al., 2013). Sensory evaluations consisting of beer and food pairings will be held to compare appropriateness of the novice pairings to the expert pairings in a similar fashion as Donadini et al., (2008). Selections will be recorded as suggested by Donadini et al., using a 9-point Likert scale to measure each item pairing. Scaling will range from 1-"definitely not appropriate" to 9-"extremely harmonic and balanced" (2008, p. 332).

Results/Discussion
Beer is the dominant beverage in terms of quantity consumed (Regan, 2003; Cornell, 2004) so it would benefit those in foodservice to align their menu items with beer. Findings could potentially assist restaurateurs plan menus, enhance consumer satisfaction, due to the enhanced gastronomical experience, and improve sales of certain food items and beers.

References Available Upon Request

FARMERS' PERCEPTIONS OF FARM-TO-INSTITUTION PROGRAMS, AN ANALYSIS OF THE SUPPLY-SIDE

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Introduction

Farm-to-Institution programs (F2I) for onsite foodservice operations have developed across the country over the past twenty-years in an effort to link local agriculture communities with onsite foodservice operations. Direct marketing as an alternate system of procurement for F2I should include an examination from the supply-side. The purpose of this qualitative study is to examine the barriers, challenges, opportunities, and motivations California farmers perceive in selling crops directly to onsite foodservice operations. Identifying supply side motivations for participation in F2I could facilitate recruiting additional farmers. Addressing issues to improve the procurement process can support and promote local economic viability for each step in the value chain.

Methods

Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with farmers selected through purposeful sampling from the California Farm Bureau and the Department of Food and Agriculture. An interview guide will be developed based on a review of literature on this topic. Questions will include demographic information about the farmer such as crops/products, number of acres, and years in business, length of time participating in F2I and what percentage of their business is conducted via direct marketing. The interviews will be recorded and transcribed. The transcripts will be independently coded using *in vivo* codes when possible and analyzed for themes by two researchers. The findings will be presented to a small group of the participants for member checking to address the validity of the findings.

Expected Findings

This research will provide insights into what motivations and benefits can be derived from direct marketing strategies with F2I programs. These findings will also aid in identifying perceived barriers and challenges for growers and producers participating in F2I.

Implications

Employing an alternate procurement process necessitates an evaluation of barriers and best practices from demand and supply side for local products. Procurement from the perspective and interests of the grower/producer are integral for addressing and improving the process to support local procurement. Identifying supply side motivations and benefits for participation in F2I could facilitate recruiting additional growers and producers.

References Available Upon Request

THE INFLUENCE OF CONGRUENT FOOD AROMAS ON EMOTIONS, FOOD QUALITY, AND PURCHASING BEHAVIOR IN RESTAURANTS

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Introduction

A number of studies have shown that ambient scents are found to have positive effects on consumers' emotion and cognition, which in turn elicit approach or avoidance responses in retail settings (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). However, relatively little research has been conducted on aromas' effects in a restaurant context, though aroma is generally thought to be one of the important factors in restaurant atmospherics (Clark & Wood, 1999) and clearly has a close connection with sense of taste and consumers' evaluation of food quality (Delwiche, 2004). To fill the gap, this study will use S-O-R theory that environmental olfactory stimuli (S) influences consumers' emotional states (O), which in turn leads to approach or avoidance responses (R) (Spangenberg, Sprott, Grohmann & Tracy, 2006) as a basic model to study how food aromas positively influence consumer's emotions, perceptions of food quality and purchasing behavior. The purposes of the study are to: (1) analyse the effects of specific food aromas (basil, garlic, lemon) on purchasing behaviors of the food that includes ingredients of the aroma being tested, and (2) investigate customers' attention to and evaluation of the aromas in the room as a manipulation check for this experiment and explore the underlying reason for the effects.

Methods

A three-week experiment will be conducted in a Midwest restaurant. Oil preparations of basil, garlic, and lemon will be respectively combined with an unscented alcohol and placed on warmers to evenly diffuse the aromas throughout the room. There will be two sets of meal choices on the menu, one of which will include a dish primarily cooked with the ingredient whose fragrance is being tested. The purchase frequency of the two sets of meals will be collected and compared to the aroma time periods. Then, questionnaires for the manipulation check will be distributed to investigate customers' attention to, and evaluation of, the aroma. The questionnaire will contain questions to check whether consumers noticed the aroma, how the aroma influenced their emotion and cognition, and what foods they actually purchased. ANOVA and T-tests will be utilized to analyse the results under different aroma conditions.

Results/Discussion

The following possible results may occur. It is possible that the ambient food aromas will (1) improve consumer's positive emotional states and/or (2) consumer's perception of food quality, which, in turn, (3) may positively influence purchasing behavior. In addition, (4) ambient food aromas congruent with a specific entrée on the menu are likely to facilitate the consumer's choice of that entrée. This study will enrich the S-O-R theory, from both emotional perspectives and cognitive patterns, improve the understanding of restaurant atmospherics and provide practical suggestions for restaurant ventilation design, while offering valuable marketing suggestions that restaurants may apply to increase purchasing frequencies of specific food dishes.

References Available Upon Request

WHAT'S IN YOUR SALAD? AN OBSERVATION OF FOOD HANDLER'S PRACTICES

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Introduction

The fresh-cut produce industry continues rapid growth into a multi-billion dollar segment of the produce industry. Consumers are preparing less food at home as retail produce sales have decreased (Garrett et al., 2003) and these consumers are more reliant on commercial operations like restaurants and grocery store ready-to-eat products to provide them safe food. In addition, in recent years, there has been an increase in foodborne illness outbreaks associated with leafy greens. This is because fresh and fresh-cut produce is consumed raw and pathogenic microorganisms are not killed as there is no cooking process. For example, there were approximately 100 U.S. outbreaks due to *Salmonella, E. coli* O157:H7, *Shigella* spp., and *Campylobacter jejuni* reported between 2000 and 2007 in leafy greens alone (Anderson et al., 2011).While food safety guidelines have been well documented for fresh-cut produce processors (Gory 2001; Garrett et al., 2003), few training materials exist for restaurant and grocery store employees. The foodservice industry has worked with regulatory agencies diligently to develop and implement food safety training materials for supervisors; however, this material may be too generic for employees who work with fresh and fresh-cut produce.

Objective

The goal of this study is to identify current food safety practices (good and high risks) in restaurants and grocery stores across Texas to develop effective and site-specific food safety training material.

Methods

A. Recruit supermarkets and restaurants in the Houston, Texas area through cold calling, recruitment emails and letters.
B. Observe the standard operating procedures for fresh-cut produce in recruited establishments.
C. Administer surveys to employees and management to determine their current food safety knowledge.
D. Develop training materials and conduct training sessions specific to fresh and fresh-cut produce in commercial operations. The training modules will detect gaps discovered by the information collected in Methods B and C.

Results/Discussion

The preliminary results demonstrated that all the establishments followed the company's standard operating procedures and utilized approved recipes. However, only 50% of the establishments observed had produce washed in clean and sanitized prep sink before use. Additionally, some employees relied on glove changing as an alternative to actually washing their hands. Based on these findings, educational material will be developed and disseminated to the establishments in an attempt to increase knowledge and improve food safety behaviors. The end goal of this project is to make sure that educational material is readily available to commercial establishments in efforts to reduce the number of foodborne illness outbreaks in relation to fresh and fresh-cut produce and improve overall public health.

References Available Upon Request

THE EFFECTS OF SERVING TEMPERATURE ON THE TASTE OF CRAFT BEERS

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Introduction

Craft beer sales have climbed in the US as consumers seek out new flavors and tastes in their beers. To meet this rising consumer demand, a growing number of pubs or bars carry a variety of local and regional craft beers. From the aspect of unique ingredients, the exceptional flavors and aromas of craft beers are susceptible to their serving temperature. Therefore, unlike the mass-produced and -marketed beers by the big beer companies, most craft beers have an ideal serving temperature that brings out the flavors and aromas. Previous research also confirms that the temperature of liquid affects sensory perception. Likewise, drinking craft beer at near-frozen temperatures would mask its unique flavors and aromas. However, craft beers are still consumed at the ice cold temperature by the majority of Americans due to the long tradition in the culture and to the lack of desire by breweries and bar owners to educate consumers. Thus, this study 1) investigates whether or not beer drinkers can perceive different flavors and aromas when the same craft beer is served at different temperatures; and 2) examines changes in drinkers' enjoyment of a craft beer when it is served at different temperatures.

Methods

Prior to the experiment, the Sniffin' Sticks screening test and the taste spray test will be conducted to identify possible impairments in the smell or taste capacity of all participants. To test temperature effects of a craft beer on flavor and aroma perception and overall liking, Two different beer styles; lager and ale craft, will be served at 35-40° F, 45-50° F, and 55 -60° F. The two styles were selected on the basis of their distinctive characteristics at certain temperatures. Six pairs of stimuli (2 x 3; two styles of beer served at three temperatures each) will be presented in a sequential monadic fashion in a single session. Two ounces of beer will be served in a 3 oz paper cup at one of the three targeted temperatures. Participants were asked to swish the two ounces of beer in their mouths for five seconds before swallowing. They will be then instructed to rate thermal intensity and pleasantness of beer on two 7-point scales ranging from 1 (extremely cold/extremely pleasant) to 7 (extremely warm/extremely unpleasant). In addition, participants will be asked to evaluate intensities of sensory attributes on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (extremely weak) to 7 (extremely strong). For ale, intensities of fruity aromas and flavor, sweetness, bitterness, and creaminess were assessed. In the lager, intensities of clean and crisp flavor, sweetness, bitterness, and creaminess were assessed. Finally, the overall liking of the served beer was rated using a 7-point hedonic scale (1 = Strongly dislike to 7 = Strongly like). The time interval between stimuli presentations was approximately five minutes in order to control the oral temperature over the testing period, based on a previous study (Engelen et al., 2003). Between stimuli, participants cleansed their palates by consuming spring water and unsalted crackers. For data analysis, the non-parametric Friedman test will be used to compare the ratings of three temperature conditions in order to determine whether the temperature of beer affects the drinkers' acceptance and perception of sensory attributes.

Results/Discussion

The results of the study will provide empirical evidence as to whether or not pubs and bars should consider serving craft beers at their optimal temperature for product differentiation and enhanced customer experience.

CAN SPECIAL MENU DESIGN GENERATE MORE PROFIT IN RESTAURANTS?

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Introduction

The menu is a defining aspect of a restaurant. It can be its most influential marketing tool. The menu is the connection to every operational aspect of a restaurant. The importance of the menu is that it determines food purchasing, food budgeting, and equipment and supplies requirements. Lastly, it determines what kind of training and staffing a restaurant needs. Restaurants market their food to customers through their menu. There is great interest in understanding how menu management influences the restaurant industry. Menu management is a strategy that restaurateurs use to develop their menus to generate profits. Menu management can be divided into four categories: menu planning, menu pricing, menu design, and menu analysis (Ozdemir & Caliskan, 2013). Operators combine these menu management strategies to generate static menus which are used widely in restaurants. Even though the static menu is the most common type of menu in the restaurant industry, researchers found that problems often arise when restaurants provide static menus over a long period of time (Pavesic, 2006). Customers get bored with the limited selection of traditional menus and seek alternative or new experiences. Special menus are an alternative strategy used by some restaurants to address this issue, but it is still unknown among restaurateurs if special menus are really generating additional revenues (Hochwarth, 2013) or attract repeat customers. Hochwarth (2013) stated that special menus can be a powerful selling tool if it is done correctly. In previous research, there is no specific definition of special menus and how customers perceive them. The objectives of this study are to 1) examine what special menus mean to customers, 2) investigate why customers order from special menus, and 3) examine if special menus can satisfy customers and generate more revenue for the restaurant as well as attract repeat customers.

Methods

A questionnaire survey will be given out to restaurant patrons to determine their perception of the special menu. The questions will inquire what special menus mean to customers and what reasons exist for customers to order from it? It will also determine whether the special menu satisfies customers and will induce them to become repeat customers.

Results/Discussion

The results of this study will help restaurant managers develop a better menu. Customers may want to try some other dishes besides what has been offered on the regular menu. Restaurant managers may have the ability to use special menus to enhance the customer experience of customers and increase their customer retention rate. It may also help to increase restaurant profits.

References Available Upon Request

WHEN THE NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCE OF HEALTH HALO EFFECT BECOMES STRONGER: THE ROLE OF HEALTH-CONSCIOUSNESS AND EXTERNAL CUES

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Introduction

Various approaches to promoting healthy eating in restaurants have arisen as one of the most significant concerns (Kim, Park, Kim, & Ryu, 2013; Saelens, Glanz, Sallis, & Frank, 2007). Previous studies, however, point out that health claims on foods intending to help consumers' healthful diet rather lead consumers to overeating because of health halos (Provencher, Polivy, & Herman, 2009). The health halo effect refers to a bias such that people evaluate all characteristics of food overly positive when the food is considered as healthy, so that underestimate the calories and unintentionally eat more or add more dishes (Wansink & Chandon, 2014). Since research examining cues to strengthen the adverse outcome of health halos in a restaurant context has been sparse, this study aims to investigate whether (1) healthiness of entrée items affects intention to eat more due to the health halos, (2) health-consciousness—internal cue—moderates the effect of health halos on intention to eat more, and (3) the attributes of food server's suggestions—external cue—moderate the effect of health halos on intention to eat more.

Methods

A quasi-experimental between-subjects design which consists of 2 (healthiness of entrée items: Healthy vs. Unhealthy) X 2 (health-consciousness: High vs. Low) X 2 (attributes of food server's suggestions: Tasty vs. Healthy) will be used. Data will be collected conducting the scenario-based survey to more than 400 customers of casual dining restaurants in the U.S. A pre-test will be performed to determine appropriate menu items as well as to test the scenario and measurement items. More than 50 college students will participate in the pre-test. The scenario will start with an instruction, such as "Imagine you are eating a grilled salmon salad" for the healthy entrée condition. Then, dessert menu and the suggestion of a food server will be provided, such as "Would you want a dessert, Sir/Madam? Today, we have a sweet gourmet chocolate brownie" (Jacob & Guéguen, 2014) for the tasty condition. After all, a 7-point Likert-type scale to measure willingness to order desserts and health-consciousness will be given. Respondents will be divided into two groups using the median split method by the level of health-consciousness. Finally, demographics as well as control information will be collected. Manipulation checks will be performed using t-test and hypotheses will be tested using ANOVA.

Results/Discussion

Consumers who have healthy entrées would be more likely to order additional desserts compared to those with unhealthy entrées. The negative effect of health halos would even become stronger when the consumers are highly health-concerned, and when exposed to an external cue related to tasty attributes. This study will provide useful implications for policy makers, health professionals, consumers, and restaurant managers regarding the impact of health halos on consumer eating behaviour in restaurants.

References Available Upon Request

EFFECT OF IMAGE CONGRUITY ON BRAND LOYALTY: AN APPLICATION OF CAUSE-RELATED MARKETING (CRM)

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Introduction

Cause-related marketing (CRM) refers to a company's offer to contribute a certain amount of money to a social cause when consumers purchase its products or services. In today's competitive marketplace, CRM captures increasing interest of practitioners and scholars because of potential benefits of effective CRM (e.g. brand image, loyalty, or consumers' attitudes). Kitchen & Schultz (2001) indicated that CRM has shown considerable grown over the past few years. However, few studies have devoted sufficient attention to understanding the motivators leading to the success of CRM. In order to bridge the gap, we focuses on what drivers encourage consumers to favorably evaluate and consider participating in CRM promotions. In summary, this paper aims to propose and test the utility of congruity theory for explaining consumer attitudes and behavior with regard to brands and companies. First, this study examines whether consumers' image congruity has a significant influence in consumer-company (C-C) identification. Second, this study tests the relationship between C-C identification and consumer behavior with regard to restaurant brands, in terms of both extra-role behavior and in-role behavior.

Methods

Participants will be general consumers in the United Sates, who had eaten at a fast casual restaurant within one month. This study will use Amazon Mechanical Turk to conduct a web-based survey for data collection. The respondents will be asked to read a hypothetical scenario with regard to CRM to support local farms that provide locally naturally grown meats with no hormone and antibiotics. Respondents will be asked to rate the extent of agreement with each of items on the instrument using a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). First, the respondents will be asked to read the self-image congruity scenario (Sirgy & Su, 2000) modified for the fast casual restaurant. C-C identification will be measured using items from Mael and Ashforth (1992). Attitude toward brand will be measured using items taken from Yoo and MacInnis (2005). Items to measure consumer's extra-role and in-role behavior will be adapted from Matos et al., (2009)**.** Lastly, a few demographic questions will be asked. Confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling analysis will be used for data analysis (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988).

Implication

In the academic perspective, the study will be able to identify antecedents and consequence of C-C identification in CRM setting. For managerial perspective, the impact of self-congruity on consumer behavior can help sponsoring companies identify their target consumers and enhance the corporate image that lead to sales increase. In addition, the finding can confirm the important role of C-C identification through CRM in understanding purchase intentions.

References Available Upon Request

THE IMPACT OF OVEN-COOKING TECHNOLOGY ON CHICKEN BREAST

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Introduction

Historically, large volume foodservice operators have gained a competitive advantage by focusing on product differentiation and economies of scale (Rodgers, 2007). Now, consumer and operator concerns include speed, quality and value of product offerings. Because of this, operators have begun exploring new cooking technologies, such as accelerated cooking, which were meant to address consumer and operator concerns in regards to increasing production speed while retaining product quality and lowering costs. Consequently, the purpose of this preliminary study was to present a practical application and evaluate the affects of different oven technologies on cooking time and quality characteristics of pre-frozen, split boneless, skinless chicken breast.

Methods

The broad research question under examination was whether or not there were significant differences across conventional, convection, combination and accelerated oven-cooking technologies in regards to quality characteristics of texture, moisture loss, fat loss, water activity and time to mandated temperature endpoint (FDA, 2013). Eight samples (N=8) were randomly selected from a frozen case of 24-6 oz. split boneless skinless chicken breasts obtained from a commercial processor. The methods employed were (1) moisture loss/yield test; the pre-cooked weight was taken followed by the post-cooked weight in order to determine the moisture loss, (2) texture test was performed using a Texture Technologies Corporation© TA-XT2 texture analyzer, which was designed to replace both the Warner-Batzler and Kramer Shear Press tests by utilizing computer software to measure and record force/distance, (3) water activity (a_w) test was performed using an Aqua Labs© water activity meter and (4) fat content was measured by the Soxhlet test, according to AOAC procedures (AOAC, 1990).

Results/Discussion

There were no significant differences in water activity, texture and moisture loss across the oven technologies. There were significant differences in the amount of fat loss: conventional (28%), convection (24%), combination (52%) and accelerated (14%); specifically between the combination and accelerated ovens. Also, there was a practical significant difference in time of cooking: conventional (17 min.), convection (15 min.), combination (12.5 min.) and accelerated (3 min.). Experimental data for the hypotheses were examined using an analysis of variance (ANOVA) procedure, and were considered statistically significant with the alpha level set at 5% ($p \leq 0.05$). Historically, microwave cooking-technologies were relegated to the reheating of foods with a great deal of variability in quality. Today's accelerated oven-cooking technologies have improved a great deal making them a more viable option for the restaurateur.

References Available Upon Request

EXAMINING THE EFFECTS OF RESTAURANT MENU DESIGN ON YOUNG MILLENNAILS' KILOCALORIE CHOICES

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Introduction

Although defined as revolutionary eaters who have dynamic and novel eating habits, young Millennails aged 18-24, frequently make poor dietary choices, in terms of Kilocalorie intake. This will likely continue to add to the globe's disease burden associated with obesity and overweight. The objective of this proposed study is to evaluate the effect of several menu designs on young Millennails' food choices, specifically kilocalories chosen.

Methods

Approximately 400 students, aged 18-24 will participate in this study during the early part of 2014. The study will be conducted using an on-line platform, and IRB approval will be obtained prior to performing the experiment.

A randomized complete block design with between subjects data collection will be performed. In order to control for variations in food preferences, there are three types of menus that will be designed (and blocked): Asian Fusion, West Coast Bistro, and Urban Mexican. The independent variable, menu design, will have four levels: the control menus with standard two page design; the first level with low Calorie items in the beginning and end of the menu list; the second level with low Calorie items in a healthy choice section; and the third level with pictures of healthy food choices. All menus will include standard information on food items such as Calories and daily Caloric intake recommendations. One of four types of menus will be randomly selected for participants based on their preference of the three restaurant-types. An exit questionnaire on the subjects' demographics, dietary habits, and personal food preferences while dining at restaurants will be included. The effect of menu design on Calorie level choices will be evaluated using ANOVA. Chi-square will be used to evaluate the relationship between demographics, dietary habits and personal food preferences. All statistical analyses will be performed using SPSS.

Research Implications

Numerous studies have reported menu design psychology as a means of understanding restaurant food choices and thus facilitating higher profits. However, few studies have been discussed related to the effect of menu design psychology on healthy food choices. This proposed research is planned in order to examine the potential for using menu design psychology to influence the Kilocalorie intake of young Millennails, when dining at casual dining operations. If menus can be designed that influence people's healthy food choices when dining out, the restaurant industry may have a tool to use in the hope of avoiding future government regulations related to food offerings. Additionally, the foodservice industry may move toward not only offering foods that customers enjoy, but also those that assist them in preventing the effects of chronic diseases.

References Available Upon Request

THE LOCAL FOOD MOVEMENT: A LOOK INTO THE MOTIVATIONS AND BARRIERS TO RESTAURANTS PURCHASING LOCALLY

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Introduction

The local food movement can be characterized as an alternative food system, a way to move away from industrialized production methods and distribution systems. Local food systems, such as farmers' markets, community supported agriculture, and purchasing directly from farmers, have been considered a way to shorten the length between producers and consumers (Baker, 2011). There has been a drive towards knowing where food is coming from and how it is being produced (Thilmany et al, 2008). The National Restaurant Association's "What's Hot 2014" lists "locally sourced meats and seafood" and "locally grown produce" as the top two hottest trends for 2014. While research has been conducted in a variety of areas including sustainability (Blake et al., 2010), community support and buyers' intent (Inwood et al, 2009), and risks associated with purchasing from local farmers (Alonso & ONeill, 2010), little research has been conducted to understand why restaurants purchase (or do not purchase) local products. The purpose of this study, is to evaluate the perceived motivations and barriers to purchasing local products within the restaurant industry. This project will seek to answer two research questions: 1) What are the perceived barriers and motivations to purchasing local products that restaurants face when making purchasing decisions? and 2) What are some common factors restaurants consider when utilizing local products in the United States?

Methods

A list of potential participants will be compiled through a web search of restaurants. Restaurants that are not independently owned and operated will be excluded from the list. The participants must be solely or jointly in charge of purchasing decisions. A screening questionnaire will be emailed to the potential participants prior to the interview followed by a phone call to ensure a higher response rate. After the screening questionnaire, an interview will be setup with each of the qualifying participants. The interview is based on an interview guide comprised of five questions derived from current literature. The interview guide will be used to spark a discussion and is not intended to be inclusive. Qualitative thematic analysis will be used to analyze the data. Thematic analysis is the process of recording patterns or themes within data. Thematic analysis will help generate a list of motivations and barriers and repeated themes can be noted (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The information gathered during the interview phase will be compared with the screening questionnaire.

Discussion

It is anticipated that through this study, a more thorough understanding of the local food movement will emerge. Information related to how the restaurant industry perceives local food will also be available. Researchers will be able to use this information to delve deeper into specific attributes of restaurants that do (or do not) purchase local food products. Industry professionals will be able to use this information to assist in purchasing decisions. Additionally, with a better understanding of where this movement currently stands with restaurant, it will be easier to determine if it will be relevant in the future.

References Available Upon Request

DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PROBLEM BASED LEARNING IN AN UNDERGRADUATE QUANTITY FOOD PRODUCTION COURSE

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Introduction

Problem-Based Learning (PBL) is an instructional method used to bridge the gap between lecture-based learning (teacher-centered) and real-world situations (student-centered). PBL guides students to use existing knowledge and their own inquiry process toward seeking out solutions to "real-world" problems. Additionally, learning through problem-based situations is much more effective than memory-based learning in creating a usable body of knowledge (Blake, Hosokawa, & Riley, 2000). PBL is characterized by its focus on contextual, collaborative, constructive and self-directed learning (Otting & Zwaal, 2011). Previous research has shown the value of PBL in food & beverage (Kivela & Kivela, 2005), food safety (Rajagopal, Bernstein, & Trost, 2013), food science (Duffrin, 2003), nutrition (Terry & Seibels, 2008), and tourism (Huang, 2005) courses. The purpose of this study is to demonstrate the use of PBL in an undergraduate quantity food production course and assess students' feedback on PBL as a teaching method.

Methods

PBL-based scenarios that aim to develop quantity food production critical thinking and problem solving skills of students will be developed and incorporated into an undergraduate quantity food production course at a university in Southern United States. A convenience sample of 85 undergraduate hospitality students will participate in this study. Students will work in groups and apply knowledge gained throughout the semester to complete a final project using PBL-based scenarios. Students will submit a 5-page report and present the findings of the project through a 10 minute stand-up presentation.

A 5-point Likert-style questionnaire developed by Rajagopal, Bernstein, & Trost (2013) will be used to assess student's perceptions of PBL as a teaching method. The online survey will be administered anonymously after the project is completed. In addition, students will also be asked to highlight strengths, weaknesses, and suggestions to improve PBL-based assignment in the quantity food production class.

Expected Results

Outcomes of this study will demonstrate steps that instructors can take when incorporating PBL into other hospitality courses. Additionally, student feedback will provide insight into student's perceptions and acceptance of PBL as a teaching method.

References Available Upon Request

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF HOSPITALITY INTERNSHIPS: DOES ORIENTATION AND TRAINING AFFECT STUDENTS DESIRES TO SEEK PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT WITH THE COMPANY?

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Introduction

Internships are widely used in the majority of the top hospitality programs in the country (Zopiatis & Theocharous, 2013) and have been the topic of research for many years (Toncar & Cudmore, 2000; Yiu & Law, 2012). The research as shown that there are clear benefits for the three stakeholders, which include institutions, students, and industry (Busby, 2003). While this practice is common there is a missed opportunity for businesses to instill in potential future managers their commit to their success. Often overlooked during internships, training and orientations offer a clear opportunity to lay the foundation for a successful internship experience for both the student and the host company (Klein & Waverm, 2000). The purpose of the research is to understand how internship training and orientation received by the students' impact their decision toward future employment with the company, to understand from the student's perspective the most effective form of training and orientation, and what could be done to improve this process of the internship. The reason this is important is to better understand the industry's training and orientation toward internships and to assist them in developing and attracting future managers.

Methods

The methodology approach for this research is to survey undergraduate students at a mid-western university whom have participated in a paid internship, which is part of the program's curriculum. The students will include those that have recently participated in a paid internship and those that have in the past 2 years. The survey will include biographical questions related to the student's education level (freshmen, sophomore, junior, and senior), gender, immigration status (domestic or international student), duration of the internship, location (state, country), and number of internships participated. The next set of questions consist to the type, if any; new hire training or orientation they received. Method of new hire training or orientation (video, trained by a trainer, trained by a manager, computer modules) and how many hours did the training consist of (1-2 hours, 3-5 hours, or 2 plus days). There will also be questions regarding how the interns felt about the training/orientation using a 5 point Likert scale, with 1 being not effective to 5 being highly effective. The students will also be asked about their intention to work for the company in the future, work in the industry in the future, and if the training/orientation motivated them about the company and or job.

Results/Discussion

The anticipated results will lead to a better understanding of how the industry's training and orientation toward internships influence decision making. The research should also shed light on what could be done to improve this process of the internship from the student's perspective. This insight will assist them in developing and attracting future managers.

References Available Upon Request

INVESTIGATING SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES: HOW DO LUXURY AND UPSCALE HOTELS PERFORM TO ATTRACT GENERATION Y?

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Introduction
Social networking sites are becoming an important marketing tool in the luxury and upscale hotel industry segment (Parr, 2013). Meanwhile, Generation Y, the heavy users of social networking sites among all age groups, utilize the social networking sites as an important decision-making tool (Ahn, 2011; Bolton et al., 2013). Generation Y will become the major market for luxury and upscale hotels in the near future (Oates, 2014). In order to attract this group, luxury and upscale hotels need to capitalize on various social networking sites. The purpose of this study is to investigate how Generation Y's travel needs are addressed on these social networking sites by the luxury and upscale hoteliers.

Methods
A total of 10 luxury and upscale hotels including Andaz (Hyatt), Bulgari (Marriott), Conrad (Hilton), Four Seasons, InterContinental Hotel and Resort, J.W. Marriott, Park Hyatt, Ritz Carlton (Marriott), Waldorf Astoria (Hilton), and Westin Hotel and Resort are selected using the Wikipedia. This study will identify the extent to which social networking sites are currently being utilized among the 10 selected luxury and upscale hotels. Various social networking activities made by the hotels on some of the widely used social networking sites such as Facebook, Google Plus, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube will be evaluated.

Results/Discussion
Through an initial round of investigation, we found that Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube are the three major types of social networking sites utilized among the 10 selected luxury and upscale hotels. Many social networking activities are targeted toward the baby boomers, which currently represent the major market of luxury and upscale hotels. However, Generation Y will gradually take over this status for luxury and upscale hotels in the near future. Social networking sites present substantial opportunity to cultivate Generation Y as potential customers because of this generation's involvement with social media. Findings from this study are expected to provide knowledge to luxury and upscale hoteliers in their efforts to attract and cater to this new market.

References Available Upon Request

PERCEPTIONS TOWARD THE VALUE OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR HOSPITALITY PROFESSIONALS: A VICIOUS CYCLE?

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Introduction

Currently, a sincere and earnest debate exists within the hospitality industry---its practitioners *and* its academics---as to whether formal higher education is really necessary for career success. Students all over the world are pursuing degrees in hospitality, business, finance, and other disciplines in hopes of furthering the limits of their own career success in hospitality. However, other than statistical correlations between college graduation and job placement, very little is known regarding whether or not these efforts can be reasonably expected to yield actual results. Academics, unsurprisingly, usually argue that college degrees are critically important to efficacy in the professional field, much in the same way that lawyers and doctors are virtually worthless without the formal education upon which their professional licenses are predicated. Many industry leaders, however, suggest that hospitality is a discipline best reserved to field learning; this view asserts that the only thing truly necessary to becoming an expert in hospitality is work experience. As industry leaders naturally influence the dynamics of talent recruitment philosophies within the companies they run, there is reason to believe that these perceptions may be highly correlated with the actual circumstances of career success for college graduates. This research proposes a qualitative case study of the Las Vegas casino resort industry to explore the relationships (if any) between the subjective perceptions of the value of education by industry leaders, and (1) the value of education as evidenced in the culture and hiring practices of the companies they lead, and (2) the propensity for a 'recycling of values' to a new generation of hospitality will-be leaders who achieve success within the structure of values established by the leaders that preceded them.

Methods

This research proposes a case study of the casino resort industry in Las Vegas, NV to examine the relationships between the perceived value of education within executive administration, company culture and hiring practices, and employees aspiring for career success. Four major Las Vegas casino resort companies---Wynn, Caesars Entertainment, Sands, and MGM Resorts---will be investigated. The methodology of this study will be qualitative, utilizing interviews with top leaders, hiring administrators, and a sampling of employees within each of the four subject companies. Thematic analysis will be employed in order to identify any trends or patterns in perceptions toward the value of higher education as they permeate from top leaders on down to the future leaders their companies are developing.

Anticipated Results

This study should help reveal some of the relationships between industry perceptions and the actual dynamics of career success being navigated by hospitality degree holders. The results should inform the area of higher education efficacy in the hospitality field.

References Available Upon Request

COMPARISON OF HOTEL DEVELOPMENT TREND AND HOSPITALITY & TOURISM MANAGEMENT MAJORS IN CHINA

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Introduction

China had significant historical events in the recent past that boosted the tourism and hospitality industry. Tourism in China has been significantly impacted on Open Door policy since 1997. In addition, updated National Holiday System (General Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, 2013) and international events held in China boosted the hotel industry in China. As the amount of domestic and international tourists increases, China needs more qualified employees (Li & Li, 2013). At the same time, China's hotel industry is faced with human resources (HR) challenges such as the shortage of qualified staff, high-rate labor turnover and the unwillingness of university graduates to participate in the industry (Zhang & Lam, 2004; Zhang & Wu, 2004). The purpose of this study was to examine the current increase trend in hotel development in China and the increase trend in college graduates who potentially make a quality human resource pool for this booming industry.

Methods

For current situation of hotel development in China, secondary data about the number of hotels and rooms in 5, 4, 3-star levels have been collected from Chinese Star Hotel Statistical Bulletin from 2008 to 2012 reported by China National Tourism Administration. For the college graduates, the number of students in tourism service field of secondary vocational schools (full-time schooling system institutions), which were reported by Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, was collected. In addition, the numbers of Chinese students graduated in the U.S. from 2009 to 2012 have been collected from Institute of International Education.

Results/Discussion

The average increase rate of hotel rooms in China is 2.5 % per year from 2008 to 2012. The number of five-star hotel rooms is rapidly expanding at the annual rate of 12.5%. The number of college students majoring in tourism services both in China and the U.S. increased by 5.8 %. As the increase percentage indicates, the increase in college graduates is higher than the overall hotel room increase in China. This indicates that the employee pool for the hospitality industry may overflow with college graduates from the relevant field compared to the industry demand.

On the other hand, the need for luxury hotel is increasing more rapidly than the need for other level hotels in China. While the hotel industry in China needs many quality employees with higher degrees in order to provide satisfactory quality of service, the luxury hotels need even more highly qualified employees. Future studies can examine skill sets required for quality staff in hotels in general as well as hotel with different star ratings.

References Available Upon Request

EXAMINING THE EFFECTS OF INTER-DISCIPLINARY PROJECT-BASED LEARNING ON STUDENTS' TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY SKILL DEVELOPMENT AWARENESS AND INTRINSIC MOTIVATION ORIENTATION

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Introduction

What are the goals of higher education? This question has been posed, argued, and answers debated for more than a century. As students transition from an academic life to a competitive business environment, or similar position in society, we are able to see the manifestation of these goals. Literature exposes the chasm that exists between the goals and outcomes of higher education. Twenty-first century skills are competencies that have a strong influence on early career success. Are institutions of higher education adequately preparing students to achieve the outcomes necessary to sustain and develop a personally satisfying and socially useful career? Research and measurements regarding these outcomes are opaque in general contexts and nonexistent in many specific disciplines. While the field offers vast and bountiful opportunities, a few teaching practices and theories have emerged as potentially being notable to affecting positive change. Project-based learning (PjBL) has been identified as a strong learning environment with which to accomplish the demands on higher education. The purpose of this study was to examine a learning environment, PjBL, which has as a core construct, the development of these necessary twenty-first century skills. Specifically this study explored the personal awareness of students regarding the ranked importance of these skills. In addition, the fundamental framework of PjBL offers scaffolding that should satisfy basic human psychological needs and promote intrinsic motivation. Therefore, this study sought to affirm if this is achieved as a result of a PjBL environment and determine if a difference exists between an interdisciplinary PjBL and a discipline specific PjBL.

Methods

Pre-intervention data will be compared with post-intervention data to evaluate change. During the second week of class students will receive an instrument that allows them to individually rank twenty-first century skills. Similarly, they will complete two motivational inventories to determine the effectiveness of the learning environment to promote intrinsic motivation.

Results/Discussion

Data collection is on-going and will continue through May 2015.

References Available Upon Request

COMPARING DEPARTMENTAL EXPERIENCES AND SATISFACTION BETWEEN TRANSFER AND NON-TRANSFER STUDENTS IN THE FOUR-YEAR UNDERGRADUATE HOSPITALITY PROGRAM IN AMERICA

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Introduction

In spite of hospitality management programs' heavy reliance on transfer students in enrollment, very little research has been done on the differences in satisfaction between transfer and first-time students. This study aims to compare hospitality students' departmental experiences and satisfaction depending on transfer students. A case study found that regardless of the transfer status, undergraduate students in the hospitality and tourism management program apply the equivalent standards in assessing the quality of the program, and they did not show significant differences in overall departmental experiences, satisfaction and intention to recommend the program to friends/relatives.

Methods

As an attempt to measure transfer students' and non-transfer students' evaluation of the program, overall departmental experiences, and satisfaction with the four-year hospitality program in the U.S., a modified questionnaire developed by Keaveney and Young (1997) was administrated to 176 undergraduate hospitality management students at a state university in the northeastern New York. Questionnaires were distributed in classes and a total of 129 usable questionnaires were obtained. The survey included three sections: the first section asked questions regarding demographic information such as gender, age, college year, major, transfer status, and major interests in the program. In addition to descriptive analysis, independent t-test statistics were utilized to determine differences between the transfer student group and the non-transfer student group.

Results and Discussion

The results of this research provide a meaningful insight into student recruitment and retention. Regardless of the transfer students, undergraduate students in the hospitality and tourism program apply the equivalent standards in assessing the program quality, which, in turn, determine their subsequent cognitive and affective evaluations. Students in institutions of higher education are becoming more consumer-oriented than ever before. Thus, creating and delivering superior customer values will be a key in creating a sustainable advantage in the highly competitive education market.

References Available Upon Request

WHY DO SOME HOSPITALITY GRADUATES LEAVE THE INDUSTRY? A QUALITATIVE STUDY

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Introduction

The purpose of this study is to explore the research question: Why do students who have taken the time and effort to pursue a degree in hospitality ultimately decide to leave the hospitality industry? The authors consider the value the graduate and their non-hospitality employer place on a hospitality degree and the skills the graduate learned while in the industry. All participants in this study graduated from the same business school-based hospitality program.

Few studies have been conducted to explore the influence of internships, family, friends, faculty, and prior experience on the choice to leave the hospitality industry. There is also a lack of exploration of the attractiveness of the skillset that hospitality graduates may possess, and how other industries may find this skillset attractive. This study considers influencing factors as well as the perceived value of the degree.

Method

The authors explore the shared lived experience of hospitality graduates through phenomenological interviews. In this case, the phenomenon is the choice to pursue a degree and career in hospitality, and subsequently leave the hospitality industry. The researchers will use a purposeful sample and will conduct one-on-one, phenomenological interviews with up to 30 qualified subjects. The researchers set an initial target sample size of 30 interviews. If the researchers reach a point of saturation and find that new information is not generated by the interview data, interviews will stop before 30 interviews are conducted. If more data are needed in order to reach a conclusion, interviews will continue beyond 30.

The authors will analyze the data through coding by looking for patterns of similarity, difference, frequency, sequence, correspondence, and causation (Lincoln, 1985). After coding and re-coding, the authors will categorize the codes and look for themes. Themes that are identified will be summarized and presented as findings. The sample of this qualitative study is not meant to be representative of the entire population of hospitality graduates. It is intended to focus on the lived experiences of specific participants who have an understanding of a similar phenomenon.

Results/Discussion

Data collection for this study has begun and the first 15 interviews are currently under analysis. The authors anticipate that this study will lead to additional quantitative studies involving a variety of institutions and their hospitality graduates, which would better allow the ability to generalize the results. The authors would also like to offer recommendations to industry employers that would assist in retaining employees with formal hospitality educations.

References available upon request.

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM VS. UNSUSTAINABLE TOURISM: ANALYZING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM EDUCATION

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Introduction
With the astonishing increases of tourism in various countries, disruptions have developed. These disruptions have impacted countries' social culture: economic devaluation, misconception, and poverty related crimes. The increase of tourism has also affected environmental preservation in terms of pollution, depletion of natural resources, and the ecological footprint on many surfaces. Non-sustainable tourism has threatened many resources by destroying habitats, disturbing wildlife, threatening communities, and overpopulating cities. The emergence of sustainable tourism is a continuing trend.

Current studies do not show whether or not sustainable tourism has an advantage over non-sustainable mass tourism; however, education about sustainable tourism can help travellers contribute to "the movement of mass tourism toward sustainability" (Weaver, 2013). Research has been done related to sustainable tourism, e.g., respondents' attitudes and behaviour (Sirakaya-Turk, Baloglu, & Mercado, 2014); profile of visitors for marketing strategies (Stoddard, Evans, & Dave, 2008); and consumer buying intentions (Hedlund, 2011). However, few researches have been done related to providing information about sustainable tourism in educational institutions. The current belief is that the more people are educated about something like sustainable tourism; the more likely they are to participate in sustainable activities when traveling. The purposes of the study are 1) to identify the profile of both sustainable and non-stainable tourists, according to their consciousness and perceptions towards sustainable tourism, 2) to identify the profile of travel agencies that offer sustainable and non-sustainable tourism products, 3) to determine what hospitality students' perceptions are, and 4) to examine what hospitality education could do to better promote sustainability concepts in the curriculum.

Methods
A survey will be conducted with tourists, tourism agencies, and educational institutions. The survey will help identify whether or not surveyors who travel non-sustainably are aware of their participation. Providing surveys on non-sustainable tourism companies will provide a better understanding to tourists as to why they should promote sustainable tourism and how it benefits their organizations.

Results/Discussion
Understanding the perspective of the consumer (the tourist), travel agencies, and educational institutions will reveal the market that is available for and receptive to sustainable tourism and whether or not it can compete with non-sustainable tourism. The results of the study will contribute to marketing strategies and the hospitality industry in general.

References Available Upon Request

HOSPITALITY EDUCATION IN SAUDI ARABIA "A COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT, FROM EDUCATORS' PERSPECTIVE"

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The hospitality industry is one of the fastest growing industries in the world, especially within international markets. Proper training for employees is essential for professional success in the hospitality industry. Just like in any other profession, hospitality students require a great deal of realistic and in-depth understanding of the industry. Thus, it is important to develop curricula that would teach students competencies needed for future employment. The market under investigation for the current study is Saudi Arabia. Hospitality programs are becoming a vital part of the Saudi's educational system and have to be in tandem with the industry requirements. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to identify particular competencies that hospitality educators in Saudi Arabian universities recognize as key factors for their graduates' success in the hospitality industry. Furthermore, this study will also identify where these skills are best learned and whether the hospitality and tourism education programs are updating the curricula to accommodate the needs of the hiring directors based of the educators' perspective.

In order to provide a thorough understanding of the importance of categorizing the essential competencies that are deemed significant for students to succeed in the workplace and to assure that hotel educational programs are in congruence with the industry's needs, three preliminary research questions were developed; RQ_1: What are the competencies that hospitality educators recognize as keys to success for students in the hotel industry?
RQ_2: How are the identified important competencies best learned in an educational institution?
RQ_3: Do the hospitality programs in Saudi universities cultivate those skills in their curricula?

This study will be conducted in two phases. Phase I will be exploratory and qualitative in nature. It will target five main universities in Saudi Arabia that have established hospitality programs for more than four years. This will allow the researcher to include graduates of the hospitality programs when performing assessment from industry's perspectives. Phase I will incorporate semi-structured, in-depth interviews with the programs' alumni. Phase II will involve members of 32 universities that are still working on establishing hospitality and tourism programs. Participants in this phase are expected to be approximately eighty faculty members. Participants will receive an endorsement letter from the Saudi Ministry of Higher Education requesting them to fill out a structured self-administered survey. Items on the survey will be developed based on the Sandwith's Competency Domain (Sandwith, 1993).

This study is significant because the results will contribute to hospitality research in terms of understanding the most important competencies from the Saudi educators' perspectives. Also, the results of this study will be a valuable tool to be utilized on a future comparison study with the industry's perspectives in Saudi Arabia. It is possible that others could use this information in furthering their own understandings in other developing countries.

References Available Upon Request

WHAT'S AFTER GRADUATE SCHOOL? HOSPITALITY STUDENTS' FUTURE CAREER GOALS AND PERCEPTION OF CURRICULUM

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Graduate school requires time, energy, money, and dedication; but is it worth it for hospitality graduate students? Students have different career goals and reasons for attending graduate school. The purpose of this study is to explore the reasons why hospitality graduate students obtain their degrees in order to determine how beneficial the curriculum is to the student in completing his or her career goals after graduation. With graduate students being an important part of the university setting and the industry, the lack of research focusing on hospitality graduate students is surprising (Nyquist et al., 2010). Redesign of the hospitality curriculum is achievable; Gursoy and Swanger (2005) give a great industry-driven model of hospitality curriculum. The redesign of hospitality curriculum should include understanding, abilities, and ethics (Dopson & Tas, 2004). More research is needed to explore the student perception of graduate students in hospitality graduate programs. This study aims to focus on the graduate students' perception of the curriculum needs assessment.

This study includes a modified version of the survey developed by the Acadia Institute's Project on Professional Values and Ethical Issues in Graduate Education of Scientists and Engineers (Anderson & Swazey, 1998). The instrument has these components: reasons for going to graduate school, graduate work and evaluation, climates of graduate programs, student responses to graduate school, and reflections on graduate school and academic careers (Anderson & Swazey, 1998). The sample chosen includes students currently enrolled in a Master's level or Ph.D. hospitality graduate program in the United States who are 21 years of age and older and have previously obtained a Bachelor's degree or equivalent. The data analysis for this study will include descriptive statistics such as frequency distributions and correlations. The results of the study will benefit hospitality programs by providing needs assessment from the graduate student perception. The hospitality industry will benefit from the study by increasing their labor pool with well qualified graduates.

References Available Upon Request

AM I PREPARED TO ENTER THE INDUSTRY? A STUDY OF GRADUATING SENIORS AND THEIR FUTURE WITHIN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

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Introduction

The hospitality industry is one of the largest and well known employers across the globe (Ricci, 2010). For those studying within the discipline, there seems to be endless opportunities to enter the hospitality field upon graduation. Ricci (2010) found that there is rarely a shortage of available positions for students as they graduate with their degree. However, studies have shown that a large proportion of these recent graduates do not persist to the hospitality industry. Hawkins, Ruddy, and Ardah (2012) found only 70% of students who graduated from a hospitality program worked within the hospitality industry. In the same study, the researchers identified 55% of available management positions were left vacant. While there are several reasons that can lead to graduates not entering the industry or to the departure of these early career professionals, this study focuses on the mismatch of expectations between the individual and the employer. Specifically, competencies learned within the classroom to not meet the needs of the employer. Several studies have examined this phenomenon through the lens of the employers and early career professional, yet few studies have examined the perceptions of graduating seniors poised to enter the industry. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the perceptions of preparedness of graduating hospitality seniors. Specifically, how well they perceive that their hospitality education has prepared them to enter the hospitality industry.

Methods

The proposed methods of this study are cross-sectional and qualitative in nature. The population of interest consists of students in their last semester of their degree enrolled in a capstone course. The capstone course was selected based on its high number of graduating seniors and the courses goal of creating a culminating hospitality experience (Stevenson, 2010). In addition, the capstone course is intended to assist the students' transition into the hospitality workforce. A convenience sample will be drawn from the capstone course at a major southwest university and semi-structured interviews will be conducted. Interviews will be approximately 30 minutes long and take place outside of the hospitality program to ensure confidentiality. After collected, data will be analysed using content analysis procedures to identify reoccurring themes. These themes will then be used to create taxonomy of preparedness perceptions for hospitality graduating seniors.

Anticipated Results

The results of this study will provide hospitality educators and administers important information as to why some graduates do not enter the hospitality industry. Through the creation of thematic factors, these findings will hopefully be able to address weaknesses and strengths within the competencies being taught in hospitality programs worldwide. In addition, the researchers hope that the taxonomy created in this study can be further developed into a generic hospitality exit survey that can be used and modified to specific hospitality departmental needs.

References Available Upon Request

SENSE OF BELONGING AMONG STUDENTS: DOES PERSONALITY MATTER?

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Introduction

It takes a special person with a special personality to work in hospitality and tourism. Research has shown that employees who work in customer service field have higher levels of conscientiousness and customer service orientation than other occupational groups (Lounsbury et al., 2012). While these personality types are beneficial in the workplace, they may create challenges for students in an academic setting (Horton, Clarke, & Welpott, 2005). Currently it is unknown how these specific personality traits may affect student's transition to college. Recently the literature has focused on sense of belonging as a predictor of transition in to college and success in the academic environment. Much of this literature has focused on the environment and climate of the institution. While there is support for this focus, there exists a gap in the literature that examines the effect of student attributes (outside of race and ethnicity) on sense of belonging. This current study examines the attribute of personality to determine if sense of belonging is experienced differently for students majoring in hospitality and those who are not.

Methods

The proposed research project will be cross-sectional and apply mixed method procedures in a two stage process. The first stage will be quantitative and the second stage qualitative. In the first stage the Sense of Belongingness Scale (Hoffman et al., 2002) and the True Colors personality scale will be administered. The sample for this study will be drawn from a food preparation laboratory at a major southwestern university. This course is a requirement for both hospitality and nutritional science majors therefore sample will include both hospitality and non-hospitality students. After data are collected, one-way MANOVA will be used to determine if differences lie between personality traits (IV) and the multiple subscales of the Sense of Belongingness Scale. Independent *t*-tests will also be conducted to determine if overall sense of belongingness and personality differ between hospitality students and non-hospitality students. The second stage of this study will collect qualitative data from focus groups consisting of both hospitality and non-hospitality students. Semi-structured interview questions will be asked in order to ascertain students' true understanding of belongingness and adjustment to the college setting. Data from both stages will then be discussed in detail with future research directions presented.

Anticipated Results

The results of this study will be multifaceted and add to the growing body of knowledge examining belongingness. First, results of this study will further the literature addressing sense of belongingness by taking the students' personality into account. Secondly, the results will assist in defining the services and programs needed by students with different personality types when adjusting to higher education. Finally the anticipated results will assist hospitality educators and administrators in identifying students who may be at risk for dropout due to a lack of belongingness to their program or university.

References Available Upon Request

EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ON HOSPITALITY UNDERGRADUATES' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: A CASE STUDY

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Introduction

Hospitality students are the main workforce in the hospitality sector, and the industry relies on the higher education system to prepare employees with requisite skills needed to meet the demands of the industry. Traditionally, educational institutions have focused on the technical and educational skills of students (Tucker, Sojka, Barone, & McCarthy, 2000). Yet some researchers have argued for a broader perspective that includes spiritual and emotional skills in education (Brackett & Katulak, 2007; Wigglesworth 2012). This study aims to examine the impact of spiritual intelligence (SI) and emotional competence (EC) on student performance. The following hypotheses have been developed:

1. Students' emotional competence is positively related to their academic performance
2. Students' academic performance is positively related to their spiritual intelligence
3. Students' spiritual intelligence is positively related to emotional competence

Methods

Data will be collected using a pre and post-test format from undergraduates enrolled in three hospitality labs (service, food prep and quantity) through an on-line survey over a semester. Two adopted scales - the Spiritual Intelligence Self-Report Inventory (SISRI- 24) developed by David King (2008) to measure SI, and the Emotional Competence Scale developed by Wong and Law (2002) to measure EC will be used. Students will receive a knowledge-based assessment to determine performance. CFA will be done to determine convergent validity then a path analysis conducted on the entire model to ascertain the best fitting model. To account for group dynamics students will be asked to indicate which lab they have taken and which lab they are currently a part of.

Results/Discussion

The proposed study will provide theoretical and empirical contributions to the existing literature on SI and EC on SP. Factors impacting performance, (such as IQ), are inherited traits while SI and EC are learned skills that can be improved. Should SI and EC be found to have a positive impact on SP, it will provide support to the existing knowledge on SI and EC and facilitate the importance of SI and EC in the hospitality curriculum.

References Available Upon Request

A COMPETENCY STUDY OF THE SOMMELIER

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The modern sommelier or wine steward is defined as the one who chooses and purchases the wine, maintains the inventory, trains the service staff on how to sell wine, assists customers with wine selections, and serves the wine at the table (Dewald, 2008). Studies have shown that the sommelier can increase beverage sales from 10 to 25 percent (Manske and Cordua, 2005). Today, several organizations are dedicated to improving beverage and service education (Dewald, 2008); these organizations include the Court of Master Sommeliers or CMS, the Wine & Spirit Education Trust or WSET, and the Society of Wine Educators, or SWE. With the increasing exposure of the sommelier in films, television, and other media, more people have taken wine certification exams than ever before. Therefore, this study seeks to explore: (1) the important competencies a sommelier needs to successfully perform in a fine dining restaurant and (2) if these wine education organizations are training these candidates enough to perform this role.

This study proposes conducting the competency study by using a mixed method of qualitative and quantitative research. Using the competencies that are required by CMS, WSET, and SWE for candidates to pass their certification exams, as well as the review of the literature, the author will form a pilot list of competencies in five categories: wine knowledge, communication, sales, staff training, and inventory or controls. The study will use a revised Delphi method; the author will conduct interviews with four Master Sommeliers that are currently or have worked in an on premise wine sales fine dining environment, using a system of open ended questions. Master Sommeliers from CMS were chosen as they are experts in the service of wine, which is educated in more detail through CMS. The pilot competency list will be presented to the Masters to give feedback and recommendations in editing the list. A final survey will be formed using this final list and will be sent to sommeliers that are currently working or have worked in on premise wine sales in a fine dining restaurant. Each competency will be rated on a five point Likert scale from “least important” to “most important” and will also be rated on a five point Likert scale for frequency of use from “least frequently used” to “most frequently used.” Each competency’s mean score will be calculated then these competencies will be ranked by importance and frequency of use. Competencies with mean scores over 4.50 will be categorized as essential, between 3.50-4.49 as considerably important, and between 2.50-3.49 as moderately important (Koenigsfeld et al., 2012). From the results, the author will conceptualize a competency model from the important and frequently used competencies as rated by these sommeliers.

Literature suggests a sommelier’s knowledge of wine plays an important role in measuring a sommelier’s competence. A sommelier’s credibility is based on his or her knowledge of the wine being sold to the customer; if the customer deems a sommelier’s credibility is low, then the sale of the wine will be lost (Manske and Cordua, 2005). Communication additionally is a necessary part of a sommelier’s competence; the sommelier that is knowledgeable and is able to communicate with authority about the wine is more likely to meet the customer’s needs (Kang and Hyun, 2012). Depending on the data analysis results and conceptualized model, the author will suggest changes to the wine education programs given by wine education organizations to better prepare prospective wine certification students.

References Available Upon Request

STUDENT PERSPECTIVES ON FOODSERVICE LABORATORIES IN A FOUR-YEAR HOSPITALITY PROGRAM

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Introduction

Hospitality management programs have historically contained a practical element in their curriculum due to the multi-faceted nature of the industry (Lashley & Morrison, 2000). These practical elements can take many forms depending on the type and goals of the program, two of the most used forms are internships (Brown, Arendt, & Bosselman, 2014) and laboratory courses (Weber, Chandler, & Finley, 2010). Research and hospitality education has identified the importance of these practical elements in curricula, in order for students to gain deep experiential learning and develop the expertise necessary in future employment (Kolb & Kolb, 2005); however student perceptions of these courses are currently not being studied. This research will focus on the practical elements of laboratory courses within the context of a university. Hospitality programs within four-year universities primarily address the theoretical aspects of the hospitality industry (Harkison, Poulston, & Kim, 2011) which may lead to a lack of hands-on experiences for students. Therefore, the practical elements learned in a lab setting become an important factor in providing students with an accurate view of the hospitality industry, and the perception of these elements may affect their perception of the industry.

The purpose of this study is to examine hospitality students’ perceptions of practical/vocational courses within the hospitality curriculum. Student understanding of the relevance of these courses with regard to future employment will be examined. Student satisfaction with practical/vocational courses will be addressed as well. The following research questions guided the study: What are the students’ perspectives of the experiential activities in their foodservice laboratory courses? Do students perceive that labs assist in learning concepts that relate to their future employment in the hospitality industry?

Methods

Based on the review of literature, a questionnaire will be developed for the study and evaluated by a panel of subject-matter experts (SMEs) consisting of hospitality faculty and practitioners. After the instrument is compiled, it will be pilot tested and modified if necessary and retested on samples not included within the final study. Students will be invited to participate during the lecture portion of their laboratory course and given access information to the online survey via Qualtrics.

Results/Discussion

The results of this study will provide hospitality program administrators and faculty with insight into what the hospitality student views and how they relate to their future career. With this important insight into the students’ point of view, decision making about improvements addressing the needs of the graduates from these programs will become an option. The findings will report current student satisfaction levels and perceived future utility of lab courses.

References Available Upon Request

LEARNING STYLES IN HOSPITALITY ONLINE EDUCATION: SUPPORT FOR FACULTY AND STUDENTS

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Introduction
Hospitality online education has become a new venue for hospitality employees to obtain degrees needed to advance the corporate ladder. For online education to continue development, part of its focus must be to continue to improve the quality of these courses (Cheng, 2013). Cheng agrees, that instructors are a vital role in improving and maintaining quality. This paper will look into quality of online instructors by how they use their strengths of their individual learning styles in their online.

Purpose
The purpose of this research is to understand how to provide support for faculty in hospitality online education for students and learning style preferences and how that influences hospitality instructors course delivery and creation. The objectives are as followed:

1. To identify institutional support for faculty utilizing learning styles in hospitality online education.
2. To identify learning preferences of online hospitality instructors.
3. To describe how online hospitality instructors use their preferred learning preference in their courses.
4. To compare institutional support to online hospitality instructor desired method of course delivery.

Instrument and Design
The design that will be used for this research is descriptive survey. The instrument will be designed to address preferred learning styles and support for utilizing learning styles in online courses. The participants will be asked which learning style theory they use to identify their needs and given that particular test. They will than be given the results and asked if they use their styles to develop or if these results have influenced their teaching. A panel of exports will review the survey before distribution for clarity. Since learning styles have already been established validity and reliability for this section has already been established. A pilot study will address the remaining sections of the instrument's validity and reliability. The population includes instructors that currently teach hospitality online courses.

Implications
This research will provide insight into the hospitality's online education by providing valuable information for both administrators and educators. It will provide descriptive information on which methods are being used to teach hospitality online courses and therefore it can suggest tools needed to support their online programs. In a recent study just below half of college administers nation wide believed they did not have the proper tools needed to support instructors teaching online (Allen & Seaman, 2013). By providing more information to our administrators this can allow decision makers to implement the necessary support. With support in place, students will be able to receive a quality online education, as we develop new techniques to address their preferred learning styles.

References Available Upon Request

GENERATION Y's PRECEPTION OF THE SERVQUAL IN HOTEL INDUSTRY

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Introduction

The baby Boomer generation has started slowly losing their hold on the attention of the hospitality industry (Kelley. B. 2009). Thus, Generation Y will become the main focus of many revenue managers, general managers, and industry executives because of their large size and highly purchasing power (Agarwal, 2009). A study showed that 34% of the US population will be from generation Y by the year 2030, which means generation Y should be considered as a target market for the next years (Nusair et al, 2011). In addition, generation Y has special characteristics that are different than previous generations (Yan, 2006). Furthermore, generation Y, or millennials has described as "free spending but hard to reach generation." Therefore, hotels operators should give more attention to generation Y in order to meet their expectations (Sherman, 2008). In short, many hotels will tend to target generation Y because of the large number that is estimated in the near future (Anderson, 2011). For instance, Marriott hotel chain is trying to take a step forward among its competitors by creating a new brand name is called Moxy in order to attract people from generation Y. .

Method

The participants for this study will be generation Y's guests who are staying at Marriott Hotel Airport of Philadelphia. Also, the study will include both male and female that only represent generation Y with expected 150 participants. These participants will be given a survey questions that include their perception of service quality while their stay at the hotel by using the five dimensions of SERVQUAL: tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy.

Results/Discussion:

This study will contribute to have a better understanding of the generation Y's perception of service quality in the hotel industry, especially there lack of studies that investigate the generation Y's perception of service quality in the hotel industry.

References upon request

ASSESSING CHANGES IN INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE AMONG UNDERGRADUATE HOSPITALITY STUDENTS ENROLLED IN A FOODSERVICE COURSE AT A FOUR-YEAR PROGRAM

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Introduction

In today's college-level hospitality programs there is a necessity to recognize that their alumni should carry with them the tools to function proficiently in an increasingly diverse industry. Demographers have pointed out that the "face" of being American is shifting at a swift pace (Jain, 2013). Intercultural competence, defined as the ability to work with people from different cultures and as the "capability to accurately understand and adapt behavior to cultural differences and commonalities" (Hammer, 2014), is now and will continue to be a competitive advantage in hospitality management. In a business world that is increasingly multicultural and global, industry professionals must become more adept at dealing with a diverse clientele (Manzo, 1994). With this in mind, the purpose of this study is to assess changes in intercultural competency, using the intercultural development inventory (IDI) among students enrolled in a foodservice course at a four-year hospitality program, within a public land-grant university. This study will answer the following research questions: 1. Is a diversity-related training effective, in a significant manner, in changing perceptions toward multicultural issues? 2. Do students improve their intercultural competence as a result of their participation in the diversity training?

Methods

This study will use the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) to assess students' intercultural perspectives before and after a concise diversity training. The IDI is a theory based statistically reliable, psychometric standardized, 50-item instrument, which measures cognitive structures (Hammer, Bennett, & Wiseman, 2003). The IDI can be completed in 15-20 minutes. Once students complete the IDI, the IDI web/based analytic program scores each person's answer and generates a number of reports. This instrument could be used to determine the group's level of intercultural competence. The target population in this study will be undergraduate students enrolled in a foodservice course at a Four-year Program. The dependent variables will be students' changes in intercultural competence, measured by the IDI. The independent variable will be students' participation in the training. The current study will be exploratory in nature and will use cross-sectional data gathered.

Results/Discussion

The findings of this study will report current and post-training student skills in multicultural competence. Through this research it is possible to recognize the effect of training on student perspectives regarding diversity and working with diverse populations, giving place to validating the need for such training to other student populations.

References Available Upon Request

THE UNDERLYING REASONS FOR DEVIANT BEHAVIORS IN HOSPITALITY ENTRY-LEVEL MANAGERS

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Introduction

Deviant behaviors in the hospitality industry are common but there is a dearth of research on deviance in hospitality entry-level managers. The purpose of this study is to examine the underlying reasons of why hospitality managers commit deviant acts and develop a theory of deviance that explains these actions. A grounded theory approach will be used in this study because of its distinct benefits when studying little known human behaviors. The significance of this study will contribute to the theoretical development of deviant behavior theories and assist hospitality operation leaders by illuminating the true causes of management deviance in their operations.

Methods

In-depth interviews will be the single way data is collected for this study and all interviews will be conducted by the lead researcher. The researcher feels that participants may be willing to share more with one interviewer than a panel of interviewers as this topic can be sensitive to some people. Once interviews have concluded the lead researcher will be responsible for coding the interviews into categories. The interviews will be semi-structured because some questions will be developed ahead of time and some questions will be asked based on the participant's responses. Three pilot tests will be conducted prior to the actual data collection allowing the researcher to make adjustments to the questions if there is any concern on wording or bias. Participants will be selected using a purposive sample that seeks out to use just participants who have been managers in the hospitality industry and committed deviant acts or behaviors. The researcher will also have to use a form of snowball sampling because finding managers who are deviant and willing to participate may be difficult. The ideal sample size for this research would be between 40 and 60 interviews or until there was data saturation. After each set of interviews the data will be reviewed and coded. Categories will be created from the first set of data and themes will be extracted from each interview. This will be the process for each interview so the researcher will not try and fit other interview data into categories created from previous interview data. After all the data has been coded, then the interviews will be looked at as a whole and categories will be matched. Validity will be confirmed by using member checking. Reliability will be established by having the interviews audio-taped and transcribed, and then reviewing the transcriptions once again with the audio files.

Results/Discussion

The researcher expects that the participants that are forthcoming are expected to explain their negative behaviors based on the fact that they are not paid equal to the job they are performing and that there is little satisfaction in their current job role. This is consistent with previous hospitality literature and often a common theme associated with hospitality managers. Previous deviant behavior studies claim that the individual is often solely responsible for their actions and this is an expectation for this study as well.

References Available Upon Request

IMPORTANCE OF WORKPLACE FRIENDSHIP: A BUFFERING EFFECT ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMOTIONAL DISSONANCE AND BURNOUT

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Introduction

The importance of workplace friendship is more apparent in the hospitality industry than in other non-service-oriented industries because of the industry's unique nature of labor. Hospitality employees engage in emotional labor in addition to physical and mental labor. During the everyday service interaction with customers, hospitality employees should avoid displaying any forms of negative response towards customers; they also must show positive outward expression regardless their genuine inner feelings. Such regulation of emotion often create clash between genuine emotion and emotion expressed to meet the job requirement; this emotional dissonance may generate detrimental outcomes like job tension, job stress, and emotional distress because it is taxing and uncomfortable when repeated. Given that emotional dissonance is a major source of burnout, the positive functions of workplace friendship may play a significant role in the emotional labor-burnout relationship.

Despite beneficial functions of workplace friendship, little investigations have focused on the role of workplace friendship in the relationship between emotional labor and burnout. Therefore, this study will examine the direct effect of emotional dissonance on three dimensions of burnout (i.e., emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced sense of accomplishment) and moderating effect of workplace friendship on such relationships.

Methods

The sample of this study will be 400 frontline employees working for hotels and restaurants in the United States. Online survey questionnaire will be used to collect data. Workplace friendship will be measured using a 6-item scale developed by Nielsen et al. (2000). Emotional dissonance will be measured by Chu and Murrmann's (2004) 16-item scale. Burnout will be measured by the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach & Jackson, 1986). Initial data analysis will use a principal components factor analysis where interdependent correlations among the variables and the accuracy of each classification are analyzed. Next, the direct associations between perceived emotional dissonance and three components of burnout will be examined. Finally, moderating effects of workplace friendship on the direct relationships will be examined through the moderated hierarchical regression analysis.

Discussion

Positive functions of workplace friendship within the employee work role have not been explored from the emotional labor perspective. Therefore, the major significance of this study is to provide insights for hospitality operators on how to mitigate employee burnout from engaging in emotional labor. This study also provides a theoretical underpinning for future emotional labor research from an extended perspective.

References Available Upon Request

FUNCTIONAL AND EMOTIONAL COMPETENCIES OF CONVENTION SERVICE MANAGERS: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

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Introduction

Convention service managers (CSMs) may play an integral role in ensuring that group business (i.e. meeting planners) will select their venue for future meetings and conventions. CSM performance in functional competency during the service encounter may not be sufficient to secure repeat business alone, however. Soft skill performance (i.e. emotional competence) may also prove to be an important factor that influences the meeting planner's intention to repurchase. The functional competencies of CSMs have yet to be established in the literature, and emotional competence has yet to be studied in a business-to-business client facing industry like the convention industry. Therefore, the purpose of this study is tri-fold: to firmly establish the functional competencies of CSMs in the convention literature; to evaluate CSMs on functional and emotional competence ratings; and to compare the results of those competency ratings along three groups (direct supervisors of CSMs, CSMs, and clients of CSMs) to gain a holistic perspective of CSM performance.

Methods

A mixed method approach will be taken in order to meet this study's objectives. Since this study is exploratory in the sense that functional competencies of CSMs have yet to be identified in the literature, a qualitative methodology is appropriate for collecting such data. However, because part of this study is also investigating how well CSMs perform in functional and emotional competency areas, a quantitative analysis of competency evaluations is also necessary. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with executives of 5 major hotel brands in the Central Florida area that are "convention hotels" to identify the functional competencies of CSMs. It is meaningful to interview these individuals because they will be able to identify the overarching functional competency areas that CSMs should possess. Additionally, focus groups with meeting planners will be conducted to validate the functional competencies as identified by the executives, and a questionnaire will be developed. Finally, in order to gain a holistic perspective of CSM performance, the functional competency questionnaire will be combined with an existing emotional competency questionnaire, and will be distributed electronically to three groups of individuals: direct supervisors of CSMs, CSMs, and clients of CSMs (meeting planners).

Results/Discussion

The results of this study are expected to yield implications for both practitioners and academia. Should the results of this study reveal gaps in functional and/or emotional competency areas with regard to how CSMs are scored across groups, managers will be able to gain a better understanding of where CSMs need to improve with regard to competency development. The results of this study may also serve as a foundation for exploring how meeting planners become loyal, by incorporating constructs such as service quality and service failure recovery as antecedents in the model. Finally, it is important to note that the results of this study may not generalize to other vendors who service meeting planners, as the manner by which a vendor services the client is contingent upon the service being provided. Thus, another potential area for future research would be to explore the functional competencies of other vendors who service meeting planners.

References Available Upon Request

PRESENTEEISM AMONG HOSPITALITY MANAGERS: THE EFFECTS OF ORGANIZATIONAL ABSENCE CLIMATE SALIENCE AND TEAM COHESION

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Introduction

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of organizational absence climate and team cohesion on presenteeism among managers in the hospitality industry. Unlike hourly employees, for whom absenteeism is an industry-wide concern, presenteeism, or the practice of reporting to work while ill, is the prevailing practice among hospitality managers. The occurrence of presenteeism is of particular concern in the hospitality industry because, in addition to negative impacts such as reduced quality of work life and loss of productivity, hospitality managers have high levels of face-to-face contact with guests and employees and hands-on contact with food which can result in the rapid spread of disease if the manager is sick. This study hypothesizes that absence climate salience at the organizational level has a positive relationship with hospitality manager presenteeism and that cohesion at the team level has a negative relationship with hospitality manager presenteeism.

Methods

A cross-level study using an online survey will be conducted among front-line managers from a total of 17 national restaurant and hotel chains. In regard to restaurants, front-of-house and kitchen managers from a leading restaurant company headquartered in Central Florida that specializes in casual and upscale casual dining will be invited to participate in the survey. This company represents eight major restaurant chains. For hotels, front desk and housekeeping managers will be selected from a hotel company that owns nine leading chains that represent the midscale, upscale, upper-upscale, and luxury segments. Twenty locations from each chain will be randomly selected and the survey will be sent to the managers from each location. Although all of the chains are national, they do not all operate the same number of locations; selecting the same number of locations from each chain will avoid biasing the sample to the larger chains. The managers will be asked to complete a 40-item questionnaire that assesses absence climate, organizational absence climate salience, presenteeism, and cohesion using existing measures, along with several control variables. A request to participate in the survey will be sent via email. The body of the email will invite the managers to participate, provide the link to the survey, and explain that the survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Managers will have 30 days to complete the survey, with reminders sent at 14, 21, and 28 days as a means of increasing the response rate.

Results/Discussion

This study is expected to contribute to the literature in three ways. First, it will provide empirical evidence for the extent to which presenteeism affects managers in the hospitality industry. Second, it examines the antecedents of presenteeism for hospitality managers at multiple levels. Third, this is the first study to directly investigate the relationship between team cohesion and presenteeism. Should the results lend support to the hypotheses, the implication is that the social context at multiple levels influences manager attendance behaviors in the hospitality industry.

References Available Upon Request

GENERATION Y AND BEYOND: MISMATCH OR WIN-WIN FOR THE CRUISE INDUSTRY?

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Introduction

Like the foodservice and lodging segments of the hospitality industry, human resource issues in the cruise segment remain a serious concern for industry practitioners. The cruise industry continues to grow rapidly, and in 2014, cruise lines expect to transport 21.7 million cruise passengers. Additionally, as a sign of continued confidence in the industry, cruise lines are planning to launch 24 new ships by 2015. Cruise companies will need to recruit additional staff for these ships, and the recruitment pool now includes Generation Y candidates.

Generation Y, defined as those born between 1980-2003, are characterized as being very different in their career needs and expectations compared to earlier generations. The purpose of this study is to gauge if the unique aspects of the cruise industry could appeal to Generation Y workers. For example, a contract requiring several months at sea could prove to be attractive to this population, as it would also offer travel opportunities with free room and board. The tendency for members of Generation Y's to welcome diversity is advantageous when working with the typically international cruise staff. However, other aspects of the industry, such as a military command structure, may need to be evaluated if Generation Y workers are found to respond and perform better in a more consensus-building or other organizational structure.

Proposed Methods

Electronic quantitative survey instruments with Likert scales will assess: (a) hospitality students' career expectations and awareness of the cruise industry as an employment option; (b) cruise line recruiter perceptions of Generation Y employees, and (c) current Generation Y-aged cruise employees' perspectives of their industry. Generation Y-aged students enrolled in 22 State University of New York hospitality programs, cruise line recruiters, and Generation Y-aged cruise line employees will be targeted. As previous research has only been able to use very small samples of cruise line employees, the researchers will request the assistance of the Cruise Lines International Association, the world's largest cruise association, to access a greater number of recruiters and cruise line staff.

Significance of Study

Results from this study could contribute to a better understanding of how the cruise industry can and may be perceived by Generation Y and possibly the generation that will come after them ("Generation Z"). Hospitality programs in the State University of New York system will also benefit from greater knowledge of their students' career expectations and perceptions of the cruise industry.

References Available Upon Request

EMPLOYMENT ANTECEDENTS THAT IMPACT TURNOVER IN FOODSERVICE MANAGERS WITHIN HOTELS

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Introduction

It is projected that jobs in the hospitality and tourism industry will reach over 337 million world-wide by 2023 (WTTC, 2014). Hospitality practitioners and researchers agree that one of the greatest employment threats is turnover (Lee & Way, 2010). The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported that the hospitality industry has an estimated employee turnover rate of 62.7% annually (US DOL, 2012).

Turnover in the hospitality and tourism industry is of particular importance, where the relationship between employee and customer is critical (Heung & Lam, 2003). In addition to the impact on customers, the negative effects of human capital losses and high turnover have an impact on an organization's operational functions and financial performance (Dess & Shaw, 2001; Shaw, Duffy, Johnson, & Lockhart, 2005).

The first step in understanding turnover is identifying the various antecedents that result in turnover. Griffeth, Hom, and Gaertner (2000) determined several predictors of turnover including: organizational commitment, job satisfaction, pay, performance, demographics, and intention to leave. Costen and Salzar (2011) identified training and development as key antecedents in job satisfaction and intent to stay. Additionally, Subramanian & Shin (2013) found that organizational climate were antecedents of turnover.

Within hospitality, foodservice has traditionally experienced the highest turnover. However, there is a gap in the research in terms of turnover in foodservice departments within hotels. This study is will investigate the turnover antecedents for foodservice departments within hotels.

Methods

This study will investigate the antecedents that are influential on manager turnover in foodservice operations within hotels. This study will employ a quantitative approach by utilizing a questionnaire based on previous research (Cho, Johnason, & Guchait, 2009; Moncarz, Zhao, & Kay, 2009; Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979; Nagy, 2002; Way, Sturman, & Raab, 2010). The questionnaire will be divided into two main sections; demographic information and turnover antecedents.

Data Collection

A pilot test of managers of foodservice locations within hotels will be conducted to test the survey's validity and reliability. Upon completion of any necessary modification the questionnaire will be sent to 220 foodservice managers of an independent hotel management company within U.S. The questions regarding each construct will then be analyzed for their impact on turnover.

References Available Upon Request

SUSTAINABILITY TRAINING MODULES FOR TEMPORARY EMPLOYEES IN THE MEETING AND EVENTS INDUSTRY

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Introduction

Given the increased perception of environmental issues, many meeting and event organizations have begun putting considerable effort into developing environmentally sustainable development. The purpose of this paper is to investigate how effectively management in a meeting and event organization can ensure that temporary employees initiate sustainable practices using an environmental waste management-training module. The condition of learning theory has been developed to describe and predict how people learn from different conditions. This can often yield a number of rules for optimal training conditions. This theory has been applied to several industries to teach managers how to deal more effectively with different internal and external conditions. This research will utilize conditions of learning theory concepts and training methods and apply them to the sustainability-training module for temporary employees developed in this study.

Methods

This study entails developing a training program, instituting the program at three hotels that have agreed to participate, and then surveying the participants both before and after the program has completed. A control hotel has also been identified. The waste management-training program will be provided in the form of activities, simulations, observations, and on the job trainings. The training program is divided in to three modules: general, specific, and application. Each module demonstrates how to apply effective methods and best practices for environmentally sustainable development in meetings and events. Targeted areas to examine include: food service, facility maintenance, and parking service. The training module, specifically designed for temporary employees, will stress basic communication skills and efficiency. It is expected that managers will exercise this based on the hierarchy that should be completed to facilitate learning at each level in accordance with the conditions of learning theory.

Results/Discussion

By assisting employees and providing them with both knowledge and application, these influential front line works should be able to transfer what is learned in theory and training to the workplace. The training module developed in this paper will give upper management an insight of how to train employees effectively by enabling them to understand and appropriately carry out sustainability practices in a short period of time. Additionally, this training module is intended to encourage employees to receive hands-on sustainability practice by engaging in brief training modules. This type of program should not only improve employee performance, but should also create a positive culture of sustainable efforts within the organization and the overall industry.

References Available Upon Request

THE RELATIONS BETWEEN EMOTIONAL VARIABILITY, ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTIFICATION, AND TURNOVER

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Introduction
Individuals' emotions vary over time, and researchers have rarely recognized the unique contributions that within-person variability might make to a full understanding of emotions. The present study attempts to investigate the relation between emotional variability and turnover. In addition, we will also investigate content-relevant individual differences, namely organizational identification, as moderators of the relation.

Methods
This study will use experience sampling methodology to investigate the hypotheses in an intra-individual, episodic or momentary approach. The sample will include 80 hotel employees. To participate in the study, employees first will need to complete a survey assessing organizational identification and demographic variables. The next stage of the study will entail completing one phone-based survey each working day during a two-week period.

Results/Discussion
We anticipate that positive emotion variability and negative emotion variability will be positively associated with employee turnover. Besides, negative emotion variability will have a stronger relation with turnover than positive emotion variability. In addition, organizational identification will moderate the relation between emotional variability and turnover intentions such that the relation will be weaker for those high in organizational identification. The present study attempts to move towards a dynamic account of emotion that acknowledges the significance of emotional variability for turnover.

References Available Upon Request

DETERMINING ANTICIPATED INTENTIONS TO LEAVE HOTELIERS' POSITIONS: A CASE STUDY OF SARASOTA-MANATEE COUNTY

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Introduction

The sharp influx of travelers has made and continues to make the Tourism and Hospitality industry an important area of employment for a variety of groups in the labor market. Turnover is a rate and the percentage which an employer loses and hires staff is called employee turnover. The employers who treat their employees as an investment, may lose good and valuable assets of the company, which is going to increase turnover rates because the employer spends time and money in order to train employees. Employee turnover is a comparison of the amount of employees a company has to replace to the average amount of total employees (Beam, 2009). In lower paying jobs, employee turnover is higher than other jobs, a concern to many companies. "Companies take a deep interest in their employee turnover rate because it is a costly part of doing business" (Beam, 2009). Major problems of turnover have been grouped under four topics: Compensation- rate problem, poor training, weak leadership and unreasonable expectations.

Methods

This study will be assessed hoteliers who are working in Sarasota-Manatee County. The research will be carried out via a questionnaire in 2015. A total of 12 items will be used to measure hoteliers' intentions to leave their existing positions or anticipated turnover through Anticipated Turnover Scale (ATS) which was developed by Hinshaw and Atwood (1982, 1984). The respondents will be asked to evaluate the importance of the identified turnover intention issues using a seven – point Likert scale. In addition, a total of 10 questions will be involved demographic information of the respondents. Using stratified sampling method, the hotels will be grouped by their bed capacities and luxury-budget classification. After being permitted to take the survey from hotel administrations, the questionnaire will be emailed to hotel employees and a pre-test will be conducted to refine the survey tool.

Results/Discussion

High employee turnover, employee dissatisfaction with compensation, schedule choices, poor benefits and moral utility are the greatest areas of concern in the Hospitality and Tourism industry. In order to improve employee morale while not leading to degeneracy and habitually undesirable work habits, companies must fulfill the morale and obligations to both the employee and their community. The problems faced by many service industries are persuasive and cannot be solved solely through the human resources department. Service companies should cooperate with government social services, colleges, and universities to find out the main source of this issue and try to lower the turnover.

WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT IN CHINESE RESTAURANT INDUSTRY: DISCOVERING SOCIAL IDENTITY FROM FAMILIAL AND WORKPLACE CONTEXT

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Introduction

As restaurants play an important role in service industry, employees working in that field often suffer from work-family conflict issues. Bellavia and Frone (2005) defined that “Work-family conflict can be described as a form of special conflict in which the pressures from the work and family domain are mutually incompatible.” At the same time, it is suggested that employees need to control the work-family balance in order to work better for organizations and reducing the conflict should be the first step that companies to take (Carlson, 2009). To find ways of handling the conflict, reasons of the conflict should be examined. Humanity support is one such reason. Any kind of support may come from family members as well as from training sessions provided by employers. However, why family members or employers are not willing to provide such support is a question to examine. This study hypothesizes that social identity from family and workplace domains is the main cause of the unsupportive environment.

Methods

Chinese servers in Full-time restaurants in Beijing will be the population of this study. Part-time servers and other positions such as chef or managers will not be included in this study. The target employee will be recruited from individually owned restaurants. Questions that will be related to servers’ work family conflict and social identity, family members’ understanding of employee social identity and demographic questions will be included in a survey. A possible five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 5 (strongly disagree to strongly agree) will be used for all questions in the survey excluding the demographic questions.

Results/Discussion

This study will contribute to the understanding of work family conflict and social identity of Chinese restaurant workers and their families’ perceptions of social identity.

References Available Upon Request

ACKNOWLEDGING ONE'S AGE IN THE WORKPLACE: DOES CONTENT MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

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Introduction

Although workers 40 and over are protected against employment discrimination by law, older workers lose their jobs faster than any other age group, yet are making up more and more of the overall labor force. Oftentimes, these displaced older workers re-career into front-line positions. At the same time, the hospitality industry faces higher turnover than other industries, and researchers have suggested that the hospitality industry tap into the older workforce. However, just as individuals hold age stereotypes about people, jobs are also stereotyped by age. The older worker may thus be disadvantaged in many hospitality jobs as these jobs are age-stereotyped (age-typed) as a young person's jobs, and older workers in young age-stereotyped jobs have been found to receive lower evaluations. This study thus proposes to examine the stigmatization of older workers in the hospitality industry, and strategies that older workers may utilize to remediated these negative outcome, specifically acknowledging the worker's age along with providing counter-stereotypical information.

Methods

We propose to present a service interaction in a young-typed job (food server) where we manipulate age and content of acknowledgement, in a 2 (age: young vs. old) X 3 (acknowledgement type: stereotypical vs. counter-stereotypical vs. none) between-subjects design. 107 participants will act as customers, observe a short video displaying a food server at work and rate the service interaction.

Results/Discussion

We expect to find a main effect of age on service satisfaction, such that satisfaction will be significantly greater in response to younger servers. We also expect to find an interaction between age and acknowledgment type such that for older servers, providing stereotypical information will result in the most negativity, followed by providing no information, with providing counter-stereotypical information resulting in the most positivity.

This study contributes theoretically to the acknowledgement literature. Though researchers have shown that acknowledging a stigmatized identity can result in positive outcomes, boundary conditions do exist (e.g., perceived controllability of the acknowledged stigma, timing of the acknowledgment). In this study, we examine how the content of the acknowledgment may affect outcomes. Practically, findings from this study provide a call to management to be aware of age-stereotypes associated with many hospitality jobs and to be wary of negative outcomes. Additionally, this study presents strategies that older workers who are targets of job age-related discrimination may utilize to buffer against negative outcomes.

References Available Upon Request

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK-RELATED STRESS AND JOB SATISFACTION IN THE HOTEL INDUSTRY: THE MODERATING EFFECTS OF SELF-MONITORING AND SERVICE CLIMATE

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Introduction

Job satisfaction is widely discussed as one of the job outcomes largely affected by job stress. It is not surprising that work-related stress produces a negative effect on job satisfaction. However, researchers started to recognize different types of stressors. Challenge stressors refer to job demands which employees perceive as opportunities for personal growth while hindrance stressors are viewed as obstacles. Therefore, challenge stressors are positively related to job satisfaction, while hindrance stressors are negatively related. Moreover, challenge stressors and hindrance stressors play the role of job demands in the job demands and job resources (JD-R) model (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011). Organizational resources and personal resources are expected to moderate the relationship between the stressors and job satisfaction. The purpose of the study is to test the effects of challenge and hindrance stressors on job satisfaction in the hotel industry. More importantly, this study aims to investigate the moderating effects of employees' level of self-monitoring and perceived service climate based on the JD-R model. Employees' self-monitoring represents personal resources, and service climate represents organizational resources that employees utilize to overcome job demands at their work.

Method

The target population of the study is frontline employees at mid-range hotels (i.e., three to four stars) located in the United States who can be recruited from the Amazon Mechanical Turk (Mturk). The questionnaire will contain five sections with thirty nine items. The measurement items of five constructs are adopted from previous studies (Cavanaugh et al., 2000; Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins, & Klesh, 1983; Snyder & Gangestad, 1986; Schneider et al., 1998). Each item will be measured by Likert-type scales ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Lastly, respondents will be asked to provide their information regarding demographics and employment. The CFA will be employed to assess a measurement model and a hierarchical multiple regression will be conducted to test the proposed hypotheses, using SPSS and AMOS 20.0 version.

Anticipated results/discussions

Results of the findings will add empirical evidence to the research of challenge and hindrance stressors in the hospitality industry. This study will extend the JD-R model by dividing the demands into the two types of stressors and investigating the moderating effects of organizational and personal resources on the relationship between job demands and job satisfaction. In addition, this study helps practitioners better understand the significance of organizational and personal resources in managing different types of stressors.

References Available Upon Request

EMPLOYEE PSYCHOLOGICAL ENGAGEMENT IN HOTELS: STRATEGIES USED IN ORIENTATION PROGRAMS

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Introduction

More and more employers have realized the importance of work engagement which refers to "a positive fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption" (Schaufeli & Bakker., 2002, p. 74). Orientation programs provide new employees with the information they need to succeed in a company (Woods, Johanson, & Sciarini, 2012, p. 163). Usually, these information is comprehensive but not attractive to employees. If an organization could offer attractive and useful information and build up a good image to its new employees in the orientation programs, the new employees are more likely to be engaged in the organization in the very beginning. As a result, improving the effectiveness of orientation will undoubtedly speed up the process for employees' psychological engagement.

The purpose of this study is to discuss the strategies that could be used to boost the effectiveness of orientation in the hotel industry, and ultimately increase employees' engagement levels. Interviews and a survey questionnaire will be utilized to obtain information about the current orientation. These methods will also be used to find effective strategies. It is anticipated that the strategies brought about in this study could help the hotel industry create effective orientation programs, improve employees' engagement levels, and finally develop the hotel's overall performance.

Methods

The participants in this study will include hotel employees conveniently selected from a pool of hotel employees working in different hotels in Stillwater, Oklahoma. In terms of the survey questionnaire, employee engagement will be measured through Allen's (2006) 5 items, such as "This job is all consuming; I am totally into it". And participants will respond in a five-point Liker scale from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. T-test will be used for the difference between strategy-used employees and non-strategy-used employees. Linear Regression Analysis will be used to analyze the relationship between orientation and psychological work engagement. All the data will be analyzed through the *Statistical Product and Service Solution* (*SPSS*) software.

Results/Discussion

Practically, if employees could be engaged since orientation, not only the employees will enjoy their job more and improve their life wellbeing, but also the organization will benefit more from employees' outperformance. Theoretically, there is few researches connecting employee engagement with orientation, let alone discussing the strategies used in orientation to speed up the process of engagement. This study may help to fill the research gap.

References Available Upon Request

PERSONALITY TRAITS OF MACAU HOSPITALITY EMPLOYEES THAT MITIGATE STRESS

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Introduction

The objective of this study is to determine personality traits of hospitality employees that are specific to the Chinese culture and that relieve job related stress. The turnover rate and turnover intention numbers for the hospitality industry are staggering. Many organizations are losing their strongest asset, the employee, who provides the service and is the representative of the organization. Even with many researchers focusing on this longstanding problem, little change has occurred. The high employee turnover rates still plague the hospitality industry. Macau is the world's leader in gaming tourism and had 22 million tourist visits in 2006 (Tang & Sheng, 2009). Reducing employee turnover in Macau's booming tourism industry would have a huge financial impact.

Methods

This is a qualitative study that will rely on interviews for the data collection process. The sample of this study will consist of gaming managers from five different Macau casinos. The interview will consist of questions that pertain to personality traits of ethnic Chinese employees who deal with high levels of stress. NVivo will be used to analyse the qualitative data and identify trends. The interviewer will take great care to ensure reliability and validity.

Results/Discussion

The results will reveal cultural personality traits that relate to job related stress. This information from this study will also increase the understanding of employee turnover in the hospitality field and fill in gaps in research in the Asia hospitality industry. The study will conclude by suggesting specific traits for Chinese companies to look for when hiring staff and also present warning signs of employee job burnout due to stress.

References Available Upon Request

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SERVICE CLIMATE, JOB CRAFTING, AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN THE HOTEL INDUSTRY

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Introduction

Front-line employees in the hotel, play a crucial role in building relationships with customers and creating loyal customers (Babakus, Yavas, Karatepe, & Avci, 2003). However, these front-line employees suffer from role stress, excessive workloads, and burnout because of the nature of their jobs (Karatepe & Sokmen, 2006). Hence, job design has been one of the significant research topics in the hospitality industry in order to find ways to improve employee job satisfaction, performance, and retention (Chen, Yen, & Tsai, 2014). Previous studies related to job design theory took a top-down approach, which indicates that managers are in charge of job designs (Hackman & Oldham, 1980; Campion & McClelland, 1993). However, researchers started to recognize the significance of employees' proactive roles in changing and redesigning certain aspects of a job (Grant & Ashford, 2008). The purpose of the study is to test the antecedent and consequences of job crafting in the hotel industry. To be specific, the objectives of this study are threefold: first, to investigate the effect of service climate as an antecedent of job crafting; second, to examine the moderating effect of proactive personality on the relationship between service climate and job crafting; third, to assess the relationship between job crafting and employees' in role/extra role performance.

Methods

The target population of the study is front-line employees who are currently working at mid-range hotels (three to four stars) in the United States who have accounts with Amazon Mechanical Turk (Mturk). In order to collect the data, an online survey will be conducted through Mturk, an online platform that enables researchers to recruit survey participants. The self-administered questionnaire will be developed including five sections: 1) service climate, 2) job crafting, 3) proactive personality, 4) employees' in role performance, 5) extra role performance, and 6) demographics and employment characteristics. In order to get respondents' profiles, descriptive statistics will be used. A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and a structural equation modeling (SEM) will be conducted to assess the measurement model and to test the proposed model, respectively. For data analysis, SPSS and AMOS 20.0 version will be used.

Results/Discussion

The findings will provide researchers and practitioners with a better understanding of service climate, how organizational efforts motivate employees to design their own job, and of the significance of job crafting in terms of employees' performance. Therefore, the results of the study can provide practical implications in enhancing managerial practice and company resources for promoting employees' job crafting.

References Available Upon Request

FORMAL MENTORING AND ITS IMPACT ON EMPLOYEE AND ORGANIZATIONAL OUTCOMES: A PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT FRAMEWORK

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Introduction

One of the major challenges facing the hospitality industry is the retention of talented employees; especially well educated employees (Walsh & Taylor, 2007). Research has revealed that 70% of a top hotel school's graduates left their organization within six years of employment (Blomme, 2006). The hospitality industry has notable challenges regarding retention including non-traditional work schedules, stressful customer service contact, and a reliance on part-time employees (Hughes & Rog, 2008), which negatively affects employment longevity. Talented employees are needed in every organization; therefore, identifying an effective way to retain employees and promote their positive job-related behaviors and attitudes is critical.

Mentoring, as one of the most adopted employment training methods, is beneficial to both the organization and individual. Reducing employee turnover has been recognized as a major organizational benefit from mentoring (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004; Viator & Scandura, 1991; Kram, 1985), but the underlying mechanism has not been well studied. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to understand how formal mentoring is related to both valued employee and organizational outcomes. Specifically, mentoring functions will be examined as an antecedent to organizational commitment, turnover intention, and employees' organization citizenship behavior. In addition, the role of psychological contract breach in moderating the relationship between mentor functions and organizational commitment will also be examined. As one of the few empirical studies using psychological contract theory to explain mentoring, this study will extend scholars' understanding of formal mentoring and provide a new approach to assess mentoring and its benefits. Further, this study will also reveal the importance of a formal mentoring program for employers and assist in improving their existing mentor program.

Method

The data will be collected from employees at a major hospitality company engaged in a management-training program with formal mentoring. A link of the online survey on Qualtric.com will be sent to employees' work email addresses, which are provided by the company. Measurement scales will be adapted from previous research including Noe's (1988) 17-item mentor functions scale (Cronbach's α = .86 and .87 respectively to career mentoring and psychosocial mentoring), Meyer, Allen and Smith's (1993) 6-item scale for affective organizational commitment (Cronbach's α = .73), Williams and Anderson's (1991) 7-item scale for OCBI (Cronbach's α = .88) and 7-item scale for OCBO (Cronbach's α = .75), Michel's (1981) 4-item scale for turnover intention (Cronbach's α = .86) and Robinson and Morrison's (2000) 5-item scale for psychological breach (Cronbach's α = .92). Data will be analyzed through regression, path analysis or SEM, depending on the sample size.

References Available Upon Request

IS EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT WORKING WITH MILLENNIALS: A PROPOSED INVESTIGATION

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Introduction

Although the hospitality industry enjoys growth and opportunity, it has typically struggled when it comes to employee retention and reducing turnover. It is believed that the industry suffers from turnover rates between 78 and 95 percent, and any reduction in this area would result in significant cost savings for any organization. The term turnover is defined as the count of total separations, voluntary or involuntary, that includes quits, layoffs, discharges, and other separations that may include retirement, death, disability, and transfers within firms. Adding to this challenge is the emerging cohort of millennials who seek a different form of engagement and who are motivated distinctly differently when it comes to drivers of job performance and retention. Not only is the industry plagued with a historical problem of retaining employees, the emerging demographic of entrants is particularly challenging in terms of engagement and how to keep them motivated.

The purpose of this study is to examine whether employee engagement after recruiting is having an impact on recruits' job satisfaction and intention to continue. Specifically, the study seeks to examine this phenomenon from the point of view of millennials working in the industry. Findings can be used to better understand retention practices and will also pave the way for theoretical domains for new research.

Methods

Data will be collected using an online database of 900 hospitality alumni of a major university in the Northeastern United States who graduated within the recent five years. Working graduates will be directed to an online survey that will be comprised of questions that aim to specifically measure continued engagement, job satisfaction and their intention to continue in their companies. Measures will be adapted from a review of literature and operationalized to the hospitality industry. Data will be analyzed using SPSS wherein the relationships between the underlying dimensions of continued engagement and job satisfaction as well as intention to continue will be established using regression analysis.

Results/Discussion

Employee engagement is a process that needs to come from a structured beginning and be as evolving as our industry. The study's findings will help pull together the pieces of a structured recruiting, hiring, and training process, and bring about a furthered understanding of how the implementation of a continued engagement model will help retain millennials, and potentially lower the rate of turnover in the industry.

References Available Upon Request

THE ROLE SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES IN CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT WITH ONLINE CO-INNOVATION COMMUNITY IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

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Introduction
The concept of co-innovation has received increasing recognition as an effective business model to nurture customer's active engagement with firms' innovation activities (Hoyer et al., 2010). The widespread use of social media has triggered the effective utilization of 'co-innovation' in various service organizations (Ang, 2011). This has subsequently leaded to the establishment of online co-innovation community (OCC) where customers collaborate with firms to co-innovate for the improvement of products and services (Piller et al., 2011). Noticeably, there is an interesting relationship between social networking sites (SNSs) and online co-innovation community (OCC). OCC serves as digital social platform and has successfully engaged with customers through SNSs (such as Facebook, Twitter, Likedin) in an effort to entice and stimulate customers to engage with the community. Although some previous studies have discussed SNSs and OCC respectively, there has been limited number of studies that have addressed the relationship between them. This study, therefore, aims to contribute to the present body of knowledge by developing a conceptual framework and empirically testing the proposed model. Motivation theory (Bénabou & Tirole, 2003) is employed in this study as the theoretical foundation to explain the utilitarian (task-oriented and rational, Baumgartner, 2008) and hedonic (fun and emotional feeling of success, Baumgartner, 2008) motivations for customers to engage with online co-innovation community (OCC). Three propositions that examine the relationship between SNSs and OCC are proposed based on the literature review: (1) SNSs serve as an information source for OCCs customers. (2) SNSs serve as collaboration platforms for OCC customers to communicate co-innovation ideas with like-minded peers. (3) SNSs serve as a social platform for OCC customers to share their co-innovation ideas. Dependent variable for this study is customer engagement with OCC (Bijmolt et al., 2010).

Methods
Survey will be employed to test the proposed framework. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modeling (SEM) will be used to analyze the results and to test the predictions.

Results/Discussion
Social Networking sites (SNSs) are proposed to serve as unique platform for online co-innovation communities (OCCs) to facilitate better customer engagement activities. This paper examines the new role of OCCs and SNSs as they contribute to innovation research. Active customer engagement will create many positive outcomes that benefit both customers and companies.

References Available Upon Request

BUSINESS TRAVELERS` INTENTION TO PURCHASE; THE APPLICATION OF TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTANCE MODEL (TAM)

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Introduction
This research focused on factors of e-comments influencing business travellers' intention to purchase a hotel room. In order to explore the relationships among behavioural belief toward ease of use and usefulness of e-comments with intention to purchase, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) was used. The results of the proposed model indicated a positive relationship between usefulness and intention to purchase, as well as the moderating effect of age on ease of use of e-comments.

Methods
The survey for this study was administered with the aid of the Qualtrics online questionnaire service. The population for this research were business travellers in the United States. With the aid of the Technology Acceptance Model as well as the inclusive review of literature, the survey questionnaire was developed and modified to fit the hospitality industry. The data was structured for use with SPSS 19.0 and the Mplus 6.0 statistical software programs. In this research, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and Cronbach`s alpha were tested. In order to test the relationship among variables Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was used.

Results/Discussion
The results of the proposed model revealed that behavioural belief positively affects usefulness of e-comments, but no significant relationship was found for ease of use of e-comments. Since business travellers do believe that e-comments are a useful source of information to choose a hotel they would intend to purchase accordingly. However, because all business travellers cannot easily use e-comment websites, some may not intend to purchase a hotel room based on e-comments. On the other hand, the results of the Structural Equation Modelling revealed one moderating effect, which was the effect of age on ease of use of e-comments. This result suggests that while individuals from different generations believe that the Internet is useful to gather information, they may not find it an easy tool to utilize.

The findings of the current study are not only useful for hoteliers to attract the business market, but could also be used by online review website operators to make their websites less confusing and easier to access. Understanding business travellers' needs and wants will help hoteliers and website operators to position and differentiate themselves from competitors; for example, adding a direct link on the hotel website that takes users directly to the e-comment website(s). At the same time, website operators should simplify their webpages by eliminating additional information that may confuse inexperienced users.

References Available Upon Request

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING: A CASE STUDY OF A 147-ROOM HOTEL IN A COLLEGE TOWN IN THE US

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Introduction
Not every single hotel player is fully taking advantage of social media marketing or effectively exploring the potential of it. Unlike studies that focus on the social media performance in the whole industry or big hotel chains (Chan & Guillet, 2011), this paper aims at investigating the social media deficiency in the small or mid-sized hotels from suppliers' perspective and applying more effective social media strategies to similar types of hotels.

Methods
This paper uses both primary data and secondary data. The data collection took place from February 2014 to April 2014. Methodologies include observation, documents, and interview. The performance of various social media platforms at the hotel was analyzed by two key objectives: property recognition and property engagement. The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for Facebook at the hotel were collected on a daily basis and compared with the hotel's past as well as with the competitors. Indicators include number of daily new likes, daily total reach, daily total impressions, etc. Documents include the demographic information of Facebook-related users retrieved using the Facebook Audience Targeting tool. The relationship of total daily reach on Facebook, total daily impression and total daily check-ins was examined by running the Pearson Correlation. In addition, a qualitative interview was conducted with the marketing coordinator at the hotel to provide perceptions in the SWOT analysis.

Results
According to the collected data, the hotel lacks commitment to sustain social media marketing efforts over time. The KPIs analysis suggested that the hotel benefits mostly from the existing customers while not effectively attracting new customers. The interview reveals that the hotel received limited funding for investment in social media marketing from the management company. The demographic information shows that Facebook users do not match with the hotel's true target demographic. The Pearson Correlation results indicate a positive relationship between total daily reach and total daily check-ins ($r = .781$, $p = .00$) and also a positive relationship between total daily impressions and total daily check-ins ($r = .803$, $p = .00$). After examining the social media marketing performance at the 147-room hotel, one issue that remained unsolved is how to build up a more effective system to link social media marketing with revenue management. Recommendations are provided: The hotel should develop LinkedIn to target more business visitors; local search can make a big difference for small properties if used effectively and a proper amount of investment is needed. Theoretically, the paper brings up a hotel-specific social media theory that might fit small or mid-sized hotels. Practically, this study sets up an example of utilizing more effective strategies to manage and monitor the social media marketing performance in small or mid-sized hotels.

References Available Upon Request

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF SYNCHRONOUS VIRTUAL MEETING TECHNOLOGY (VMT) EMBEDDED CLASSES AND KEY FACTORS INFLUENCING PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS IN VARIOUS CLASS SET UPS

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Introduction

Natural communication involves: co-location, synchronicity, and the ability to convey and observe facial expression, body language, and speech. Therefore, the rich context of synchronous face-to-face communication is highly considered as an effective class communication and content delivery method (Kock, 2005). Virtual Meeting Technology (VMT) refers to tools for facilitating interactive and synchronous communications that take place over the Internet using features such as audio and video, instant messaging, and application sharing (Eduause, 2006). Therefore, VMT is gaining popularity and considered to be a future model of educational meetings as it can even capture content and track participant data in ways live educational events cannot (Meeting Professionals International, 2012). Although VMT is deemed to be suitable for educational purposes, little research has studied the use of synchronous video in higher education (Warden, Stanworth & Warden, 2013), and tourism and hospitality management education is no exception. There is very little pedagogic evidence providing the practical details of using synchronous VMT and key factors influencing on effective delivery in a classroom instruction. The purpose of this study is; 1) to explore the perceptions and experiences of undergraduate students in synchronous VMT embedded classes; 2) to identify key factors influencing students' perceived effectiveness of VMT embedded class; and 3) to measure how different class context and level of applications affect student perception and experience. The underpinning theory of this study is Media Richness Theory and Model of Media Choice (Kock, 2005).

Methods

This study will utilize a self-administered quantitative survey to collect key information to answer the research questions. Validity and reliability of the measurement instruments will be ensured by adoption of items that were tested by previous empirical studies.

Results/Discussion

This study can shed a light on conceptual and practical implications for VMT enhanced teaching by providing empirical evidence of how synchronous VMT can be effectively integrated into both physical and virtual classrooms. Findings of this study will identify key factors influencing students' perceived effectiveness of VMT embedded learning. This study will also provide insights in how different class context and level of applications can affect student learning experiences and suggest indicative support for the successful application of VMT in different classroom settings.

References Available Upon Request

INFLUENCE OF ONLINE REVIEWS OF DIFFERENT UGC PLATFORMS ON CUSTOMER PERCEIVED VALUE AND LOYALTY

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Introduction

UGC (User Generated Content) on various platforms enable travellers to comment on tourism products and destinations they have experienced, and consumer generated online reviews can inform and influence individual travel purchase decisions (Xiang and Gretzel, 2010). It is important to understand how customers interact with UGC channels in terms of channel choice (Wilson, Murphy, and Fierro, 2012). Little is known about whether or not different UGC channels have different influences on customer perceived value and loyalty. To fill this gap, the purpose of this study is to explore the relationships among the online reviews on different UGC platforms, customer perceived value and loyalty in the hospitality and tourism industry.

Methods

An experimental method using simulated web based content will be employed. Four kinds of review websites will be devised to mimic the look and feel of different platforms of UGC websites. Actual online reviews on a hotel will be selected, edited and posted on the devised websites. Data will be collected in the United States using a consumer survey of an online access panel that mirrors the overall population. A screening question will be employed to ensure that all participants had experience of booking hotel accommodation. Participants will receive an email invitation to participate in the study and will be randomly assigned to one of the eight experimental conditions using web links from the email invitations. After perusing the simulated UGC site, participants will complete a questionnaire that contains measures for the dependent variables followed by manipulation check measures.

Results/Discussion

The study calls attention to the different impacts of UGC platforms on customer value and loyalty. The study will contribute to the literature by establishing the relationships among online reviews on different UGC platforms, customer perceived value and loyalty. Based on the results of the study, researchers could further explore the strengths and weaknesses of each kind of UGC platforms for consumers to evaluate the hospitality and tourism products. Practically, the findings will assist hospitality managers in understanding the differences of the influences of four UGC platforms so as to effectively distribute limited resources for monitoring and responding to online reviews on the platforms.

References Available Upon Request

UNDERSTANDING THE ADOPTION OF MOBILE 3D GIS SERVICE AND TOURISTS' BEHAVIOR

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Introduction
Along with the emergence of advanced mobile technology, technology is able to capture tasks by using location-based and content-based information. Among different techniques, geographic information system is a valuable tool for tourism services because products offered in tourism are usually places which can be located on a map, such as accommodation and restaurants. Three-dimensional representations provide an immersive user experience and the fact of saving time and effort makes them more popular. In the tourism industry, context and spatial information are especially critical for tourists to have a satisfying experience. In recent years, the rapid increase in the development of GIS technologies has led to the development of integrated global positioning system (GPS)/GIS applications, which can be taken advantage of by the tourism industry. The purpose of this study is to investigate empirically the relationships among antecedents of TTF, TTF and TAM in the context of 3D GIS mobile service.

Methods
The online questionnaire survey will be used in this study. The first section will include items measuring the respondents' perception of each construct in the research model, and all items will be assessed using five-point Likert scales from 1 = ‘‘strongly disagree" to 5 = ‘‘strongly agree". The second will be obtain the respondents' demographic characteristics and personal preference for mobile application and GIS service experience. This study will be conducted using a simple sample of college students in Oklahoma State University. A number of e-mails will be sent to the potential respondents, providing link to Qualtrics survey. The collected data will be analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 19.

Results/Discussion
The anticipated results are supposed to show positive relationship between technology fit and perceived usefulness, and the relationship between technology fit and perceived ease of use. Also, one of the important findings should prove the relationships built in the technology acceptance model. All these findings should support the relationship between TTF and TAM, contributing to link them together in terms of 3D GIS service environment. As a result, managers in hospitality industry can get a better understanding towards customers' behaviour of using mobile 3D GIS service, which may reveal some insights for products and service experience improvement.

References Available Upon Request

THE IMPACT OF BIOMETRIC TECHNOLOGY ON GUEST'S SATISFACTION AND FEARFULNESS IN HOTELS

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Introduction

Biometrics is the use of automated methods to identify an individual based on biological or physiological characteristics. The usage of biometric technologies in the hotel industry, especially in the United States, is little. Few hotels have adopted biometric technology so far. Research on biometric context focuses on use in business, security, technological, and government applications. Some of the studies have reported the use of this biometric technology in the hospitality industry. Reporting the usage of this technology from the customer's viewpoint will aim to fill the gap by examining the current and potential future use of biometric technologies. This study will provide invaluable insight on the impact of security on guests' satisfaction and fearfulness of using or implementing biometrics technologies in hotels. The purpose of this study is to investigate the usage of biometric technologies in hotels and study the relationship between security and the two components, which are guests' satisfaction and fearfulness of using these technologies. This study will also examine, test, and validate the factors that influence biometric technology acceptance by guests.

Methods

The study proposed that the biometric technology application would have impacts on customers' sense of security and sense of fearfulness. Furthermore, customers' sense of security and fearfulness will influence their level of satisfaction. A convenience non-probability sampling method will be used in the data collection. Survey questionnaires modified from previous studies will be distributed by the author among hotel customers who stay in business hotels in metropolitan cities on East Coast. Fourteen questions will be used to measure the sense of security, sense of fearfulness, and satisfaction. A sample question for sense of security is: biometrics technology can guarantee encrypted information. A sample question for sense of fearfulness is: biometric technologies, especially fingerprint, can cause diseases. A sample questions for satisfaction is: I made a right decision to stay in this hotel.

Results/Discussion

This study will provide an empirical analysis of the constructs that impact implementing biometric technology in hotels, which are security, satisfaction, and fearfulness. The relationship between the two hypotheses that were mentioned in the literature review will be studied. This study attempted to understand guests' perception toward using biometrics technology in hotels.

References Available Upon Request

WHY CUSTOMERS GO MOBILE? INVESITATING FACTORS INFLUENCING HOTEL CUSTOMERS' ADOPTION OF MOBILE TECHNOLOGY

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Introduction

Hoteliers have recognized the extensive use of mobile technology as smartphones, tablets, and apps by customers prior to customers' hotel stay and during their visits. Many hotels have started catering to these mobile centric travellers by offering them with innovated services. Although mobile technology is widely utilized in the hotel industry, relevant literature is scarce (Chan, 2012). Therefore, this study aims to fill the literature gap and contribute to the existing literature by examining the factors influencing customers' adoption of mobile technology for hotel services. The factors we examined include usefulness, ease of use, enjoyment, innovativeness, trust, privacy, reliability, attitudes and intentions of adoption, etc. The findings of the study will contribute to the present body of knowledge and provide practical implications to hoteliers who target mobile centric travellers.

Methods

Data was collected from 683 adult hotel customers via a research company. Online self-administration questionnaires were distributed through Qualtrics to the participants. After data screening, 650 responses will be analyzed to test the proposed hypotheses. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modeling (SEM) will be used.

Results/Discussion

The use of mobile technology has gained increasing interest given the substantial growth in the use of mobile devices and mobile applications by customers (e.g. ubiquitous usage of smartphones, growing numbers of applications tailored to ipad, Android tablets, smartphones, etc.). The findings of this study will provide valuable suggestions to hotel practitioners on mobile technology marketing. Additionally, this study will offer implications for hoteliers on increasing the customer's adoption of mobile technology to facilitate hotel services.

References Available Upon Request

A CASE STUDY ON SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL COMMERCE DAILY DEAL FOR LOCAL HOTEL BUSINESS

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Introduction

Social commerce is a fast emerging trend and platform in e-commerce in which individual merchants feature their products to buyers connected through social media at heavily discounted rates during a short period of time. *Companies in the hospitality industry have been quick to jump on the daily deals bandwagon in an effort to boost occupancy rates in a sluggish economy. Some revenue managers in the hospitality business run the daily deals to fill unused customer capacity during slow periods and to bring in new customers. However, others do not use the daily deals due to the potential negative consequences such as cannibalization and brand/price erosion. The objective of this study was to provide insights into this ongoing controversial discussion about the daily deals. To this end we conducted a case study of the hotel daily deal that identified the demographic characteristics of the daily deal customers and their attitudinal and behavioral responses to the daily deals.*

Methods

We utilize the actual daily deal promotion transaction data of a hotel in a local tourism destination in the U.S. along with the follow-up survey with customers who purchased and redeemed the hotel daily deal. Our transaction data encompasses the archive of the hotel's first GROUPON deal from November 2011 to March 2012 and contains the consumers' purchase, redemption, and overage (i.e., extra expenditure during their stay) records. Then, we developed a questionnaire-based survey for the hotel daily deal users. Our sample frame represents guests who purchased this deal and stayed in this hotel. These guests were individually invited to participate in the survey by a hotel revenue manager. Although 790 customers purchased the deals, we conducted the study with 465 customers who made reservations and redeemed the voucher at the time of our data collection. Thus, 298 guests finally participated in this survey (response rate: 64.1%).

Results/Discussion

We explored daily deal customers' profiles, experiences with, and evaluations of the deal. The results contradict the conventional findings of social coupon studies looking at the restaurant daily deals with reference to deal users' demographics and the deal effectiveness. The hotel daily deal customer segment was somewhat different from the restaurant daily deal market, and the cannibalization was not found to be potential disadvantage of the hotel daily deal. However, it should be cautious that too frequent offers of the daily deal make a bad impression regarding brand and price erosion and result in cannibalization. Customers will not pay full price but rather they will just wait for the next deal available. As the deals are repeatedly offered, the deal purchasers will less likely comprise new customers, thus cannibalizing the existing customer market. The additional findings and their implications will be further discussed on our presentation.

References Available Upon Request

USAGE OF MOBILE APPS IN THE MICE INDUSTRY

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Introduction

The Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) sector is the newest and fastest growing segments of the hospitality industry and its economic contribution is widely acknowledged (Getz, 2005). Recently, the MICE sector has become more tech-savvy (Park & Gretzel, 2007). Mobile Applications (apps) downloaded to mobile devices that can easily access mobile-optimized websites and meeting-dedicated social media pages are assisting planners with the registration process, and offering an easier method to gather feedback from participants after an event (eMarketer, 2011). However, mobile apps are still in their early stages of development and few studies have been conducted on the role that mobile apps have played on intentions to use in the MICE industry. Likewise, few studies have explored a user acceptance model for mobile apps (Rasinger, Fuchs & Höpken, 2007). As such, the purpose of this study is to develop a comprehensive conceptual framework that examines the factors influencing event planners' acceptance of mobile apps. This study presents an extended Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) that integrates the Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT), technology experience and trip experience into TAM to investigate what determines user mobile application acceptance.

Methods

A self-administered and closed-ended questionnaire was designed for measuring the constructs using a 7-point Likert-type scale. The questionnaire consists of four sections: antecedent variables (e.g. prior technology experience and prior trip experiences), IDT (e.g. compatibility), TAM (e.g. perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, attitude toward use, and intention to use), and demographic information. The measurements were adopted from previous studies (Davis, 1989; Moore & Benbasat, 1991; Rogers, 1995; Schrier, Erdem, & Brewer, 2010).

A pilot test will be undertaken by distributing a survey to 15 event planners working in the MICE industry. Based on feedback received changes will be made for clarity. An e-mail invitation will then be sent to 1,000 randomly selected event planners in the U.S., along with a link to the online questionnaire. It is anticipated that 300 completed surveys will be collected. This study will employ Amos 7.0 to test the conceptual model and hypotheses with a two-step approach suggested by Anderson and Gerbing (1988).

Results/Discussion

The result of this study will not only contribute to the theoretical development of MICE participant usage of mobile apps, but also provide practical implications for MICE marketers to improve the design features of mobile apps.

References Available Upon Request

EXPLORING SMARTPHONE USE IN THE WORKPLACE: THE ANTECEDENTS AND DIFFERENTIAL IMPACTS OF USING SMARTPHONE FUNCTIONS ON PERCEIVED JOB PERFORMANCE IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

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Introduction

As the rapid development of advanced mobile computing and telecommunications technologies, Smartphones provide not only various communication tools (e.g., text, voice, and video calling) but also smart-computing tools (e.g., hospitality the point of sale software, mobile enterprise systems and personal digital assistant tools) in the workplace. Since the function of Smartphones improves ‘anytime and anywhere’ accessibility to various communication and computing functions, organizational workers may benefit from the use of Smartphone in their workplace in various ways. While mobile applications are widely used in the hospitality and tourism industry, little research has attempted to identify antecedents and roles of Smartphone use at the workplace in the hospitality industry. Thus, our main research purpose is to investigate the impact of two different types of work-related Smartphone functions (communication functions vs. smart-computing functions) on perceived job performance in the hospitality industry. This study also identifies three antecedents of using Smartphone functions: Smartphone dependence as an individual factor, workplace mobility as a task-related factor and perceived critical mass as an external influence.

Methods

To test research hypotheses, we will conduct a field survey among organizational workers who have used Smartphones for their workplace activities in the hospitality industry. We will employ extant measures and also develop new items to measure focal constructs. The measures will be developed using seven-point Likert scales. To test the proposed model, we will employ Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Model analysis using SmartPLS software.

Results/Discussion

Despite the importance of Smartphone use on employees’ productivity in the workplace, not much attention has been paid in the hospitality literature. The findings of this study would be able to present a holistic view in understanding the significant role of work-related Smartphone functions on perceived job performance, which contributing to the growing body of the hospitality literature on both mobile technology and human resources. In addition, this study will give us insight of how internal, task-related, and external factors of organizational workers facilitate the use of Smartphone functions in the hospitality industry. Considering those factors will help managers facilitate her/his subordinates’ use of specific Smartphone functions to enhance their job performance in the hospitality industry.

References Available Upon Request

SERVICE QUALITY FACTORS IN CONVENTION MOBILE APPLICATIONS AND THEIR EFFECTS ON PARTICITANTS' SATISFACTION AND BEHAVIOR

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Introduction

Convention attendees demand to use high levels technological advances (Lee, Park & Khan, 2012) and use diverse information and communication technology (ICT) devices to effectively conduct their business everywhere. Among many of the ICT devices, the most used one during the convention is a smartphone. Attendees expect convention organizers to provide applications which provide exhibitor directory searches, convention floor plans, and convention itinerary plans. (Lee. & Lee., 2014) Many studies have found that smartphone is an efficient tool for providing convention services such as marketing and communication, however, there is limited research in factors related to convention mobile's service quality and its effects on participants' satisfaction and future behavior. Therefore, this research study will have the following objectives:

1. To investigate factors related to satisfaction toward convention mobile applications service.
2. To analyze the relationships between the factors of user satisfaction with convention mobile applications and participants' satisfaction with convention service.
3. To examine factors in user satisfaction in convention mobile applications and participants' behavioral changes.

Methods

For determining factors of service quality in convention mobile applications, a review of the literature was conducted using the most recent 5-year research on about convention mobile applications. Factors were compiled and the top 10 common were utilized.

For testing convention attendee's satisfaction and their behavior, a quantitative study will be conducted. Both online (http://www.qualtrics.com/) and on-site (Pack Expo 2014) survey will be done. Survey questions will be divided into three sections. Section 1 contains demographic information, section 2 identifies the current status of using convention mobile application and section 3 other covers satisfaction with convention mobile application and their future behavior. A total of 30 questions will be asked in total. Only people who have smartphones and use convention application will be considered for this study and the sample will be selected randomly.

Discussion and implication

First, this research is designed to analyse the characteristics of service quality related to convention smartphone applications and to discover the key elements that affect customer satisfaction of re-purchase intentions. Second, this paper will suggest fundamental information for making marketing strategies to suppliers that are already offering this service and those that might use this service.

References Available Upon Request

TRANSACTION COST ECONOMICS AS META-THEORETICAL APPROACH FOR EXAMINING HOTEL MANAGEMENT IN PACIFIC ISLAND COUNTRIES

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Introduction
While some Pacific Island countries (PICs) have been able to convert a theoretical comparative advantage in tourism into actual economic gain, others are confronted with significant barriers in doing so. How hotel businesses in low performing PICs are managed to work in a tourism industry that is not working has yet to be accounted for in theoretical terms. Until endemic theories are systematically developed, research and practice in this area will either remain atheoretical or rely on imported theories not well suited to PICs. The aim of this study is to develop a grounded theory on how to design and maintain a workable hotel business model in a country that itself does not have a workable tourism business model, and where ease of doing business is low. Grounded theory method (GTM) (Glaser, 1978) is used in conjunction with transaction cost economics (TCE) (Williamson, 1975; 1985) as meta-theoretical approach for achieving this aim. The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) is the setting for this study.

Methods
The data collection and analysis procedure of this research occurred in two waves. For the first wave of data collection (Study 1), the authors used a semi-structured format to interview 37 relevant individuals in the FSM. To facilitate the theoretical saturation of concepts identified in Study 1, a second wave of data collection (Study 2) was used to collect additional interview data from 11 individuals. The TCE meta-theoretical approach guided the data collection and analysis. TCE’s focus on how people/firms come together contractually to successfully organize themselves within a given institutional and industry environment helped flesh out issues from an interesting theoretical perspective. The analysis is currently on-going.

Results/Discussion
Hotel entrepreneurs and operators in the FSM and PICs like it have little guidance on how to design and maintain a workable business model in such challenging business environments. Utilizing a TCE meta-theoretical approach in the grounded theory development process can potentially help bridge the gap between theoretically uninformed business management practice and practically uninformed business management theory in the FSM and other PICs. Given the tedious nature of doing business in an environment where costs and risks are high while overall industry performance is low, this should be especially important. While much of the literature on PICs has focused on constraints while ignoring solutions (Scheyvens & Momsen, 2008), it is hoped that this study will help advance research in this area in a way which moves away from dwelling in the pessimistic and fatalistic (Baldacchino, 2000; Campling, 2006), and towards the advancement of informed solutions to complex issues.

References Available Upon Request

THE APOSTOLIC ENTERPRISE: A COMMUNITY-MANAGED BUSINESS IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

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Introduction

During the Great Depression era, the United States federal government created new laws and programs to boost the economy. Some of the laws allowed citizens to reorganize their businesses and livelihood in ways that provided more security. Within the Revenue Act of 1936, the federal government created a nonprofit organization structured after the material culture of the first Christians. [See *Acts of the Apostles* from the New Testament.] The *apostolic* organization, under section 501(d) of the Internal Revenue Code, is a nonprofit community that can manage any type of for-profit business. The revenues of the community business or businesses then support the daily living needs of the members. There are several hundred apostolic organizations currently operating in the United States, and many of these communities have been around for decades. Jesus People USA is one example of an apostolic organization that operates a variety of businesses, some which deal with lodging and foodservice. The historic Chelsea Hotel in Chicago is the facility where they currently live and generate part of their revenues. They also manage a nearby events center and use it for their own community functions. The purpose of this research is to determine the compatibility of the apostolic organization with the hospitality industry through a case study of Jesus People USA.

Methods

This research will gather information on Jesus People USA from materials they produce and through personal interviews. The produced materials of the organization will provide a surface-level view of their operations and will reflect how the organization is presented in the marketplace. Personal interviews will then allow for a deeper understanding of the organization and how it is managed.

Results/Discussion

This case study will establish the apostolic organization as a viable management strategy within the hospitality industry. The research will then compare the feasibility of organizing as an apostolic enterprise versus other nonprofit and for-profit entities. Since there are few apostolic organizations in the marketplace, the research will also discuss opportunities for new hospitality concepts.

References Available Upon Request

EXPLORING ATTITUDES TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT (SSCM) PRACTICES IN SMALL SCALE FOOD SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS

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Introduction

Increased concern from the public and media has prompted some food industry practitioners to engage in more sustainable practices in an effort to mitigate detrimental environmental consequences (Pullman, Maloni, & Carter, 2009). Foodservice related businesses have begun incorporating environmentally friendly initiatives intended to positively affect the triple bottom line (TBL). The TBL concept is designed to utilize sustainable development measures to meet the needs of present and future generations based on three dimensions: environmental, economic and social impacts (Dyllick & Hockerts, 2002). S*ustainable supply chain management* (SSCM) follows the TBL paradigm and has the potential of improving a company's competitive advantage through reputation, innovation or differentiation (Carter & Rogers, 2008; Ta & Murfield, 2013). However, smaller hospitality businesses often lack the means and support to execute complex sustainability polices (O'Neill & Alonso, 2009) or have the ability to influence the sustainable practices of other larger firms within the food supply chain (Maloni & Brown, 2006). Extant literature has investigated varying aspects of SSCM from different organizational perspectives (Fabbe-Costes, Roussat, Taylor, & Taylor, 2014; Turker & Altuntas, 2014; Pullman, et al., 2009) including food supply chain (Beske, Land, & Seuring, 2014) and tourism (Sigala, 2014), however there is an insufficient amount of research exploring SSCM from a small scale food service perspective.

Methods

This study will employ a qualitative approach based on grounded theory to explore the attitudes and opinions of small scale food service operators. Information will be gathered from executive chefs and managers through 60 minute, semi-structured, one-on-one interviews. Approximately 12 chefs and foodservice managers in West Texas will be targeted via a convenience, snowball sampling method through social media posts and e-mail. The 12 item interview instrument was established from existing literature concerning SSCM in the hospitality and food service industry (Beske et al., 2014; Sigala, 2014). Data will be gathered through the interview processes until saturation is reached, and then it will be transcribed verbatim, coded and analyzed for content. The coding and analysis process will be conducted by the primary investigator and a second party to ensure consistency (Burg & Lune, 2012).

Results/Discussion

Themes identified from the observed data may be considered for use as a theoretical framework for future studies on this topic and by operational owners, managers and chefs interested in sustainable supply chain management.

References Available Upon Request

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF SPONSOR PERCEPTIONS ON GREEN MEETINGS

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Introduction

Environment issues are a big concern for the whole economy in recent years because of the impact of global climate change. "Going green" has been a trend for all the economy sectors to respond to such environmental issues. The meeting and event industry attracts attention in going green due to its ability to attract a huge number of people in a short period of time and the amount of travel associated with it (Mair, 2011). As a result, many meetings and conventions are developing strategies to improve their environmental and sustainability credentials (Rittichainuwat & Mair, 2013). One of the most common strategies is to promote what is called "green meetings".

In 2004, the Convention Industry Council (CIC) published the Green Meetings Report, defining green meeting as a meeting that "incorporate as environmental considerations to minimize its negative impact on the environment" (p.3). Discussions about green meetings have increased in recent years (Mair & Jago, 2010; Park & Boo, 2010; Draper, Dawson, & Casey, 2011; Mair & Laing, 2012), but little is known about how sponsors view on the green practices taken by meetings, and whether they are interested in these greening measures. Sponsor is an important source of funding and supplies to meetings. If they are reported to view positive on greening meetings, it will encourage meeting organizers to engage with more greening practices. Therefore, the objectives of the study are: 1) to explore the sponsor perception on greening meetings, 2) to find out the green solutions that supported by sponsors, and 3) to provide meeting organizers possible strategies in planning greening meetings and attract potential sponsors.

Methods

This study will use an online questionnaire, adopting items derived from the Mair and Jago (2010) model of greening, from the work of Draper et al., (2011) and from the industry association publications that provide instructions on how to plan a green meeting. The target population is all the sponsors at conventions being held in October 2014 in Oklahoma City, OK. Researchers will first contact the organizers of all the meetings on a meeting calendar that published by Oklahoma City CVB to get the contact list of the meeting sponsors. A request to complete the survey will be sent to all the names on the list through email. A reminder email will be sent 7 days later. Factor analysis will be used to group the green practices into different categories and ANOVA analysis will be used to explore what green practices are the most and least welcomed by meeting sponsors.

Results/Discussion

The present study will contribute to the understanding of the sponsor perceptions on green meetings, and explore what kind of greening steps are least welcoming and most supported by sponsors, thus providing possible solutions for meeting organizers to better attract potential sponsors.

References Available Upon Request

THE EFFECT OF FEEDBACK ATTRIBUTIONS ON EMPLOYEES' JOB OUTCOMES

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Introduction

This study aims to explore different communication feedback styles and to empirically investigate the impact of these on employees' self-esteem, satisfaction, and job performance. Communication "is a basic function of all managers' jobs and performing it well is a key ingredient for organizational success" (Greenberg, 2010, p. 22). Previous studies have shown that proper feedback styles can foster employees' job attitudes (Kuhnen & Tymula, 2012; Larson & R, 1989) and enhance their performance (Harms & Roebuck, 2010). While considerable research has focused on the way negative attitudes affects communication styles, the issue of how inefficient communication feedback styles impact employee's self-esteem and job related outcomes remains underexplored. This research will assist hotel organizations to implement and manage communication feedback approaches that can promote the sustainability of employees' performance and enhance job satisfaction.

Methods

Data will be collected from front line hotel employees working for three star and above hotels in Saudi Arabia in spring 2015. The survey contains two sections. Section one contains questions assessing participants' background information. Section two contains four scales testing the variables of communication feedback styles, self-esteem, job satisfaction, and job performance. The survey instrument uses a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Conbach's reliability test will be performed to measure the internal consistency of each scale used. A series of simple regression analyses will be conducted to determine if communication feedback styles significantly predict employees' job attitudes and behaviors.

Results/Discussion

The findings of this study will contribute to our understanding of the role communication feedback plays in employees' self-esteem, job satisfaction, and job performance. An informed and practical feedback system can help determine the most appropriate feedback style to activate ideal organizational behaviors. Thus, managers may use the findings of the study to review their feedback approaches towards promoting and sustaining peak performance. In addition, the findings may provide supervisors with the necessary knowledge of how to promote an engaging environment for sustainable business.

References Available Upon Request

A DUAL MODEL OF THE IMPACT OF EMPLOYABILITY ON EMPLOYEE CREATIVITY IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

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Introduction

This research centers on creativity and its associated predictors. We argue the necessity of creativity in the hospitality industry is based on the fact that increasingly dynamic business environment has set up a higher standard for the hospitality organizations to outperform their rivals. Cultivating employee creativity is one of the effective approaches to improving and innovating core services so that customer's changing needs can be well entertained.

This research majorly examines how perceived employability affects employee creativity through two different paths. Perceived employability, the workers' perceptions about potential job opportunities (Berntson & Marklund, 2007), has aroused intensive research interests during the recent years of economic downturn (e.g., Kinnunen, Makikangas, Mauno, Siponen, & Natti, 2011). Nevertheless, the domain of organizational behavior has witnessed a surprising scarcity of employability research, despite of the benefits of employability to both organizations and individual employees. By introducing perceived employability as a significant predictor of employee creativity, this study addresses the voids in the research of employability and of hospitality creativity. In particular, we argue that employability increases creativity via psychological safety whereas it decreases creativity via detachment.

Methods

After a pretest on over 10 hospitality students, the main study involved a cross-sectional online data collection with 300 hotel frontline employees on Amazon's Mechanical Turk, based on a convenience sampling method. In terms of the questionnaire development, perceived employability was assessed with Janssens, Sels, and van de Brande's (2003) scale. Creativity was measured using Subramaniam and Youndt's (2005) items. The measurement of psychological safety was adopted from Edmondson (1999), whereas the detachment measures were developed based on Maslach and Jackson (1981). Finally, perceived organizational support was assessed by Eisenberger *et al.* (1986). The collected data will mainly be analyzed by structural equation modeling (SEM).

Results/Discussion

The findings will have both theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically, this study is among the limited studies on employability and on hospitality creativity. Its uniqueness especially lies in the attempts to theoretically establish the links of employability to creativity, which fills in an important research gap. Practically, the findings is expected to encourage the hospitality organizations to enhance employee employability by providing them sufficient training and mentoring. As a result, employees will obtain the benefits of increasing their future chances of getting hired and achieving career success. The hospitality organizations can also be rewarded from their efforts to enhance employee employability by developing creative employees that assist their companies to survive and thrive in the fierce business competition.

References Available Upon Request

AN ANALYSIS OF PERCEIVED BENEFITS OF WORKING IN MULTICULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS BY FUTURE HOSPITALITY/BUSINESS LEADERS

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Current research paper focuses on the future business leaders' perceived understandings about working in multicultural work environment. Van Der Zee & Van Oudenhoven's (2000) Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (which is a personality questionnaire that tests the following qualities of a person; open-mindness, social initiative, flexibility, emotional stability, cultural empathy) measures the student's overall feeling about being in multicultural environment. In their study, Oudenhoven and Van der Zee (2002) used MPQ in order to assess students' and expatriates' multicultural effectiveness in international working environment. However, there are not many articles in literature that focused on students' perceptions about where they would like to work after graduation. The current study not only focuses on students who go to school in United States of America and have grown up in U.S.A but also focuses on those who may have grown up in a different country. The study also focuses on how effective it is going to be for students to work in multicultural organizations after graduation, rather than focusing only students' emotional adjustments in multicultural environments and academic settings.

FEMALE BUSINESS TRAVELERS: A POTENTIAL MARKET SEGMENT WORTH INVESTIGATING AGAIN?

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Introduction

Women made up less than 5% of American business travelers in the mid-1990s. By 2010, women comprised nearly half of all business travelers and are now the fastest growing segment of business travelers in the United States. Women business travelers have therefore become an important market segment in the hospitality industry.

Lodging facilities have made efforts to appeal specifically to women business travelers. However, there has been a mixed response to offerings such as rooms painted in "feminine" colors and "feminine" amenities ranging from fashion magazines to breast examination shower cards. One approach to addressing safety, a top priority of women business travelers, has been to offer segregated woman-only hotel rooms, floors, or hotels. Studies in India, the Middle East, and with female Taiwanese and Japanese tourists suggest that this approach may be more successful outside the United States and other Westernized societies.

The purpose of this study is to explore the needs and expectations of women business travelers in the United States. Specifically, this study will identify possible marketing strategies for this population, develop a profile of women business travelers, and gauge interest in gender-specific amenities.

Proposed Method

A quantitative survey instrument will be used to solicit profile data such as: 1) demographic information, 2) business travel details, and 3) unisex amenities expected and desired. A cross-section of the surveyed women business travelers will then be invited to participate in three 5-member focus groups to discuss: 1) their opinions on and recommendations for gender-specific amenities, and 2) if their opinions regarding segregated woman-only hotel floors or hotels specifically would change depending on the level of safety they anticipate at their destinations.

The researchers will recruit women business travelers employed at the 10 colleges/universities in the Adirondack Region of New York State through their human resources and finance offices. These women are employed in a concentrated and easily accessible area, span a wide range of ages and experience, represent private and public sector employers, and will have traveled professionally both domestically and internationally and for varying periods of time.

Significance of Study

A better understanding of women business travelers can result in more frequent returns and increased revenue. This study will also enrich the body of research on traveler behavior, especially that of the woman business traveler.

References Available Upon Request.

MEASURING CONSUMER'S PERCEIVED IMPORTANCE OF GREEN ATTRIBUTES FOR RESTAURANTS

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Introduction

Today's consumers have become more ecologically conscious than before. The increasing attention consumers pay to eco-friendly products has brought a number of changes to the restaurant industry. Current literature has shown green practices can improve restaurants' corporate image, attract more attention from consumers, and increase consumers' purchasing intention (Hu et al., 2010). While the prominence of different green practices have been well documented in hospitality literature, a relatively limited number of studies compare the importance of various green attributes perceived by restaurant customers. According to the Green Restaurant Association (n. d.), consumers want to feel as if they have done something good to the society in addition to just having a nice meal. Meanwhile, little research identifies how consumers' demographic backgrounds may influence preferences of green attributes. Therefore, this study is designed to address the knowledge gap in current literature.

The purposes of this study include: (a) to examine the important green attributes that influence consumers' purchasing decisions when they choose a restaurant and (b) to explore various consumers' preferences of green attributes among patrons with different demographic backgrounds. Especially, the following research questions will be answered in this study: 1) What are the green attributes that deem important to restaurant customers? 2) Why consumers perceive some green initiatives more critical than others? 3) What are the similarities and/or distinctions among different groups of consumers (e.g., age, education, income level, with or without kids etc.) in regards to their preferences of restaurant's green attributes?

Methods

This study combines the embedded design and the explanatory design of mixed methods approach in the investigation. We are expecting to use the quantitative methodology to identify the important green attributes that influence consumers' patronizing decisions and qualitative data to explain the reason how and why those green attributes can influence consumers' decisions. The investigation will begin with a narrative review of relevant literature to identify a series of restaurant green attributes. An instrument will then be developed based on the attributes identified. Selected consumers who complete the questionnaire will be invited to participate in a follow-up qualitative study to further explain why they view some attributes more important than others. ANOVA and framework analysis will be used to examine the data.

Expected Outcomes and Implications

This study is expected to bring additional insight to current literature and hopefully narrow the knowledge gap being discussed previously. Practically, The quantitative results will inform restaurants' owners and managers the importance of various green attributes, enabling them to allocate their time and resources wisely by focusing on those green initiatives that deem most important to consumers. The qualitative data will help researchers explain why certain green attributes are more important than others. Restaurants will then be able to implement the green practices and market the restaurants' green attributes that seem most critical to their target customers.

References Available Upon Request

THE IMPACTS OF PROMOTION ON PRICE SENSITIVE AND PRICE INSENSITIVE SPA CUSTOMERS' DECISION

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Introduction

Since the popularity of spas has increased, spas have become significant profitable centers in hotels (Koh, Yoo and Boger Jr, 2010). Kucukusta and Denizci Guillet (2014) also argue that spas are important income sources for resorts and hotels. The 2013 US Spa Industry Study of ISPA (International Spa Association, 2013) shows that the revenue of spa industry increased by 4.7 % and spa visits increased by 2.8 % while the number of spas increased by just 0.5 % from 2011 to 2012. As these numbers indicate, even though the number of spas remained almost the same, the market grew and the customers spent more money on spa services.

Marketing mix of spa marketing; product, place, promotion, and price could be identified differently based on the customers' characteristics and spa market's trends. Among these marketing components, price is the easiest way for service providers to compete in the market. However, price-based competition has its own risks; for example, it might cause the spa service to become a commodity (Tabacchi, 2010). Due to the risk of price-based competition, promotion component of marketing mix becomes more critical to appeal to the customer in the long term, because competing with respect to price might hinder the revenue management and profitability in the long run. For this reason, segmentation of the customers and designing promotion strategies based on customers' price sensitivity will be an efficient way for the long-term revenue and profitability in the highly competitive spa market. Thus, the purpose of the research is: *To explore the impacts of promotion efforts on decision making and repurchasing process of price sensitive and price insensitive Spa customers*

Methods

The proposed data collection method of the study will be quantitative, namely web survey. The sample of the study will consist of customers who have experienced spa service before. Questions regarding price and the importance of each promotion activity for customers' decision to book a spa service and to revisit the spa destination will be included in the survey. The price sensitivity and perception about various promotion strategies will be measured by Likert–type scale ranging from 1(extremely unimportant) to 5 (extremely important). The comparison of the results and demographics will be analyzed by ANOVA test.

Results/Discussion

Few scholars have done studies on the segmentation of spa customers as price sensitive and price insensitive and the customized promotion types for these customers. Thus, the study aims to explore the impacts of promotion on price sensitive and price insensitive Spa customers' decision. The result could be used by Spa managers to manage their price and promotion strategies based on the customers' choices.

References Available Upon Request

DO CONSUMERS TRUST ONLINE REVIEW? INVESTIGATING THE IMPACT OF ONLINE REVIEW ON CONSUMERS' PATRONAGE OF RESTAURANTS

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Introduction
As social networking sites continue to flourish, they created an e-WOM communication platform between consumers who have never met. The online market enables previous consumers to write reviews, discussing their experience about the quality, value, and efficiency of products or services, which influence potential consumers. Potential consumers tend to rely on others' opinions to reduce their level of perceived risk and ambiguity. However, publishing fictitious consumer review on an online platform has become a widely used trick by companies since consumer-generated review can also controlled and manipulated. In light of the increasing usage of various consumer-generated online reviews in restaurants, the study investigates the cues that show consumer trust in reviews and examines the impact of the review on potential consumers' visit decision of the restaurant.

Methods
The questionnaire will be developed based on existing literatures in foodservice and marketing contexts. After the initial development, the instrument will be pilot-tested by researchers and graduate students in the hospitality management program of a primary Midwestern university for review to ensure content validity and wording accuracy. The data of this study will be collected through the panel of an online survey marketing company using a structured questionnaire administered to restaurant consumers. It is anticipated 300 responses with usable format will be collected. The data of the study will be analysed using Structural Equation Model.

Results/Discussion
The results of this study will provide researchers and restaurant practitioners with a better understanding of consumers' perception toward online review and its potential relationship with their patronage behaviour. The results from this study will provide practitioners with effective strategies to ultimately enhance customers' trust in online-reviews resulting in visiting restaurants.

References Available Upon Request

THE ROLE OF SHOPPING ORIENTATION ON ONLINE DAILY DEALS PURCHASES

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Introduction

The hospitality and tourism industry has embraced the use of websites to attract and allow the customer to complete transactions. As marketers recognized the importance of online marketing strategies there has been an increased focused on research on this area. However, the study of marketing efforts such as online coupons is almost non-existent in the tourism and hospitality industry. Online coupons such as "deal of the day" allow marketers to reach new customers, increase sales and gain long-term customers while providing customers deals catered to their preferences. Research suggests that online shopping behavior is regulated hedonic or utilitarian shopping orientations. That is, consumer's tendency towards shopping is based on their activities, interests and opinions. An individual's online shopping behavior may be influenced by how shopping is perceived as a hedonic (i.e. recreational and experiential) or utilitarian (i.e. convenience and economic) activity.

In addition to examining shopping orientations, online promotions containing specific conditions, referred to deal details in the present study, will be examined to determine their impact on intent to purchase. Limited time offer and limited quantity have been found to influence and assist the customer in the decision making process because they can create a sense of urgency to encourage decision making. Therefore the goal of this study is to explore the effect of shopping orientations on intent to purchase when consumers are given an online deal with branded or non-branded information.

Methods

A quasi-experimental design will be used for this study to examine the impact of shopping orientation on intent to purchase. A 2 (hospitality products: branded/non-branded) x 2 (deal details: limited time offer, limited quantity available) x 2 (customer orientation: utilitarian and hedonic) factorial design will be used as it allows the researcher to investigate two or more factors in the same experiment (Abbey, 1979). A survey will be constructed by using previously constructed and validated scales used to measure shopping orientations.

Expected Results/Practical Implications

The authors expect to find a difference on intent to purchase based on shopping orientation and the type of ad received (branded/non-branded). In addition, the authors expect to find that brand consciousness and deal details will positively influence intent to purchase. In terms of implications, since this type of promotion is increasingly popular marketers need to understand the type of consumer these efforts are attracting. Also, increasing the understanding of the factors that influence the decision making process will be integral to the creation of a successful online deal.

References Available Upon Request

ENGAGING EVENT MARKETERS THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA: HOW EVENT MARKETERS ARE USING SOCIAL MEDIA AS A MARKETING TOOL FOR HOSPITALITY EVENTS.

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Some of the main goals of event marketing are to help their attendees to learn more about the event and have a new experience. However, Social media networking is a great channel to interact between the event marketers and the attendees. As a result, event practitioners are expected to pay attention to social media and include it in their event marketing plan (Seungwon, 2011.)

This study aims to investigate the level of social media adaption by events marketers as a tool to promote their events; therefore, the researchers will develop research instrument based on two previous studies. The first one focuses on nonprofit organizations using Facebook by Waters et al. and the second focuses on the hotel industry in Hong Kong use of social media websites in their marketing efforts by Chan and Guillet (2011).The research instrument will be as an evaluation criteria model. Thus, the researchers will determine if the evaluation criteria items are presented by event marketers on Facebook. The evaluation criteria model will cover three key levels of: (1) Basic Information Level (E-mail, URL, phone number, and location);(2) Awareness Level (information for clients to be aware of the event products, services, and History); (3) Promotion Level (photos posted, new links, video files, discussion wall, and press releases).

This study is significant because the results will contribute to highlight the importance of social media as an effective marketing tool for hospitality events. Moreover, this study seeks to contribute to the knowledge on social media by exploring how well events marketers use social media to promote their events.

The researcher is in the process of collaboration with another researcher to create the evaluation criteria model for the instrumentation. The anticipated timeline for completion of the study is August 2015.

References Available Upon Request

DO CREDIT CARD REWARD PROGRAM BUILD LOYALTY FOR HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY?

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Introduction

Airlines have offered frequent-flyer programs allowing customers to accumulate miles as rewards. Acquired miles can be redeemed for benefits such as air tickets, priority boarding or free class upgrades. Inspired by airlines' success, hotel chains began to reward their customers by offering points redeemable for free night or room upgrades. Using a co-branded credit card to offer a loyalty program has been considered as one of the loyalty trends for the twenty-first century (Capizzi & Ferguson, 2005). Existing research has examined whether rewards program will build loyalty to hospitality industry, especially for restaurants and hotels (Keh & Lee, 2006; Park, Chung, & Woo, 2013; Tanford, Raab, & Kim, 2011). However, few studies have explored the role of credit card redemption reward programs played in brand loyalty (Kivetz & Simonson, 2002; Yi & Jeon, 2003). Thus, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

1) How do reward timing and reward type affect customers' perceived value of loyalty programs based on customers' satisfaction with credit card banking services?
2) Are there any differences on customers' perceptions of rewards programs between hotel and airline industry?
3) How customer's perceived value of credit card loyalty programs influence customers' loyalty to hotel / airline brands?

Methods

A 2 2 2 2 full-factorial, randomized experimental design will be used in this study. Timing of reward redemption (immediate vs. delayed), type of rewards (monetary vs. non-monetary), and customers' satisfaction with the banking services (satisfied vs. dissatisfied) are designed as between-subject variables.), while type of co-branded credit card (hotel vs. airline) is designed as a within-subject variable. Participants will be recruited from chained-brand hotels and International Airports in the Midwestern U.S.. Each subject will be randomly assigned to one of the eight conditions by developing scenarios to manipulate timing of reward redemption, type of rewards and customer satisfaction. The participants will be asked to evaluate their attitudes towards credit card banking, perceptions about credit card loyalty programs and preference for the proposed reward using five-point Likert scales. ANOVA will be performed to analyze the data.

Results/Discussion

It is expected that this study could deepen the understanding of how customers' perceived value of credit card loyalty programs influence customers' loyalty to hotel / airline brands and also could be used as references for service organizations to build and improve loyalty by offering co-branded credit card. Additionally, prior studies related to reward programs have only focused on one key industry sector, either lodging industry or restaurant industry (Hu et al., 2010; Liu, 2009; Park et al., 2013; Tanford et al., 2011), no known study has made a comparison of rewards programs between airline and lodging industry. Thus, it is hoped that this study will help consumer-facing businesses create a differentiated experience that will reap the full benefits of customer loyalty.

References Available Upon Request

ROLE OF IMAGE CONGRUENCE IN RESTAURANT BRANDING STRATEGY

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Introduction

Although there are many established theories and structures to enhance customer loyalty, few researches have been studied to consider the other factors like image congruence in the integrated branding model. To see the impacts of brand image and brand personality on satisfaction, few researchers have studied the effects of image congruence (IC) on customers' behavioural responses to brand (Onkvisit & Shaw, 1989). These researchers demonstrate that customers prefer brand with certain images that are congruent with their own self-image. When branding restaurant based on the brand personality and brand image, image congruence can fill the gap toward satisfaction and loyalty. Main purposes of this study are to (1) test the holistic relationships among brand personality, brand image, brand satisfaction, and brand loyalty in restaurant settings and (2) demonstrate the role of image congruence among the variables.

Methods

This study will employ a quantitative approach to investigate the relationship among restaurant brand personality, brand image, image congruence, brand satisfaction, and brand loyalty. Aaker's (1997) five dimensional brand personality scale (BPS) will be used to measure brand personality. Restaurant brand image will be measured by adapting four questions from the study of Lassar, Mittal, & Sharma (1995) and two questions from the study of Sirgy, Grewal, Mangleburg, Tamara, & Park, J (1997). Adapted from Oliver's (1997) study, 11 items brand satisfaction scale will be used to measure overall satisfaction. Lastly, brand loyalty will be measured by three items adapted from Jones and Taylor's (2007) scale. Data will be collected from three independent restaurants in Iowa. A survey questionnaire will be distributed randomly to the customers visiting restaurants. Descriptive statistics, confirmatory factor analysis, and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) will be employed to assess the relationships among variables.

Results/Discussion

Based on the six hypotheses in a holistic model, we could anticipate that (1) brand personality and brand image of restaurant Company positively influence both image congruence and restaurant brand satisfaction; (2) image congruence positively influences restaurant brand satisfaction; and (3) restaurant brand satisfaction is positively associated with restaurant brand loyalty. With these anticipated results, this study will be able to help restaurant managers to fine-tune the restaurant brand image to the target customer's image to improve satisfaction level in turn maintain and develop brand loyalty.

References Available Upon Request

CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT VS. REVENUE MANAGEMENT

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Introduction

Marketing management' focus has evolved from transactions to developing and maintaining long-term relationships with customers. Many service providers practice *Relationship Marketing* to cultivate a mutually beneficial and continuous relationship with their customers (Mukherjee & Nath, 2003). Trust has commonly been identified as the determining factor in the relationship marketing. Thus, encouraging customers' trust is crucial in managing customer relationship (Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Mukherjee & Nath, 2003; Deb & Chavali, 2010). However, the commonly applied revenue management practices might be detrimental to the trust building efforts (Shoemaker, n.d.). The fundamental concept of revenue management is to adjust price in accordance with the demand to make the product or the service available for the customers and the company at the right price and right time (Wang & Bowie, 2009). Nevertheless, while hotels adjust prices based on the demand to maximize their profits, customers might consider it to be an opportunistic behavior by hotels to take advantage of opportunities as they arise. Applying revenue management strategy to true loyal customers without careful scrutiny will break their trust toward the service providers. Thus, the purpose of this study is to investigate whether there are conflicts between customer relationship management and revenue management by evaluating the particular relationship between the hotels' opportunistic behavior and customers' trust.

Methods

An in-depth personal interview with five hotel revenue managers at district level and five hotel directors of sales and marketing at individual property level have been arranged. The questions are related to what their current practices are in terms of customer relationship management and revenue management. What's their viewpoint of the conflicts between opportunistic behavior by revenue management practices and trust building by customer relationship management.

Results/Discussion

this study will contribute to the industry through clarifying the impact of the relationship between revenue management and customer relationship management to the guests who are the main target market for hotels. Also, this study will provide the practices of revenue management (RM) and customer relationship management (CRM) and its impact on guests.

References Available Upon Request

ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF CONSUMER SEKPTICISM TOWARDS CAUSE-RELATED MARKETING (CRM)

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Introduction

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a topic increasingly capturing the interest of practitioners and scholars due to the positive impacts of CSR initiatives on brand loyalty and brand image (Gupta & Pirsch, 2006). The current study examines a specific form of strategic CSR known as cause related marketing (CRM) which refers a partnership between profit and non-profit organization to promote the company's product or services and to raise funds for causes (Polonsky & Macdonald, 2000). Consumers become skeptical about the true motives behind companies' CRM (Yoon & Gurhan-Canli, 2006) because CRM is linked with product sale from consumers (Singh, Kristensen & Villasenor, 2009). Drawing on utility of attribution theory, this study posits how brand-driven, CRM-driven, and customers' own personality-driven attributions influence the consumer skepticism toward CRM, which in turn has an unfavorable impact on attitudes, word of mouth (WOM), and CRM participation intents.

Methodology

Participants will be general consumers in the United Sates, who had eaten at fast food restaurant within one month. This study will use Amazon Mechanical Turk to conduct a web-based survey for data collection. Respondents will be asked to rate the extent of agreement with all of items using a 7-point Likert-type scale (strongly disagree, 1 to strongly agree, 7). The respondents will be asked to read a hypothetical scenario with regard to CRM to help reduce the rate of overweight children. The four-item of skepticism will come from Mohr et al. (1998). Brand credibility and familiarity will be measured using scale from Simonin and Ruth (1998). Items to measure perceived fit and egoistic motive will come from Barone et al. (2007). Self-esteem and cynicism will be measured (Kanter & Wortzel, 1985). All of items for consumer evaluation of CRM will come from Cui et al. (2003). Confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling analysis will be used for data analysis (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988).

Managerial implication

A fuller knowledge of the damaging consequences of consumer skepticism toward CRM can assist companies in their efforts to minimize the skepticism. Given the general rise of skepticism about the role of corporations in society and skepticism's potentially contagious nature, companies should devote greater efforts to adopting appropriate promotions and clearly communicating their genuine commitment to the causes that they choose.

References Available Upon Request

GAMIFICATION IN TOURISM: ASPECTS OF SELF-DETERMINATION THEORY AND FLOW

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Introduction

The concept of gamification is defined as the use of game design element characteristics in non-game contexts (Deterding et al., 2011). The idea of gamification is to use this motivational and emotional power of games for other purposes such as marketing, education, health care, and social media. There are several of game elements that have been considered for gamification such as clear goals, challenges, points, progress, levels, badges, leader boards, rewards, achievements, and feedback (Hamari et al., 2014). Some examples exist where gamification is applied to different tourism industries: airlines (American Airlines, KLM), hotels (Starwood SPG, Marriott Hotel), travel guide maps (Whaiwhai) and location-based applications (Foursquare, Tripventure). However, the application of gamification in tourism is still in its infancy and is mostly affiliated with limited academic research discussing game design patterns and game design mechanisms for services and marketing (Huotari & Hamari, 2012).

Two motivation theories (i.e. Self-determination theory and Flow theory) are especially of interest in gamification research since they have been applied to human-computer interactive systems and full-fledged games to enhance fun. SDT and flow can give valuable insights into human motivation and may be an important resource in designing for effective and meaningful gamification. Early gamification mechanics use challenges and rewards to increase engagement and motivation of activities (Neeli, 2012; Zichermann & Cunningham, 2011). Many games are designed to be challenging on the goals of users (Pagulayan et al, 2002), and many recreational activities also offer external rewards (Leitner, 2012). Sometimes, external rewards can make people feel demotivated, reducing performance (Kohn, 1999).

Methods

To manipulate participants to experience of gamification, we used “letterboxing”, which combines treasure hunting with puzzle solving. This experimental design contained including and excluding challenges (quests, clear goals, adventures, and achievement) and external rewards. The data for this study were collected in the Jeju Kimnyong Maze Park, located in South Korea in October, 2014. A total of 1200 participants were randomly assigned to one of 4 groups, they were asked to fill out the questionnaire on their emotional state after their experience.

Results/Discussion

We will estimate the structural equation model (SEM) for the innate needs of SDT (relatedness, competence, and autonomy), psychological variances (Flow, Fun, Enjoyment), and behavioural intent variances with multi-group analysis to compare the groups to analyse the effect of challenges and rewards. This study is expected to contribute to the tourism literature by expanding the realm of research to gamification strategy in the context of theme parks.

References Available Upon Request

APPLYING A NET VALENCE MODEL TO MEDICAL TOURISM – THE MODERATING ROLE OF DESTINATION IMAGE

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Introduction

Medical tourism has recently been recognized as one of the fastest growing areas in the tourism industry (Han & Hwang, 2013). In fact, South Korea is a rising medical tourism destination, yet ranked only seventh among nine major medical tourism destinations in Asia (Yu & Ko, 2012). The reason might be that there are some risks associated with a travel to South Korea for medical services. Accordingly, this study answers the question of what risks and benefits of overall medical services of South Korea impact on the preference of South Korea as a medical tourism destination by empirically testing a net valence model initially adopted by Peter & Tarpey (1975). In addition, this study modifies the model by adding destination image as a moderator.

Methods

In contrast with extant literature, this study population is those who have not been abroad for medical services. This is because this study gears toward expectation formed prior to experience (expected risks, benefits, and value). Data are collected through MTurk, an online data collection platform. The overall data quality of MTurk is recently proven to either meet or exceed psychometric standards for journal publications (Buhrmester et al., 2011).

Items were developed to measure five constructs based on extensive literature review – six items for expected risks of medical services abroad, five items for expected benefits of medical services abroad, four items for expected value of medical tourism to South Korea, two items for behavioral intention and three items for destination image. Expected risks and benefits are measured with 5-point Likert scale from 1 (not important at all) to 5 (very important). The other three constructs are measured from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). After collecting data, structural equation modelling will be conducted using AMOS 22 (Arbuckle, 2013).

Results/Discussion

Anticipated results are both expected risks and expected benefits significantly affect expected value, which in turn significantly impacts on behavioural intention to choose South Korea as a medical tourism destination. Moreover, destination image significantly moderates the relationship between expected value and behavioural intention.In terms of theoretical contribution, this study firstly adopts a net valence model to medical tourism sector. The reason medical tourists' behaviour is assessed differently from other types of tourists (i.e. leisure travellers) is that they tend to be rational and based their travel decision on value. In this regard, a net valence model can successfully contribute to understanding medical tourists' behaviour. Also, by adding destination image, this study deepens an original model theoretically. Meanwhile, this study has practical implications that destination marketing organizations and medical service providers should work closely together in order to attract prospective medical tourists as many as possible. This is because value of medical services can be appealed to people instantly while destination image is memory, perception, feelings of a person that is accumulated for a long time.

References Available Upon Request

MEDICAL TOURISM: EXPLORING POST-TRAVEL PERCEPTIONS OF THE TRAVEL EXPERIENCE

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Introduction

Though there has been considerable investigation into medical tourists' motivations for seeking medical care internationally, there has been limited post-travel research regarding how satisfied these medical tourists were with the care they received. The majority of current research has focused on pre-travel motivations; most post-travel research has been speculative or anecdotal, and lacking in empirical data (Crooks, Kingsbury, Snyder, & Johnston, 2010). More Americans are becoming medical tourists than ever before; this is largely due to the inflated cost of medical care in the United States, coupled with the modern ease of international travel, improved medical technology and standards of care worldwide, and the proven safety records of medical care in many developing countries (Bookman & Bookman, 2007). International medical tourism has gained intense momentum within the past two decades and is now a multi-billion dollar industry (Goldbach & West, 2010). Several domestic insurance companies are exploring coverage plans that would include international medical procedures, suggesting a further increase in outbound medical tourism may be on the horizon. (Kirchner, Carroll & Nious, 2013).

This project proposes to measure the post-travel satisfaction of American tourists who have sought medical care outside of the United States, with respect to how this may guide their future medical tourism decisions. By gaining a more thorough understanding of American's medical tourism experience as a whole, the process may be improved upon. This study will also provide insight into important push-pull factors that influence the patient-customer's decisions, which may in turn aid industry professionals in more efficiently capitalizing from this lucrative field of tourism, as well as improving upon domestic medical-and-wellness tourism services.

Methods

Push-pull factors and attributes derived from literature research will be used to create a survey instrument. Data will be collected via Qualtrics (an online data-collection service), generating 300 completed responses from Americans who have traveled internationally for medical services. A post-travel comparison of expectation versus experience will be conducted using multiple regression to identify the variables that correspond with high and low satisfaction levels among the sample group.

Results/Discussion

This research is still in progress. Measuring the level of satisfaction and overall medical tourism experience will offer valuable information to an under-researched area of tourism and hospitality, and provide insight into important factors that mold the patient-customer's decisions. Applications of this type of data include: furthering our general knowledge of the medical tourists' experience to help professionals understand the US medical tourism market, the reduction of the risk factors and increase of knowledge for potential medical tourists, a smoother facilitation of medical tourism travel (through medical travel agencies and intermediaries, hospitals, host-country suppliers, and many other venues).

References Available Upon Request.

EXPLORATION OF FESTIVAL AND EVENT VOLUNTEERS' MOTIVATION AND SATISFACTION LEVELS UTILIZING THE KANO METHOD

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Introduction

Many nonprofit event organizations rely on volunteers, but there exists a supply and demand imbalance making it critical for events to guard their resources. Volunteers are both an internal and external customer creating a challenge in traditional Total Quality Management (TQM) studies. Within TQM, the Kano Method is a tool that has been successfully used to delve into the intricacies of internal and external customer motivation, satisfaction and experiences.

This study aims to identify how Alabama events can optimize volunteer satisfaction while minimizing dissatisfaction by utilizing the Kano Method. By determining the relationship between motivation and satisfaction and prioritizing the elements as Attractive, Must-Be, One-Dimensional or Indifferent, events can effectively select the elements that will lead to continuous improvement, for both the event and the volunteers. This study also aims to identify how motivation and satisfaction factors impact key outcomes (organization commitment, intention to repeat volunteer, intention of volunteers to recruit volunteers, belief in organization's goals and values, and overall satisfaction) in Alabama events.

Methods

A quantitative correlational research method was used for this study. A convenience sample of eligible volunteers from events around Alabama represent five areas: art, food, culture, sport, community, and service. Surveys were distributed in person and online and analyzed using SPSS. The Kano Method requires finding the frequencies from the motivation and satisfaction variables and inputting them into the evaluation table. A principle component analysis with varimax rotation reduced the factors to run a backward elimination regression for each outcome to create a predictive model.

Results/Discussion

A relationship was identified between variables that motivate and satisfy. Twelve of the fifteen variables are classified into the same category, and eleven of those variables were found to be 'Attractive'. Satisfaction created a statistically significant model with significant factors for predicting each of the five key outcomes. Motivation produced four statistically significant models, but only two models had factors that were significant. Overall, satisfaction is a better predictor for the targeted key outcomes.

The results of this study indicate that the Kano Method is a viable tool in exploring the relationship simultaneously between motivation and satisfaction as it relates to volunteers. Volunteer managers in various disciplines will be able to better meet the needs of their volunteers. Event planning along with other areas in the hospitality industry have a new approach when tackling multidimensional issues such as: turnover, customer satisfaction, tourism development, and marketing strategies.

References Available Upon Request

TOURIST MOTIVATION IN SELECTING NATURE-BASED TOURISM DESTINATIONS: A MIXED-METHOD APPROACH

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Introduction

Despite the growth in popularity of nature-based tourism in America, little is known about motivational factors for choosing a nature-based destination. Thus, the objective of this study is to fill this gap in knowledge and to examine motivational factors of tourists when choosing a nature-based tourism destination. The subjects of this research are the management, staff, and guests of a nature-based tourism destination located in northeast New Mexico. The destination has been in operation since 1902 and specializes in hunting, fishing, and outdoor exploration. This study will utilize a mixed methods research design and will be conducted in two phases. The results will help nature-based tourism destinations with a better understanding of their guests' selection process in order to market their businesses and provide guests with what best meets their needs.

Methods

Phase I utilized in-depth interviews and convenience sampling. The purpose of Phase I is to identify emerging themes about the motivations of nature-based tourists when choosing a destination. The primary investigator transcribed all in-depth interviews and those transcripts were cross-validated and merged into one set of data. The resulting data was analyzed using comparative pattern analysis, which involves identifying recurring regularities in data, then sorting them into categories to link the underlying meanings (Baxter, 1991). This method allows for identification of common themes through analytic induction. Transcript-based thematic analysis of data was conducted by three researchers following a systematic approach suggested by Krueger and Casey (2009).

Results of Phase I will be used to design Phase II, which will be a quantitative study utilizing a self-administered survey distributed to a nature-based destination location guests over a 12 month period. Based on the results of the in-depth interviews, survey items will be developed to examine a broader perspective on nature-based tourists – specifically, their preferences, experiences, motivations, sources of information, and demographics. Prior to the actual survey study, a pilot study will be administered to guests at a similar destination to check for reliability and validity of the instrument. Descriptive statistics will be used to determine what information sources guests prefer to use when choosing a nature-based destination. Factor analysis (principal axis factoring) will be employed to identify factors that explain motivations to visit a nature-based destination. Further, regression models will determine how guests' demographics, geographic proximity, desired activities, and experience levels predict motivations.

Results/Discussion

Based on the collected interviews thus far, we found several motivations when choosing a nature-based destination. The quality of the overall experience (i.e. lodging, food, service, friendly staff, and high quality hunting or fishing) seems to be the major recurring factor along with the fact that families have been coming for generations and many consider it a private national park.

References Available Upon Request

DOES BEIJING'S IMAGE CHANGE AFTER LYMPIC GAMES?

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Introduction

Since the late 1800s, numerous cities in many countries have competed to host the Olympic Games, which are probably the most important mega sport events in the world. Previous research studies have focused on investigating what impact the Olympic Games have brought to their host cities (Boukas, Ziakas, & Boustras, 2013; Garcia-Ramon, Albet, Garcia-Ramon, & Albet, 2000; Haynes, 2001; Hiller, 2006; Jasmand & Maennig, 2008; Kasimati & Dawson, 2009; Liu, Mao, Huang, Zhang, & Chen, 2008), specifically, the Olympic Games' impact on cities' transportation, economy and facilities. Beijing hosted the 2008 Olympic Games–the first time in the history of China that Beijing hosted a worldwide sport events. Now, 6 years after the Olympic Games, all the post-Olympic effects have emerged and the iconic Olympic facilities in Beijing have become significant landmarks. National and international tourists now choose Beijing as a destination, and because of the uniqueness of the Olympic facilities and architecture in Beijing, those buildings are on the must-see list. The main purposes of this study are to examine: (a) Beijing's city image before and after the Olympic Games and (b) if tourists and residents have different perceptions about the city destination image.

Method

The survey instrument consists of 14 items including ten items for cognitive image and four for effective image. The cognitive image items were adapted from Baloglu and McCleary (1999) and Chew & Jahari's studies. The effective image items were adapted from Russell and Pratt (1980)'s research. For the measurement of the difference before and after the Olympics, the respondents were asked how different they felt about the image item when the Olympic host icon was added to the destination Beijing. The data was collected in Beijing for both residents and tourists from May to August 2014. SPSS 20.1 will be utilized for a t test and chi-square tests across the scale, nominal, and ordinal questions between resident and non-resident visitors.

Expect Results

Significant differences between residents and non-resident visitors will be reported regarding the destination cognitive image and effective image. We will make suggestions and recommendations that will contribute to greater tourism improvement and better quality of life in the Beijing region, as well as the positive economic impact from the facilities and changes subsequent to the 2008 Olympic Games in China.

References Available Upon Request

BEYOND "SIZE": TOWARD A NEW WINERY CLASSIFICATION FOR WINE TOURISM RESEARCH

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Introduction

In wine business research, winery size was identified as an important independent variable in studies of various natures. Wine tourism research, particularly studies examining consumer satisfaction in winery tasting rooms, claimed that the size of a winery matters greatly to the customer (Charters, Fountain, & Fish, 2009; Fountain, Fish, & Charters, 2008). A wide variety of mostly quantitative attributes have been used in research thus far (e.g. production volume, number of employees); however, there is little consensus regarding the definition of "small", "medium", "large" and the applicability of quantitative attributes for research objectives such as consumer satisfaction.

Methods

A survey will be distributed to wineries in the United States. Various qualitative and quantitative measures will be collected such as number of employees, education and experience level, wine production volume, ownership structure, and services offered. An objective of the descriptive analysis will be to determine the scope of these characteristics, for example how many wineries offer wine tastings. Between group differences will be calculated using ANOVA. The main goal will be to group wineries according to their responses to tangible (e.g. production volume) and intangible (e.g. event services) measures.

Results/Discussion

In order for future wine tourism research to differentiate amongst wine businesses, a clear, logical, obtainable yet comprehensive classification of wineries is needed. Winery segments distinguishing between those offering more and less services, seems to be a suitable suggestion for a new "size" classification because size, in terms of one single quantitative indicator, may not be the most realistic predictor for wineries' business scope. This appears particularly so due to wine markets emerging and becoming more service-oriented, global, complex, and diversified. Wineries are multipurpose operations; hence, multi-dimensional classification measures are required to conduct meaningful research.

References available upon request.

LINKS BETWEEN CULTURAL HERITAGE TOURISM AND OVERALL SENSE OF TOURIST WELL-BEING

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Introduction

There is a plethora of studies that focus on cultural heritage tourism (CHT) as an important aspect of tourism activities. However, there is, if any, very limited work that explores the link between cultural heritage tourism (CHT) experiences and overall sense of well-being (OSWB) induced by such experiences. Thus, the main objective of this study is to establish and empirically test the link between cultural heritage tourism (CHT) experiences and overall sense of tourist well-being (OSWB). This particular study is an attempt to examine the relationship between cultural heritage tourism (CHT) and overall sense of tourist well-being (OSWB), and to identify how satisfaction with cultural heritage sites may mediate the relationship between types of needs and overall sense of tourist well-being (OSWB). The conceptual foundation is that overall sense of tourist well-being (OSWB) in the context of cultural heritage tourism (CHT) will be influenced more by high-order needs (HON) than by low-order needs (LON).

Methods

The study will use a survey data collection technique. The questionnaire will be developed and pilot-tested before it is administered to the selected samples of at least two types of cultural heritage attraction sites. It is estimated that from each attraction site at least 250 cases will be secured. Combined, the study will have 500 completed questionnaires and the study sites will be determined at a later time in consultation with tourist experts and academicians. The study will collect data using a marketing firm.

The analysis of the study will be carried out in several related steps. The first step is about the development of scales that would measure types of needs, satisfaction, and overall sense of tourist well–being (OSWB) in the context of cultural heritage tourism (CHT). The second step will use exploratory factor analysis (EFA) of the mentioned scales, once further refinements have been done, and the study will use regression analysis to establish the link between cultural heritage tourism experience (CHT) and overall sense of well–being of tourists (OSWB). The study will also check for normality for data distribution.

Results/Discussion

The study will conclude with two types of implications, namely, practical implications and theoretical implications as suggested by study findings. It is hoped that practical implications would allow heritage destinations and attractions to develop more focused designs that would appeal to different types of tourist needs.

References Available Upon Request

THE MANSIONS OF HEAVEN: A WORLDWIDE HOSPITALITY NETWORK THAT ENCOURAGES TOURISM

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Introduction

In ancient empires, a common government project was to establish a royal roadway and hospitality network to increase the speed of travel for messengers, officials and soldiers. As these roadways were constructed and renovated, imperial roadside inns were placed at every day's length of travel; the *tampu* of the Inca Empire and *caravanserai* of the Persian Empire are a few examples. The Tabula Peutingeriana is an ancient road map of the Roman Empire wherein all roads lead to the capitol city of Rome, and the imperial *mansiones* are represented by a house-like drawing. Into this context, the founder of the Christian faith was born. He spoke of a new empire and a holy society, the kingdom of Heaven. During his last evening meal, he cast a simple vision of the kingdom of Heaven which guides and encourages his followers to this day. The purpose of this research is to understand his vision and its relevance to the hospitality industry using the best translation of John 14:2a from the New Testament. Although this text has been well-researched, few modern scholars have considered the possibility of the text referring to imperial lodging of an earthly empire.

Methods

Within this research, the original languages for John 14:2a are evaluated, and possible translations of the text into English are critiqued. The most edifying translation will fit both within the context of the surrounding literature and greater society. This research will then highlight and evaluate other writings within the New Testament that complement the primary text in question.

Results/Discussion

This research will suggest the best translation for John 14:2a after analysing its literary and social context. The value of the research will be to more clearly define the role of hospitality within the eschatological vision of the Christian faith. Due to the influence of the Christian faith in the world economy, the research results are expected to encourage investment in the hospitality industry.

References Available Upon Request

EXAMINING THE INFLUENCE OF ATTITUDE ON LOCAL FOOD PURCHASE INTENTION OF TOURISTS: A MULTILEVEL APPROACH

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Introduction

People usually go on vacation with the company of their family and friends. Since travel decisions are not taken individually, there would be a group influence which makes the decision making process more complex. However, the majority of studies in tourism literature deals with the individual behavior (Obrador, 2012). There is a need to understand the interdependency of the behavior of tourists travelling together. Thus, the purpose of this study is to apply Hierarchical Linear Modelling in order to understand the influence of cognitive and affective attitude towards local seafood on the intention to purchase local seafood of tourist couples visiting coastal destinations of USA. Studies focusing on travel decision making of families categorized travel decisions as husband dominant, wife dominant and joint decision (Mottia & Quinn, 2004; Thornton, Shaw & Williams, 1997; Zalatan, 1998). According to Schänzel, Smith and Weaver (2005) collecting information from all family members and investigating collective travel experience of a family will create a holistic understanding of family travel. The role of emotions on travel decisions was emphasized by some authors (Sirakaya & Woodside, 2005). Cognitive and affective attitude regarding to food has received attention in many studies. (Aikman, Crites & Fabrigar, 2006). These studies show that affect has stronger impact on pleasure food consumption; and cognition has stronger impact on functional food consumption.

Methods

The unit of analysis for this study is couples. The study participants were mixed gender couples visiting the cities of Charleston, Beaufort and Hilton Head Island. Couples were intercepted in downtown and beach areas in the first three weekends of October 2014. 380 questionnaires were collected from 190 couples and the response rate was 67%. Data will be analyzed by HLM to detect the interdependency of tourist couples' attitude towards seafood and their intention to purchase seafood.

Study Contributions

This study will fill the gap in the literature by analyzing group behavior in tourism context by using HLM as the data analysis technique. The conceptual model is built to examine the relationship between cognitive and affective attitude, age group of tourist couples, gender, source of food and intention to purchase seafood. Studies focusing on the cognitive and affective predictors of food consumption behavior is limited to daily life. Current study aims to examine these relationships within the tourism context. Furthermore, the conceptual model developed in this study could be applied to local food other than seafood such as agricultural products. An understanding of local seafood preference of tourists will add marketing knowledge to local seafood producers, tourism marketers and government tourism agencies. Collaboration of these stakeholders in order to develop new tourism products based on local resources will create a positive economic impact for the region.

References Available Upon Request

IMPACT OF NOSTALGIA TRIGGERS ON EMOTIONAL RESPONSES AND REVISIT INTENTIONS IN COLLEGE FOOTBALL GAMES

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Introduction

College football is one of the most popular spectator sports in the United States (Baade, Baumann, & Matheson, 2008). Attendance at all college football games in 2013 was 50 million, which is much higher than most other sports in the United States (e.g., National Football League, National Basketball Association, and National Hockey League). Average attendance among the 123 National Intercollegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division 1-FBS football teams, the highest level of collegiate play, totaled more than 45,500 fans per game in 2013 (Huston, 2014). Generally, many young people attend football games with their families during their childhood. As they grow older, they visit football games with friends during college years and revisit with family and friends when they are young adults and in middle age. For these reasons, memories of past football games attended are important factors that can encourage people to revisit. Reisenwitz, Iyer, and Cutler (2004) described this psychological emotion as "nostalgia." Nostalgia can be defined as a personal emotion induced by consumers' lived experiences that influences their present-day product or service choices. The specific objectives of the current study are to 1) examine the triggers of visitors' nostalgia, 2) investigate the impact of visitors' perceptions of college football environments on emotional responses: pleasure and arousal, and 3) examine the effect of pleasure and arousal emotions on visitors' behavioral intentions.

Methods

A survey will be used for this study, and it will be administered at two Big-12 conference universities in the United States during the college football season, from September to December. Nostalgia triggers will be measured by 20 items using a 5-point Likert-type scale (Batcho, 1995; Wildschut et al., 2006). Pleasure will be measured by five items (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974) and arousal will be measured with six items (Mehrabian & Rusell, 1974). Responses to these items will be reflected in bipolar adjectives. Finally, behavioral intention will be measured with three items using a 5-point Likert-type scale (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 2010).

Results/Discussion

The findings of this study can provide several useful implications for the management of college football events in the U.S. It is crucial for the management of college football events to contrive ways to remind visitors of good memories of past college football games in order to draw nostalgia and to stimulate revisit intentions. Through effectively managing and controlling the nostalgia triggers of patrons who visit college football games, college football managers are able to develop marketing strategies that are helpful for attracting more college football visitors.

References Available Upon Request

AN INVESTIGATION OF CULTURAL AND INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS AFFECTING TOURISTS' DECISION TO VIIST BANGKOK

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Introduction
The characteristics of tourists are important factors when a researcher analyzes tourists' satisfaction with destinations (Lee, 1999). Also, it is important to understand tourists' past experience in the tourist destination because they generally tend to share their experiences with other people (Leiper, 2005). Thus, this study is designed to analyze the relationship between international tourists' characteristics (i.e., cultural and individual characteristics), as well as their past experience in the tourist destination, and their travel intention to Bangkok. Hofstede's cultural dimensions are the most well-known and widely used cultural framework in marketing, psychology, and sociology (Steenkamp, 2001). Hofstede created five dimensions with regards to cultural dimensions: power distance (PDI), individualism-collectivism (IDV), masculinity-femininity (MAS), uncertainty avoidance, and long-term orientation. This study will examine the influence of different cultural dimensions on tourists' decisions to visit Bangkok. Therefore,
H1: There is a relationship between international tourists' cultural characteristics a) power distance (PDI); b) individualism-collectivism (IDV); c) masculinity-femininity (MAS); d) uncertainty avoidance; and e) long-term orientation, and their travel intention to Bangkok.

Secondly, the satisfaction levels are impacted by tourists' demographic characteristics (Master& Prideaux, 2000). Tourists with different characteristics may prefer to visit different types of traveling destinations. For example, Yoon and Uysal (2005) supported that age and income determine people's choice of destination. This study will discover the relationship between international tourists' demographic characteristics and travel intention. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:
H2: There is a relationship between international tourists' demographic characteristics a) age; b) income; c) occupation; d) gender; and e) education level, and their travel intention to Bangkok.

Furthermore, Light (1996) found that tourists' decisions to revisit a destination also depend on their experience during the previous trip. Kozak and Rimmington (2000) supported that tourist satisfaction with a destination, rather than with a facility, is more important to create repeat visits. Therefore,
H3: International tourists with different travel characteristics of past experience will influence their travel intention to Bangkok.

Methods
This study will employ a quantitative research design using the survey method. The questionnaire will consist of 5 sections as follows: (1) personal background (i.e., cultural and demographic characteristics), (2) travel characteristics, (3) travel push factors, (4) travel pull factors, and (5) travel intention to visit Bangkok. The questionnaire will be measured by using 5-Likert scales (Sekaran, 1992). 400 international tourists will be selected from the tourists who visit Bangkok.

References Available Upon Request

APPLICATION OF HERITAGE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES IN JENKINS COUNTY, GEORGIA

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Introduction

Millen, GA is the county seat and the only incorporated city within Jenkins County. The city is among the many small, rural Southern cities facing economic hardships. A 2010 study found that Jenkins County is a destination zone with the anchor community of Millen. A notable suggestion resulting from the study was that the current heritage resources need enhanced interpretation and promotion.

The purpose of this study is to demonstrate that the combination of a theoretical framework in tourism and an applied collaborative model will result in more effective tourism promotion than if these frameworks were used separately. This study also aims to provide Millen with a plan to stimulate tourism in the region.

This study is guided by the following research questions:

RQ1 How can integration of a theoretical framework and an applied collaborative model in tourism allow for creating an effective tourism strategic plan for a community?

RQ2 How can we adapt the collaborative tourism framework to apply it successfully in a small Southern rural community?

RQ3 How will the implementation of collaborative tourism strategy result in enhanced visitation to the target community?

Methods

A tourism development assessment aimed at each of the five components of the Functioning Tourism System Model (Gunn, 1988) will be conducted by January 2015. This assessment will draw on the methods established by Clare Gunn to evaluate Jenkins County as a potential tourism destination. While Gunn's framework will guide the evaluation of the viability of Millen as a tourism destination, the tourism plan will be guided by the collaborative community-based tourism framework developed by Jamal and Getz (1995) which consists of a three stage process; problem-setting, direction-setting, and implementation. All three stages involve the community's input so that Millen can be established and sustained as a tourism destination.

Results/Discussion

This study will provide Jenkins County officials an in-depth look into what resources are available and how to use those resources to their advantage. Additionally, a series of written "day-trip itineraries" will be provided to the county. These itineraries will enable both the immediate promotion of tourism based on existing infrastructure as well as "targets" for future development. The final product of the project will be embodied in the form of a historic walking tour through downtown Millen. The culmination of this project is set for National Historic Preservation Month in May 2015.

References Available Upon Request

THE ROLE OF THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY IN MANAGING CUSTOMERS' SPA WELLNESS EXPERIENCE

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Introduction

More than ever before, people desire to look and feel better, to slow the effects of aging, manage stress, and/or prevent age-related illnesses (Joppe, 2010). The response of the tourist industry to these trends was to create health resorts offering spa treatments, relaxation and activities. Among wellness tourism, particularly the spa industry has made steady progress as shown in the increase of its sales volume and number of facilities (McNeil & Ragins, 2005). Spa tourism has emerged as the fourth largest leisure industries in the USA (McNeil & Ragins, 2005). Only those hospitality firms that conceptualize and manage the wellness offerings as essentially a 'service' will gain an advantage in understanding and delivering service excellence. Therefore, the objective of this study is to develop a theoretical model that may help hospitality firms to enhance customer experience for wellness customers.

Methods

The conceptual framework for this study is based on the work of Cox's (1982) Interaction Model of Client Health Behavior (IMCHB) and Schmitt's (1999) Strategic Experiential Modules model (SEMs). Toward this integrative approach, IMCHB will be used as a basis of the general framework to delineate the entire service process of spa experience. Only the background variables and health outcome elements will be used to guide this study. Then, SEMs five strategic experiential modules of 'sense', 'feel', 'think', 'act', and 'relate' will be applied by substituting the partial component of the IMCHB model that delineates the interrelationship between the dynamic variables and client and professional interaction. To attain research objectives, empirical data will be collected using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Measures for TPB constructs will be derived from the extensive literature review on spa tourism. Case studies on popular spa destinations and personal interviews will be conducted. The population targeted for this study will consist of spa tourists who have been to spa destinations in U.S at least one or more times. A survey method will be chosen for this study and these questionnaires will be distributed online. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) will be used to test hypotheses and determine whether there are any significant relationships between constructs.

Results/Discussion

The wellness industry is considered to be complex in nature because it provides multidimensional experiences (Gentile, Spiller, & Noci, 2007). IMCHB is segmented into three major components which are client singularity, client-professional interaction, and health outcome. However, one thing to note here is that IMCHB model accounts only the interaction between client-professional in the model. On the other hand, while SEMs model provides an experimental grid as a tool in managing customers experiences through taking into consideration of sensory, emotional, cognitive, behavioral and relational values, only experiential component has been addressed, neglecting personal background characteristics as well as the outcome of the service. This integrated model would allow firms to capture bi-directional involvement between the firm and its customers, thus, enabling the firm to fully manage customer experience from the beginning to the end of the service delivery.

References Available Upon Request

PUSH AND PULL TRAVEL MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS OF LGBT TOURISTS

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Introduction

The U.S. tourism industry generated more than $1.5 trillion in economic output in 2012 (U.S. Department of Commerce). The estimated annual economic impact of Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual and Transgender (LGBT) travelers in the U.S. was projected to be $65+ billion a year (Community Marketing Inc., 2014), which will make them the largest spending market in the U.S. Out Now Business Class (ONBC) 2013, research reported the 2014 annual spending on tourism by LGBT will exceed $200 billion world-wide. LGBT people traveled more, had the largest disposable income of any niche market group, and stayed longer than straight travelers (Forrester Research, Inc., 2014).

The tourism industry has begun to realize the value the LGBT market offers and embraces the 'pink dollar'. Research estimated that the LGBT community took an average of four trips/vacations per year and spent an average of seven nights at their destination (Community Marketing, Inc., 2013). On average, the LGBT community earned more annually and had a higher disposable income than the heterosexual market (CMI, 2013).

LGBT tourism continues to be an ever expanding niche market, however, research will be needed to fully understand what motivates the LGBT community to travel; specifically, the internal or emotional aspects (push factors) as well as the external or situational aspects (pull factors). The purpose of this study will be to establish tourism 'push' and 'pull' motivational factors particular to the LGBT respondents, when selecting tourist destinations, specifically those destinations aligned with LGBT.

Methods

A self-administered survey was developed to measure the relevant push-pull motivating factors of LGBT travelers. Questions focused on: 1) visitation and frequency of gay tourism attractions, 2) gay tourism destinations, 3) travel choices, 4) motivational push factors, and 5) motivational pull factors. The motivational push and pull factors were adapted from Way and Kesterson (Kesterson, 2014). The questionnaire included 31 push motivational factors and 19 pull motivational factors; both employed a 5-point Likert scale.

Results/Discussion

Results of this study are forthcoming. Data Analysis will exercise factor analysis, regression and correlations. This was an exploratory study focusing on LGBT travel through motivational travel factors. The hospitality industry and marketers as well as the LGBT community will greatly benefit from the results of this study. If states continue to legalize same-sex marriages, the economic impact could have significant economic improvements for the tourism industry.

References Available Upon Request

IMPLICATIONS OF GLOBALIZATION AND AIRLINE ALLIANCES ON TOURISM DEMAND AND AIRLINE PROFITABILITY: CASE OF MAINLAND CHINESE OUTBOUND TOURISM TO THE U.S.

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Introduction

This paper provides an overview of the Chinese outbound tourists demand and investigates Chinese travellers' preferences on airlines and service quality. Chinese outbound tourism market grew by 127% from 2006 to 2012, which is the most rapidly growing market in the world (NBS, 2013). In addition, it is expected that Chinese international travellers will become one of the major sources of tourism growths in U.S. tourism destinations (CNTA, 2013). Given a surge in demand for Mainland Chinese outbound tourism to the U.S., this study attempts to contribute to the body of literature in several ways. This study 1) reviews tourism demand for Mainland Chinese outbound tourism to the U.S. and the impacts of globalization and airline alliances; 2) investigates the effects of airline alliances on Chinese tourism demand for U.S. tourism markets and airline profitability; and 3) conducts a survey to identify Chinese travellers' preference on airlines and service quality. Based on the findings of this paper, we provide implications of globalization and airline alliances to policymakers, and airline and tourism managers.

Methods

This paper provides a comprehensive review of existing literature on airline alliances and Chinese tourism demand for U.S. tourism. An online survey is conducted to Chinese tourists in the U.S. to identify participants' preference on airlines and service quality, and demographic information. In addition, we collect data from various sources such as Star Alliance, SkyTeam and Oneworld, Department of Transportation (DOT), and National Bureau of Statistics in China (NBS) to achieve the objectives of this paper.

Results/Discussion

Total 68 responses were collected and our preliminary results show that over 47.9% of the respondents choose Air China and China Eastern Airlines from China to U.S. destinations, and 62.5% of respondents prefer searching related information and book their tickets on airline official websites. With regards to the service quality, over 41.3% respondents respond that capability of security-related accidents/safety record is the most important factor for airlines. Additionally, on-time performance and handling of luggage loss or damage are the second and third important aspects, respectively. Furthermore, 37.5% of outbound Chinese tourists prefer to choose U.S. carriers and 27.1% respondents are interested in using Japanese airlines over other carriers, implying that foreign carriers can increase their market shares in China if they meet the service needs of Chinese travellers. According to our findings, it is suggested that airline and tourism mangers need to build effective marketing strategies to meet the demand of Chinese travellers' preferences on service quality in order to improve the profitability of airlines and tourism firms. Other findings and implications will be included in a final paper.

References Available Upon Request

WHERE TOURISM GOVERNANCE AND BRANDING CONVERGE - THE ROLE OF STAKEHOLDERS

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Introduction

The coordination of stakeholders is fundamental for an effective governance of destination, which involves different organizations in the decision-making process (Hankinson, 2007). Bregoli's (2013) study indicated that governance methods strongly influence destination's internal brand strength through communication, engagement, consultation and motivation among stakeholders. Because stakeholder coordination approaches vary according to different governance models in different destinations, there should be a critical link between tourism governance and destination branding. The relationship between the two begins to emerge in recent literature (Bregoli, 2013). This study attempts to conceptualize a model that links destination governance and branding via stakeholder coordination.

Conceptual Model

This study adopts a supply-side perspective in analyzing destination branding and employs the concept of internal brand strength. Internal brand strength consists of two dimensions: brand commitment and brand citizenship behavior. The relation between governance and branding can be identified from the impact of stakeholder coordination on internal brand strength. Stakeholder coordination in centralized governance is characterized by command, enforcement and lack of policy consultation. The branding often only represents the interest and perception of powerful decision maker. However, in decentralized governance, the branding process involves extensive communication among stakeholders to ensure value and interest consensus. The community may be more self-motivated to act consistently with the brand image, thus enhancing the level of brand identification and internalization. The model connects destination governance and internal brand strength along the two dimensions delineated by how coordination among stakeholders takes place. Coordination approaches result in different responses and actions of stakeholders toward the branding. The final outcome should be different levels and forms of brand commitment and brand citizenship behavior.

Future Research

This research will be followed by a series of case studies. The first set of cases will be collected from China where a myriad of destination governance approaches are taking place due to the transitional nature of its economy from the centralized to the market-oriented. The cases are expected to illustrate the relationship between these approaches and destination branding.

Reference Available Upon Request

THE EFFECT OF TIMESHARE LAWS ON VACATION OWNERSHIP CORPORATION'S STOCK VALUES

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Introduction

Vacation ownership's secondary market, the "resale" market, has had an increase in unscrupulous resale operators who have taken advantage of timeshare owners attempting to sell their timeshares since the Great Recession. These operators would require money from timeshare owners in advance, claiming the fees were for closing costs or advertising services, and then disappear with the money (Elmore, 2012). By 2010, fraudulent timeshare resale operators in Florida became the top fraud complaint received by the Florida Attorney General's Office (Popkins, 2013). To help combat this growing issue, Florida passed the Timeshare Resale Accountability Act. In the vacation ownership industry, Florida has the highest concentration of vacation ownership properties and has a significant impact on the entire industry (ARDA, 2011; Weir, 2014). Thus, any changes in Florida laws relating to the timeshare industry may become a model for how other states and countries deal with similar situations. This in-progress study focuses on the stock performance of publicly traded United States based vacation ownership firms that are affected by the enactment of the Timeshare Resale Accountability Act.

Methods

This descriptive research study utilizes event study methods. An event study attempts to measure the effect of an event on market prices (Torchio, 2009). This research will first identify impactful events, to include changes in Florida state law, and identify which firms are impacted by these events. Data will be collected in terms of stock prices of the identified timeshare firms using various securities-related sources. Normal and abnormal stock price returns will be calculated, model parameters and an estimated timeline window will be identified, and the aggregate returns will be computed (Campbell, Lo, & MacKinlay, 1997). Time series analysis will be conducted on financial returns of the firm's stock and its reference index. For each event the estimation window will be calculated and sequences of firm and market returns will be identified. Then, regression analysis will be utilized to examine the relationship between the stock and reference index. Finally, normal returns for all days in the event window will be predicted and these will be analyzed with the abnormal returns utilizing a t-test.

Results/Discussion

As vacation ownership corporations tend to seek legitimacy for their product in an environment of fraudulent operators, it should be empirically shown whether the announcement of a new, aggressive consumer-protection law would increase their shareholders' wealth. The results of this study will statistically show the influence of these events, if any, on shareholder wealth and address the lack of research in this area. This research will be important in hospitality research as these topics, if significant, should be addressed in further detail. While similar event studies have been performed in the lodging sector (Kwansa, 1994), there is a paucity of event study research in the vacation ownership industry.

References Available Upon Request

THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL ON RESIDENTS' SUPPORT FOR MEGA SPORTS EVENTS: THE CASE OF THE 2018 OLMPIC WINTER GAMES IN PYEONGCHANG, KOREA

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Introduction

Mega sports events are becoming more important nationally. South Korea experienced the positive effects of economic upsurge and enhanced national image after the 1988 Olympic Summer Games. Heretofore Studies on mega sports events have focused on their economic impact. However, researchers are recently recognizing the importance of residents' support on holding successful mega sports events. To draw residents' support, fostering social capital is seen as highly viable among several strategies. Social capital has been discussed in public administration, sociology, pedagogy, and so on. Research on social capital is in progress in the area of tourism, few tourism studies have focused on the social capital of mega sports events. The aim of this study is to examine the influence of social capital on residents' support for mega sports events. This study will take advantage of the upcoming hosting of the 2018 Olympic Winter Games, in Pyeongchang.

Methods

This research model was designed and hypotheses were established based on previous studies and the characteristics of mega sports events. Hypotheses state that social capital in the host region of a mega sports event will influence residents' support. The social capital consists of trust, norm, and network in this study. The observed variables of trust are trust in the central, regional, and local government, as well as the national assembly, local council. The observed variables of norm are observance of order, ethical recognition, low crime rate and network are mutual cooperation, internal communication, information sharing. The observed variables of residents' support are agreement, expectation, and volunteer work. This study adopts a test questionnaire survey method. The questionnaire is self-administered and measurement scale is a five-point Likert scale. This study will use quota sampling method of 300 adults in Pyeongchang in the light of age distribution. SPSS will be utilized for the data. Methods of analysis are descriptive statistical, primary factor, regression, and stepwise regression analyses.

Results/Discussion

This study aims to shed light on the importance of social capital in hosting successful mega sports events. The following results are expected. Trust, norm, and network will influence residents' support. And trust will have the largest influence on residents' support. Theoretically, this study will find factor of social capital on mega sports event characteristic. Further, this work aims to provide empirical evidence on the importance of social capital on residents' support. Practically, this study will suggest that social capital must be established to gain residents' support. So policies related to social capital must be enforced, including those on educational programs and debates in the local community.

References Available Upon Request

UNESCO'S BRANDING OF SITES AND PRACTICES: ROLES AND RESPONSES

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Introduction

The United Nation's Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) began designating sites as 'Biosphere Reserves' (BR) in 1976, 'World Heritage Sites' (WHS) in 1978, and 'Intangible Cultural Heritage' (ICH) practices in 2008. UNESCO's acknowledgement and labelling of these sites and activities have impacted them in an assortment of ways; however, the general effects of internationally-recognized branding on properties and customs are not well understood. Research in this area is limited primarily due to the variety of entities designated, the difficulties of studying them before and after their designations, and the absence of data compiled on location. This paper sets out to answer three questions: What is the role and effectiveness of UNESCO branding in fostering tourism at BR, WHS, and ICH sites?, what is the community's role in, and reaction to, the branding of these entities?, and how do tourists respond to the branding of these entities? Connections are drawn between case studies and UNESCO's current objectives. Suggestions are then made for improving the designation process and benefits.

Methods

This paper uses a narrative approach to review current literature on the topic of UNESCO branding. To do this, a brief history of UNESCO and the establishment of its conservation programs is outlined. Previous UNESCO-branding research concentrates on changes in the number of visitors, revenue, and management structure upon site/practice designation. These factors are discussed and compared to UNESCO's observations. Next, three recent case studies (each representing one of the three major inscription types) are summarized and analyzed. Conclusions are drawn regarding effects of inscription on tourists and site/practice communities. Observations of these responses then led us to develop a list of ways to better the inscription process and benefits for stakeholders.

Results/Discussion

Most scholars agree that branding an entity tends to increase the number of visitors to its location. Because of the large variety of entities (urban centers, remote areas, trans-boundary, annual festivals, day-to-day experiences, etc.) a much larger sample size is necessary to draw such broad conclusions regarding increases in economic benefits. The three case-studies demonstrate that, not only does each entity possess distinct attributes, but the specific environment, participant values and desires, and available resources vary with each as well. However, in all three cases, researchers found important statistics and/or stakeholder responses missing from local discourse. Additionally, all three scenarios found that the participatory approach to planning and managing seemed to work very well in smaller communities. Though it seems that designation increases visibility, several authors have found that the public has little awareness of what being inscribed as a WHS represents. UNESCO's observations are generally in line with research findings. To improve the inscription process and benefits, it is suggested that UNESCO: increase their dialogue with local communities (especially early on), encourage the accurate recording of data, encourage participatory systems of governance at small sites, encourage the use of UNESCO's logo and mission on branded entity-focused websites, and place lists of similar, lesser-known entities at more popular designated sites.

References Available Upon Request

STATE-TO-STATE BRANDING: INTEGRATING COUNTRY-OF-ORIGIN THEORY

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Introduction

Associations are frequently linked to a product's place of origin. For instance, consumers may consider Audi or BMW automobiles as representative of Germany's high quality standards (Agrawal & Kamakura, 1998). Previous literature has examined the significance of branding components such as country origin or image, and how these relate to the countries in which they originated (Aaker, 1996; Nagashima, 1970; Yoo, Donthu, & Lee, 2000). This study incorporates the concept of countries possessing brand components and applies this to states. Consumer perceptions towards a location and how it relates to their tourism experience are pertinent and assessed in this study. The country-of-origin theory suggests countries have certain extrinsic cues tied to it which consumers associate with being representative of that location (Hulland, 1999; Kotler & Gertner, 2004). These cues may include the brand name, seller or value linked to a specific location (Kotler & Gertner, 2004). In this study, state-of-origin entails extrinsic cues associated with a state affecting destination preference. States often compete against one another to host tourism events and attract visitors just as brands and companies vie for market share. This study will examine respondents' perceptions toward the five most highly visited states: California, New York, Florida, Nevada and Texas. The relationship between state image, product design, state-of-origin, brand equity and brand loyalty toward states will be examined. This study adds to limited extant research concerning branding within a nation, specifically at the state level.

Methods

The online questionnaire for this study includes 40 questions. In order to control situational variables or other effects of compounding variables, which are not intended to be tested in this study, participants will be presented with a scenario about a traveling experience before they begin answering related questions. Survey items related to brand loyalty (Yoo, Donthu, & Lee, 2000), state-of-origin (Han, 1989; Maheswaran, 1994), brand equity (Yoo, Donthu, & Lee, 2000), destination image design (Orbaiz & Papadopoulos, 2003), product design (Cai et al., 2004), and demographics (Kim, Uysal, & Sirgy, 2012) were adapted from extant literature. SPSS will be used to compute descriptive statistics, conduct factor and reliability analysis of the data. Regression and ANOVA will be used to determine positive and negative relationships.

Results/Discussion

This study is only limited to U.S. states, which may be devoid of commonalities with non-western tourism environments. When considering a state as a brand, states should aim to build stronger reputations while associating state-of-origin with a favourable image. This leads to repeat visitors. The results of this study may indicate travellers' perceptions of states' strengths as well as improvement areas needed to boost their overall image and customer loyalty.

References Available Upon Request

EFFECTS OF EWOM ON PURCHASE DECISION: THE INTERPLAY OF INFORMATION DIRECTION, USEFULNESS VOTE AND EWOM EMOTION

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This article examines how information direction (positive vs. negative), usefulness vote (with vs. without) and eWOM emotion (weak vs. strong) of the electronic word of mouth (eWOM) in the hotel industry contribute to the effect of eWOM. Many previous researches have found that negative reviews, usefulness vote and strong emotion of the reviews had more powerful impact on customers. But in this study, the authors found that useful vote did not positively associated with customer's perception toward the product, and strong emotion of the review worked in the negative way.

2*2*2 controlled experiments was conducted among college students to assess the effect of eight hotel reviews with different information direction, usefulness vote and eWOM emotion. Then the interaction effect of the above factors was analyzed.

The results of the experiment show that the influencing power of eWOM is greater for negative eWOM than for positive eWOM, greater for without usefulness vote than for with ones, and greater for weak emotion than for strong one. The results reveal that emotion has moderating effects on information direction, usefulness vote, and effect.

The findings provide managerial implications for hotel Internet marketing strategies. Along with the accumulated online shopping experience, consumers no longer find the online comments convincible as usual. Suspects have been granted to those posts with strong emotion while more and more spotlights on the actual contents. Hotel managers should pay special attention to the negative hotel reviews.

Acknowledgment
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AGRITOURISM AND THE EFFECTS IT HAS ON FARMERS ECONOMICALLY, THE ENVIRONMENT AND EDUCATION

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Introduction

Agritourism has become an increasingly popular and prosperous venture in many rural areas in the United States and all over the world; it provides benefits for both farmers and the public. Agritourism creates opportunities to urbanize, grow, and depend less on outside jobs for stable income (Neuman, 2011). The growth of agriculture and tourism combined has created many opportunities from providing entertainment exposure, lodging facilities, outdoor recreation participation, and educational activity (Center for Crop Diversification, 2011).

Some challenges that may occur in farmers' transitioning process into agritourism include farm renovations, start up costs business, marketing strategies, and liability insurance just to name a few. Marketing, management, and good public relations skills are a necessity when a farmer begins running a business that brings the tourism industry onto their property. Accepting the educational aspect of agritourism can have a large impact on our peers because there is an increase in opportunities for learning and economic growth. The knowledge college students gain through agritourism education will empower them to develop ways to improve the quality of local communities in the area so that they become sustainable and economically stable. The purpose of this study is to 1) discover if farms participating in agritourism can be more economically successful than regular farming practices alone, 2) indicate if there are more disadvantages than advantages in agritourism, and 3) determine if the education of agritourism can influence the decision making of our peers.

Methods

A qualitative approach will be applied to this study because of the field's small amount of research. Data will be collected from an economical, environmental and educational agritourism perspective through interviews with stakeholders and students in the area. Content analysis will be applied to interpret the data.

Results/Discussion

The results of the study will identify if farms that participate in agritourism can be more successful than farms that do not. The study will identify the pros and cons of agritourism and focus on how education on agritourism can play a part in the decisions we make in our daily lives.

References Available Upon Request

POTENTIAL IMPACT OF RURAL TOURISM IN VIRGINIA

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Introduction

The presence of rural tourism offers options for the local community to enhance the attractiveness of its region. In the U.S., there is a trend toward rural tourism and agritourism programs that have been implemented not only to drive tourism in these smaller destinations, but to sustain local farm businesses. Agritourism is often overlooked in overall appraisals of the U.S. farm sector due to the relatively small size of many operations (Veeck, et al., 2006).

California leads the states in the successful implantation of agritourism efforts on rural farms. California is the largest agribusiness in the U.S. generating 11% of the nation's produce and about 25% of the nation's "table food" (Trevors & Saier, 2007). The state of Virginia is home to hundreds of small farms that are dwindling due to lack of income. Virginia has operational farms which are dispersed in both its Northern and Southern regions. These farms also accommodate agritourists. By creating an authentic product to attract visitors, the small farm is able to provide for daily operations as well as profit from the experiences they create for tourists and other individuals.

Virginia Polytechnic University and Virginia State University have collaborated on a Virginia Cooperative Extension program that is dedicated to restoring and prolonging the success of small farm operations in the state. By offering education to local farmers, Virginia is investing in its agriculture industry to promote and maintain agribusinesses. By comparing the agriculture industry of California to Virginia, the hypothesis of whether or not Virginia can become a more formidable rural tourism destination will be clarified. A concern with the potential of Virginia farms agritourism activities lies with return-on-investment. Can a small farm develop products which are both sustainable by the land and affordable enough to produce on a consistent basis? Therefore, the purposes of the study were to 1) identify programs and initiatives being made by farmers and rural enthusiasts in California, 2) determine if these programs and initiatives can be implemented and executed in rural areas of Virginia, 3) explore why there are not many farms participating in agritourism throughout the state of Virginia.

Methods

An interview will be conducted with local farmers and stockholders; focus group discussions with both the University of California and Virginia State University's agriculture & hospitality professionals (and other industry experts) will be conducted. The information collected will be evaluated by content analysis; strategies will be proposed to contribute to an increase in rural tourism in Virginia.

Results/Discussion

Farmers can be successful when implementing agritourism on their own; however, the impact that the community makes plays a critical role in the economic sustainability of a rural farm operation. The proof provided from leaders in the agritourism business across the U.S. ensures that Virginia has high potential to start capitalizing from this market segment of agritourists in the industry.

References Available Upon Request

HOW DOES QUALITY OF SERVICE AND WILLINGNESS TO PAY INFLUENCE CONSUMER-PERCEIVED PRICE FAIRNESS ON AIRLINE FARES?

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The purpose of the study is to identify and measure the relationship between the concept of consumer-perceived fairness and airline pricing strategies. These relationships were explored using the framework of Prospect Theory in terms of consumer patronage (quality of service and willingness-to-pay).

Theoretical foundations for this study include the concepts of yield management, perceived fairness (Kimes, 2002), and mental accounting theory (Thaler, 1980). The study also discusses how the airline industry uses revenue management techniques. According to the data, consumers do not find these strategies to be fair based on their past experiences. Considering customers' behavioral intentions, based on the perception of price unfairness, Campbell (1999) states that customers tend to feel perception of price increase to be unfair when they figure out the negative trigger of price increase. In addition the study discusses research regarding ancillary fees (Chung & Petrick, 2012). About six years ago, when a passenger purchased an air fare, checked bags or meals were complimentary; however, recently, it is common for airlines to gain revenue from these complimentary services. Making consumers pay add on fees is similar to companies not fulfilling their commitments of the product. It is assumed that with the limited amount of research for airline pricing strategies, existing literature can be utilized to guide the understanding of consumer behavior. This study was designed to investigate the perceptions of social fairness on the airlines pricing strategies.

Convenience sampling was used to collect the data. 156 respondents took the 11 question survey which was published on Survey Monkey. The survey was distributed by using social media. The data was then analyzed using Analysis of Wilcoxson to provide results that compared of the effects of willingness-to-pay and quality of service on perceived fairness.

The study results indicated that consumers' willingness to pay increases when consumers know that they will receive high quality of service which shows that willingness to pay is highly correlated with quality of service. There is also a significant discrepancy between airlines' pricing strategies and what consumers perceive to be fair.

The study and its ensuing results are of importance as they provide additional scholarly support to both Prospect Theory and the theory of Mental Accounting and the roles that each play in consumer behavior. From an airline industry researcher perspective, the current results provide insight into airline consumers' attitudes regarding the revenue management techniques that airlines practice. The results can be utilized to provide justification and guidance in altering or establishing airline pricing strategies that consumers will consider to be fair.

IMPACT OF SMOG ON AMERICAN INBOUND TOURISTS TO BEIJING CHINA

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Introduction

Beijing as the capital city in China is one of the top choices for international tourists. Tourists from the US have made up a large portion of Beijing's inbound tourism market (Beijing Municipal Commission of Tourism Development, 2014). However, air pollution, especially the smog, in Beijing has received world attention recently and has had a negative impact on its inbound tourism. The total inbound tourist volume to Beijing is decreasing (Beijing Municipal Commission of Tourism Development, 2014). However, there is little research on the impact of the smog in Beijing on its inbound tourism market. This study will focus on the influence of Beijing's air pollution on American tourists' attitudes and satisfaction. The findings of this research will allow the researchers to suggest a strategic plan for the future development of the tourism industry in Beijing. Also, the study will help increase the awareness of the tourism organizations and government for the development of sustainable tourism in Beijing.

Methods

The research study will use a survey on American tourists who are visiting Beijing, China and measure their perception of the influence of the smog in Beijing. The survey will consist of three sections. The first section is the demographic information. The second section evaluates tourist's attitude. This section will use 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree) to assess the impact of the smog in Beijing on: a) tourism image, b) tourist satisfaction, c) word of mouth or electric word of mouth (WoM or EWoM), and d) tourist decision-making. The third section will investigate tourists' awareness of organizational and government support in the rise of the smog. The following hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 1: Smog has a negative impact on Beijing's tourism image among American tourists.
Hypothesis 2: Smog has a negative impact on American tourists' travel satisfaction in Beijing.
Hypothesis 3: Smog has a negative impact on American tourists' WoM or EWoM.
Hypothesis 4: Smog has a negative impact on American tourists' decision-making on revisiting Beijing.
Hypothesis 5: Alternative travel itinerary under serious smog weather has a positive impact on American tourists' satisfaction.
Hypothesis 6: Evidence of support from tourism organizations or government has a positive impact on American tourists' satisfaction.

Results/Discussion

The study will provide meaningful information for sustainable tourism development in Beijing. The researchers will be able to provide useful suggestions for travel agencies to improve inbound tourists' satisfaction. The strategies suggested by this study will help improve American tourists' satisfaction level and enhance the cultural exchange between the two countries. Also, the study is expected to increase government's awareness of the sustainable tourism development in Beijing.

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SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITIES AND FAMILY VACATION EXPERIENCES

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Introduction

Time spent together is a precondition for a good quality of relations between children and parents (Mesch, 2003). Lehto (2009) indicated that family travel activities could create unique interaction opportunities for family members and contribute positively to family bonding and communication. Previous studies about family relationships have identified that joint recreational activities are positively related to intrafamily communication (Lehto, Lin, Chen, & Choi, 2012) However, people are tempted by various social media networks and this temptation is gradually changing the previous family travel motivations. Facebook, travel blogging, Digg, and various forms shape the way travellers engage with each other and the world around them (Molz, 2012). The ubiquity and accessibility of these communication services enable tourists to remain in contact with the people from whom they are geographically distant (White, 2007). The purpose of this study is to explore how social media activities affect family vacation experiences, such as how social media activities change the way family members interact with each other; how social media activities influence the way family members interact with the vacation destination, and how social media activities influence the post-trip recollection of the family vacation.

Methods

Qualitative research method will be used for this study. This study designed with the individual interview involved 30 participates included young adults, faculties and their family members who lived in Purdue University.Participants will be recruited through an advertisement that will be published in Purdue Today. Anyone interested could contact the investigator. All participants must be age 18 or older, and had a family vacation experience in the past two years. Participants will be asked to recall their recent vacation with family members and to describe their social media activities during the family vacation.During the interviews, written notes and audio recording will be used to record the interviews to improve their completeness and accuracy. The interviews will last for about 40 minutes to an hour at a time and place that is convenient to the participant. Participants will receive a $10 Apple or Starbucks store gift card upon the completion of interviews.

Results/Discussion

Social media activities will affect intra-family interaction, destination interaction and experience-memory interaction positively or negativelyThis study establishes a foundation for further researchers who want to explore the impacts of social media on human interaction, and provides direct benefits for hospitality and tourism industry to learn about consumer behaviours and make marketing strategies to improve consumer satisfaction. Meanwhile, the study help the families realize some interaction problems produced during the vacation and enhance family relationship and cohesion.

References Available Upon Request

THE INFLUENCE OF MEDICAL TOURISTS'NATIONALITY ON DESTINATION ATTRIBUTE SATISFACTION, OVERALL SATISFACTION, AND DESTINATION IMANGE

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Introduction
Medical tourism is an emerging form of travel in which people go to other countries to receive treatment (Deloitte, 2008). However, there is a lack of empirical study suggesting how the medical tourism industry attracts tourists from different nation and satisfies their needs especially from Japan, China, and Russia (Seo, 2013). This current study aims to explore the influence of nationality on tourists' destination attribute satisfaction, overall satisfaction, and destination image. This study, especially, focuses on the medical tourists visiting Korea because Korea is growing dramatically as a medical tourist destination.

Methods
A secondary data will be used for testing the proposed hypotheses. The data will be obtained from the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism in order to collect information of medical tourists visiting Korea. The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism surveyed foreign tourists at the four International airports, including *Incheon*, *Gimpo*, *Jeju*, and *Gimhae* International airport, and two international harbors, including *Incheon* and *Busan* harbor, every year. A total 36,000 tourists participated in this survey from 2011 to 2013, and among these subjects, only medical tourists from Japan, China and Russia will be selected and used for data analysis. The survey questionnaire assessed tourists' overall satisfaction, which will be taken as representing satisfaction toward destination, and overall destination image. For the data analysis, descriptive analysis, ANVOA, and correspondence analysis will be conducted to examine the proposed hypotheses by using the SPSS.

Results/Discussion
This research will examine the influence of medical tourists' nationality on tourists' destination attribute satisfaction, overall satisfaction, and destination image. In addition, it might be helpful for segmenting tourism markets and developing new marketing strategies satisfying various needs.

References Available Upon Request

WE SEE DEAD PEOPLE: THE IMPACT OF PARANORMAL REALITY TELEVISION ON LOCAL TOURISM

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Introduction

Dark tourism has increased in popularity in recent years due to reality television shows. The television program *Ghost Hunters* visits haunted locations to investigate paranormal activity and capture evidence of such. Visual media, such as television and film, are central to contemporary attraction treatments and in turn provide income generation, commodification, and entertainment value to locations (Lennon and Foley, 1999). This study proposes to determine if dark tourism locations featured on reality television shows have increased local tourist activity after a location is featured on national television. The goal of the study is to utilize actual tourism data from locations as well as data from Smith Travel Research (STR) to conclude if there are trends related to the inclusion of locations featured on television shows.

Review of Literature

Dark tourism is the act of tourists traveling to sites of death, tragedy, and suffering (Foley and Lennon, 1996). Research in dark tourism is motivated to understand why tourists are drawn to these sites and to indicate a shift in the way in which death and disaster are being handled by those that offer associated tourist products. Lennon and Foley (2000) linked the presentation and consumption of death at tourist sites to three factors 1) global communications create an initial interest in both a death and the travel to a location to see where the death occurred, 2) the objects of dark tourism present anxiety and doubt, and 3) the sites have become commodified. Additionally, elements of ethics arise when the line between the meaning of the site and what transpired there have become blurred.

Television has been used to glorify death and legends. Koven (2007) researched the convergence of legends and media. Reality shows create interest and curiosity in legends, stories of torture, and explorations into the supernatural. These shows challenge tourists understanding of the world and create fascination with ‘dark tourism’ (Koven, 2007). The commercial exploitation of the paranormal is not a new phenomenon. Holloway (2010) discussed historical records of crowds gathering at alleged haunted sites along with local businesses reaping the rewards. This study will explore ten popular destinations featured on the reality television show *Ghost Hunters*. The purpose of this study is to examine the impact that being featured on a popular television series has on the local economy and tourist attractions.

Methodology

The goal of this study is to determine if there is an influx of travelers to a location and community that has been featured on a paranormal reality television show. A sample of ten haunted locations in northeastern states will be selected. Each location will provide data related to the amount of tours given six months prior to the air date of the television show and a year after the air date. In addition to this, data from STR will also be used to determine if there is an increase in overall tourist activity in the community. To analyze the data, SPSS will be utilized and a correlational analysis will be performed to measure the relationship between the location being aired on television and the change in tourist activity.

References available upon request

GREEN TEA TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AS AN AGRITOURISM IN BOSEONG SOUTH KOREA

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Introduction

Agritourism is defined as touristic visitation to farms for consumption purposes (Lobo, 2009). Boseong is a popular agritourism destination for green tea enthusiasts in South Korea, accounting for 40% of the total national green tea production (DiscoveryKorea.com, 2014). Although some studies have been done in the field of tea-tourism in Boseong, including tea marketing strategies (Song, 2007) and how the green tea industry can benefit the regional economy (Suh & MacPherson, 2007), there is a lack of research that probes how the local stakeholders such as residents, business owners, tourists and government officers perceive the tea-tourism in Boseong. To further develop green tea tourism in Boseong, South Korea, application of the stake-holder theory will provide empirical evidence to help the destination capitalize from agritourism and tea tourism.

Methods

Qualitative and quantitative methods will be used in the study. First, semi-constructive interviews of stakeholders (residents, business owners, and local governmental officials) will be conducted in Boseong, South Korea. Interviews will identify perceptions of green tea tourism and opinions in developing the destination as a green tea tourist attraction. Quantitative data will be used to develop a market profile, consumer attitudes regarding tea tourism, and future patronage intention. A survey will be distributed at Boseong Geen Tea Festival, hosted on May 3th to 6th, 2015 in South Korea; a sample of 500 responses will be used to answer the research questions (Bachiochi & Weiner, 2004). The qualitative data will be transcribed for content analysis while SPSS and ANOVA statistical software will be used to run the findings from the quantitative data.

Results/Discussion

This research will examine stakeholder's perspectives of green tea tourism and strategies to promote agritourism. Theoretical implications of the results will contribute to the literature of analysing agritourism from the stakeholder-theory approach. The managerial implications of the study may contribute to the current assessment of tea tourism in Boseong and provide trends in green tea tourism consumers in Boseong, South Korea.

References Available Upon Request

EFFECTS OF NOSTALGIA ON SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING – EVIDENCE FROM RURAL CHINA

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Introduction

China started its dramatic economic reform in 1978, and the country has witnessed a rapid and unprecedented progress of urbanization since then. Many people migrated from their rural hometowns where they had been living for many years, to big cities. Besides pressures, hardworking, and struggling at big cities, those rural-urban migrants want to enjoy their lives and pursuit happiness, therefore, travelling to rural tourism destinations becomes a popular option to them, because those rural destinations contain the cultures, customs, environments and lifestyles that they were once very familiar with. The current research plans to understand how nostalgia and perceived authenticity influence rural-urban migrants' experience, particularly their subjective-wellbeing, while returning to rural destinations.

Methods

Semi-standardized in-depth interviews will be adopted in this study, because it allows researchers to adapt to each different interview situation and interviewees' reactions. The researchers plan to collect the data in 2014 and 2015 and will choose several popular rural tourism destinations surrounding big cities in China. Targeted interviewees should be born in rural China and grew up at their hometowns up to their young age at least. The researchers will randomly select tourists at rural destinations and ask them whether they have previous rural living experience; if not, the researcher will move on to the next potential interviewee.

Results/Discussion

The research findings will contribute to the academic advancement of rural tourism management. This research merits attention by shedding light on rural-urban migrants while returning to rural areas. In particular, the study contributes to the literature of rural-urban migrants by investigating key elements that can generate and affect nostalgia as well as the impact on subjective well-being both during and after travelling. Additionally, the incorporation of perceived authenticity promises new insights into nostalgia.

References Available Upon Request

MODELLING STAKEHOLDER COORDINATION AND DESTINATION RESILIENCY

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Introduction

Resiliency research seeks to understand how systems (such as tourism destinations) respond to and adapt to change, and scholars have begun developing models of tourism resilience which place an emphasis on the dynamic (versus static), complex (with multiple independent actors working towards disparate goals), and networked nature of destination systems. Building on this recent work, the objective of this research is to develop a systems based model of destination value creation that can be evaluated quantitatively and applied as part of a destination resiliency toolkit which will include the relevant metrics and simulation tools needed by decision makers to more effectively respond to change.

The destination value system (DVS) conceptualizes a destination as a constellation of inter-related value creation networks representing the sequence of traveler activities and the coordination of destination stakeholders activities (such as marketing which can achieve economies of scale). As such, tourism value is coproduced by the traveler and the destination stakeholders (i.e. each traveler chooses their own unique combination of products and services as inputs of a production function). Further, value creation occurs in both physical and virtual space and happens during all stages of travel (dreaming, planning, booking, experiencing, and sharing). Recognizing the complex and networked nature of the DVS, it is crucial to understand how the dynamics (including the nature and structure) of stakeholder coordination impact both destination value creation and resiliency to changes in the destination system.

Methods

An online survey will be distributed to approximately 200,000 travelers over a 12 month period in order to quantify the traveler activity networks and corresponding levels of satisfaction and spending for approximately 40 U.S. destinations. As the scope of this research is limited to marketing coordination, the stakeholder network for each of the destinations will be quantified using web crawlers that measure consistency of destination promotion language and count links among destination service provider web sites. Metrics for both the traveler activity networks and stakeholder coordination networks (including density, clustering, degree centrality, and betweenness centrality) will then be calculated and used as independent variables in multivariate regression models for predicting visitor satisfaction and visitor spending. A simulation model for resiliency to changes in the creation and distribution of value within the system will then be developed using the outputs of the regression analyses as the starting point.

Anticipated Results and Potential Contributions

This research will estimate how destination value creation is impacted by the structural relationships between a destination's traveler activity network and stakeholder coordination network. It is expected that a range of ideal network structures will emerge which could inform strategies for increasing travelers' satisfaction and spending. Additionally, coordination strategies for optimizing resiliency in response to changes to the destination system (e.g. destination characteristics, consumer behavior, or management strategies) could be developed based on the results of the simulations.

SANTACALIGON FESTIVAL: ATTENDEE DEMOGRAPHICS, SATISFACTION, AND INTENTION OF PARTICIPATION

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Introduction
The current research study will evaluate a local festival in terms of attendee demographics, satisfaction and intention to participate in the four main areas of attraction. The festival, Santa-Cali-Gon Days Festival is held in Independence, Missouri and in its over forty years of existence has yet to collect any data in regards to attendees. Understanding who the attendees are, what they like, and do not like is vital to the future success and growth of the festival as more and more families are choosing to participate in festivals located closer to home with lower cost. The Santa-Cali- Gon Days Festival celebrates the unique heritage of the City of Independence as the starting point of the Santa Fe, California, and Oregon Trails. This premier annual festival has drawn over 200,000 attendees on its' historic Independence Square. The festival takes place over Labor Day weekend featuring over 400 crafters, vendors and more than 1000 food booths.

Current trends within the tourism and destination marketing research context has focused on the target market and the importance to destination marketing organizations and Convention and Visitors Bureaus. The goal of a DMO and CVB is to bring a visitor to the destination. Many tourists have been found to not have the resources to travel long distances, but local festivals offer an alternative to more costly options. Understanding who attends a local festival is vital in terms of marketing efforts and enhancement of the overall festival; needs and wants of one target market differ from the needs and wants of another target market.

Methods
A questionnaire addressing three main areas of 1) satisfaction of festival (to include what participants like best and least) 2) intention to participate (carnival, arts and crafts, food booths, and live entertainment stages) and 3) demographics was created by the researchers and the Independence CVB. First, data is analyzed using descriptive statistics in order to understand the overall level of satisfaction, intention of involvement with varying areas of the festival, and demographics. Secondly, qualitative responses will be grouped be simple classification of negative or positive; both researchers will do this to reduce bias in classification of responses. Descriptive analysis will also be used for the total number of positive and negative responses.

Discussion
The predominant festival attendee is a female repeat visitor of the festival for the past twenty years and obtains information through word of mouth sources (friends and family), does not visit the carnival grounds, is likely to visit the entertainment stages, visits the arts and craft tents, and consumes food from booths around the Courthouse. Additionally, the attendee will stay for 3 hours and is in the age range of 45-54 years old and is a resident of Independence, Missouri. Qualitative data was obtained that allowed the researchers to make seven main assumptions that are discussed in the full paper.

References Available Upon Request

LINKING FOOD PERSONALITY AND FOREIGN FOOD CONSUMPTION TO DESTINATION IMAGE FORMATION

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This study intends to understand Korean food as a conduit in promoting Korea as a travel destination. We will explore the relationship between personality trait and individuals' willingness to travel to Korea. Relationship between attitude towards Korean food and intention to travel to Korea will be examined and we propose that this relationship depends on image of Korea as a tourist destination. Regression analysis and independent t-test will be conducted to assess the role of food in one's destination image formation and in stimulating one's intention to travel to Korea. The result will contribute to the understanding how food can be utilized as a destination marketing medium.

FACTORS AFFECTING TOURIST SATISFACTION WITH TRAVEL EXPERIENCE: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF TAIWAN AS A DESTINATION

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Introduction

Customer satisfaction has always been at the top of the list of important issues that must be addressed by marketers in the tourism industry (HR Focus, 1992). Measuring tourist satisfaction in the tourism and travel industry has been exhaustively studied due to the need to position a destination's competitiveness in the worldwide marketplace. In response to the need for a reliable means of measuring tourist satisfaction, many researchers have, in the past, attempted to develop both theoretical and methodological frameworks. The purpose of this study is to determine which factors affect tourist satisfaction, specifically for those foreign tourists visiting the destinations offered by Taiwan.

Methods

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) will be employed to examine the process for tourism promotion, the use of travel agencies, and how public transportation is utilized to enhance tourist satisfaction. The structural equation model (SEM) will be utilized to determine which factors significantly influence tourists' satisfaction. It can be expected that the results will not only boost the Taiwanese tourism and hospitality industry, but also will increase foreign exchange earnings and international receipts for the government of Taiwan.

Discussion

This study will analyse which tourists' satisfaction factors can be impacted by: tourism promotion, travel agencies, public transportation and the quality of destination attractions in Taiwan. The results of this study will provide policy makers both within the Taiwanese government and the tourism and travel industry with data upon which higher levels of customer satisfaction can be achieved, while at the same time increasing foreign revenue within the country of Taiwan. Further research will seek to determine what additional factors may have a direct impact on tourist satisfaction beyond those found in this study.

References Available Upon Request

UNDERSTAING SEASONAL DIFFERENCES IN MAREKTS FOR THE MYRTLE BEACH BOARDWALK

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Introduction

The purpose of this research is to understand seasonal differences in the visitation and spending patterns of a specific group of travelers to the Myrtle Beach area. Tourism is the major job and revenue-creating industry in the Myrtle Beach area. Tourist expenditure generated $612.1 million in payroll income and 36.6 thousand jobs for area residents (USTA 2012). Horry County collected over $400,000,000 from the seven-year life of the so-called Penny Tax, which is a tourism tax, since the inception. The annual visitor number to Myrtle Beach area was 15.2 million in 2012 alone (Bernstein, 2014) and the visitors contributed reasons for vacationing in Myrtle Beach to good weather and growing economy that the beach offers (Jones 2014). However, the Myrtle Beach area suffers from extreme seasonality. For example, during the offseason between November and February, lodging occupancy averages less than 30 percent. According to the Brittain Center for Resort Tourism (2013) 40 percent of room nights sold in the Myrtle Beach Area are sold between Memorial Day and Labor Day. During the fall tourist season, the period between Labor Day and Thanksgiving, only 21 percent of the room nights are sold. In order to better understand the seasonal fluctuation in the Myrtle Beach area, the authors will examine how the market changes from summer to fall, by 1) the percentage of visitors in each of three life stages 2) the specific places travel parties chose to visit during their stay; 3) the distance they travel to Myrtle Beach from their origin market; and by 4) the average spending per travel party.

Methods

The data is being collected since June 1st of 2014 on the Myrtle Beach Boardwalk. The boardwalk was opened in May, 2010 in response to the community's need to replace an iconic attraction, the Pavilion Amusement Park, which closed in 2006, and is one of the most visited places during tourist' stay in the Myrtle Beach area. The data will be divided into summer and fall season as defined above and analyzed based on the visitor characteristics by season: 1) distance traveled; 2) life stage; 3) travel spending on the boardwalk; 4) and attractions frequencies; and life stage. The three life stage groupings are parties with no children, parties with children 6-20 years old; and parties with children under 6. T-tests, ANOVA, and MANCOVA will be used to determine if statistically significant differences exist across the seasons based on these variables. The findings will be presented during the conference.

Discussion

We expect the K-12 school calendar would impact the seasonal choice of family vacationers with children. Consequently, a higher concentration of travel parties with school age children is expected during the summer months and a higher concentration of travel parties with no children or with children under 6 years old, not being impacted by the K-12 school calendar, would be expected during the fall season. Researchers would expect to find statistically different attraction choices, spending, and distance traveled for fall season travelers versus summer travelers.

Reference Available on Request

ROOT TOURISM: AN EXPLORATORY MIXED-METHOD STUDY OF NIGERIAN'S IN DIASPORA AND THEIR INTENTION TO TRAVEL BACK TO THEIR ROOTS FOR TOURISM PURPOSES

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Introduction

The travel and tourism industry contributes approximately $2 trillion to the world's gross domestic product, which equals the total measure of goods and services in the world's economy (World travel, 2012; Haring, 2014). The economic growth of many countries is due impart to the development of tourism that stimulates a nation's financial stability over time (Liu, Li, & Tang, 2013). Many developing countries need this financial boost to enhance their economic infrastructure, and this proposed study is a method that could achieve the goal through the use of root tourism (Odularu, 2008). Root tourism is defined as the practice of drawing migrated individuals who left their home country due to: a lack of opportunity, political unrest, economic stress, more professional opportunities, back to their home country for the purposes of patronizing the tourist attractions now available in their country. Although tourist destinations are available within the home country, the willingness of the country's ex-habitants to return home is still questionable (El-Khawas, 2004). The research questions that will be answered by this mixed-method study are:

1. How do the Nigerian's in Diaspora describe the factors that may influence their decision to travel to Nigeria for the purpose of root tourism?
2. What factors inhibit Nigerian's in Diaspora from returning to Nigeria for the purpose of root tourism?
3. Are the factors identified in the research predictors of Nigerian's in Diasporas' intention to travel back to Nigeria for purpose of root tourism?

Methods

This study addresses the various factors that influence the intention of American Nigerians in Diaspora to travel back to Nigeria for tourism purposes. The purpose of this exploratory sequential design is to first qualitatively explore the factors that influence the Nigerians in Diasporas' decision to travel to Nigeria for tourism purposes using a small sample of Nigerian's in Diaspora and then to determine if the qualitative findings generalize to a large sample size. The first phase of the study will be a qualitative exploration of 10 Nigerian's in Diaspora, in which decision making themes will be identified via a video conference focus group using Skype®. From this initial exploration, the qualitative findings will be used analyzed for use in the development of assessment measures that can be administered to a large sample in the second phase. In the quantitative phase, survey data will be collected from approximately 400 national Nigerian's in Diaspora from a registration database at the Eastern Nigerian Heritage Conference that will be held at the Marriot Hotel in Newark, New Jersey during the summer of 2015.

Results/Discussion

The anticipated results of this study will display challenges of safety, tourism opportunities, and comfort, which may prohibit this population from going back to Nigeria for the purpose of root tourism.

References Available Upon Request

UNDERSTANDING RESIDENCES' ATTITUDE OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN SAPA, VIETNAM

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Introduction

Located in the northern part of Lao Cai, Sapa has the coolest temperature in Vietnam and a lot of beautiful scenery to attract travellers; therefore, it is one of the towns in Vietnam where tourism is booming according to the *Lonely Planet Travel Guide and Travel Information*. The total tourism revenue from the areas around and including Sapa is 576 billions in Vietnam dong in 2013. In spite of the growing tourism, the Sapa local community is still poor. There are many street vendors selling handicrafts, and they also cling, follow, stalk, and ask for money from the tourists which make tourists uncomfortable. Due to the lack of knowledge of tourism, the locals' behaviour may push the tourists away. The local government has tried to address this issue and found solutions. Unfortunately, their efforts have not been successful. Therefore, the purpose of the study is to investigate residents' intention to support tourism development in Sapa. Specifically, this study will evaluate how the perceived economic impact, sociocultural impact, environmental impact, and quality of life influence residents' attitude toward tourism development. Furthermore, how does their attitudes influence their intention to support the tourism development in Sapa. The results of this study will help the local government to have better knowledge in order to develop a plan that will match with local residents' needs and wants. For academic purposes, it will evaluate whether previous studies would be well applied to different cultures and different tourism life cycles.

Methodology

The study proposed that there is a direct and positive relationship between perceived economic impact, sociocultural impact, environmental impact, and quality of life, and residents' attitude toward tourism development. Furthermore, there is a direct and positive relationship between residents' attitudes and their intention to support the tourism development. SEM will be applied to evaluate the proposed relationship. Survey questionnaires modified from previous studies will be distributed among local residents in Sapa

References Available Upon Request

‘EUDAIMONIA’ AS AN OUTCOME OF WELLNESS TOURISM? AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF WELLNESS TRAVELERS USING SELF DETERMINATION THEORY

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Introduction

Travelling to escape the ‘ordinary’, hectic, high stressed pace of life is nothing new to the field of tourism motivation research (Knowles & Curtis, 1999). However, the emergence of the alternative tourism market, wellness tourism is still relatively new. According to The 2013 Global Wellness Tourism Economy Report (GWTE), wellness tourism accounts for 14% or $436.8 billion of the global tourism market with predicted growth rising up to 16% by 2017 (GWTE, 2013). Additionally, GWTE (2013) reports that wellness tourists spend, on average, 130% more than a traditional tourist. Wellness tourism has been defined as “travel associated with the pursuit of maintaining or enhancing one’s personal wellbeing” (GWTE, 2013, p. ii). This study attempts to gain a deeper understanding of wellness tourism through the lens of qualitative research with wellness travelers.

Self-Determination Theory and Eudaimonia

Developed by Deci & Ryan (1980) Self-Determination Theory (SDT) operates from the foundation that humans are active organisms with the intrinsic need for psychological growth, development and commitment to overcoming challenges while preserving an ideal state of ‘balance’ (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002). SDT is premised on the assumption that humans operate with the innate and universal need for autonomy, competence and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 1980). Formed from the basis of this well-known theory, Ryan, Huta and Deci (2008) presented a model of eudaimonia which is defined simply as ‘living well’. In combination, SDT along with the model of eudaimonia will guide this study.

Methodology

Research for this exploratory study will be qualitative in nature consisting of interviews with wellness tourists. Interviews will be conducted with individuals who have traveled at least once to specifically partake in wellness tourism. Research questions to guide this study are as follows:

(1) What are the general characteristics of wellness tourists?
(2) What are the motivations leading to wellness travel?
(3) What experiences and outcomes result from wellness travel?

Anticipated Results

It is anticipated that results from this study will provide a breadth of information about wellness travelers, their characteristics, motivations and outcomes as a result of participation in wellness tourism. Specifically, this study will advance the knowledge of the concept of ‘eudaimonia’ and its relationship to wellness tourism. Results should show the underlying driver forces of wellness, thus leaving a significant impact on the tourism industry. In depth thematic analysis of the data is expected to result in rich information to inform a future phase of this study that will be quantitative.

References available upon request

REDSIGNING HOTEL HOUSEKEEPING OPERATIONS TO IMPROVE PRODUCTIVITY, LABOR COSTS, EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION AND GUEST SATISFACTION

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Introduction

Teamwork has been shown to not only increase an employee's ability to adapt to new work roles and tasks, but to also increase personal responsibility for the quality of work they are doing. The purpose of this study is to examine the effectiveness of hotel housekeeping teams compared to hotel housekeeping done on an individual basis using productivity, labor costs, employee satisfaction, and guest satisfaction as the performance metrics.

Methods

Two separate quasi-experiments will be conducted in this study to test eight hypotheses. The first quasi-experiment will be conducted at Property A which currently uses the teams design in housekeeping. While the property is using a team design, there is currently no process for determining which housekeeper will work with which team. The general manager of Property A has agreed to switch to a team design in which there will be two teams in each building and housekeepers will be assigned to a team based on their cleaning abilities. Therefore, housekeepers with lower cleaning abilities will be teamed up with housekeepers of stronger cleaning abilities. Abilities will be measured by the general manager, housekeeping managers, and quality assurance manager for the company. Property A has three buildings so one building will not participate in the treatment and will act as the control group. A pre-post-test design will be used having one control group and two experimental groups. The second quasi-experiment will be conducted in Property B with the control group being Property C. Property B and Property C are the same brand of hotel as well as the same size, therefore, making them an acceptable experiment and control groups. Pre-tests will be conducted to confirm the two groups' similarity. Data will be collected for both experiments beginning in January 2015 through March 2015 with the treatment being implemented in February 2015. Housekeepers at Property B will be assigned to a team based on their cleaning abilities and Property C will remain cleaning as individuals.Measurements for the performance metrics in this study will be used from previous validated scales for employee satisfaction and guest satisfaction. Productivity and Labor costs will be calculated by documents turned in by the housekeeping managers at the end of the day. Paired sample t-tests will be used to analyze the differences in employee satisfaction and productivity before and after the treatment. Independent sample t-tests will be used to analyze the difference in labor costs and guest satisfaction before and after the treatment.

Results/Discussion

The expected results are that all hypotheses will be upheld and the team design will have a significant positive influence on housekeeping operations. Property A and Property B experimental groups will have significantly stronger differences than the control groups at the end of the experiment time frame.

References Available Upon Request

HOTEL AQUATICS ACCESS & TITLE III OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE THOUSAND ISLANDS

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Introduction

The current number of individuals with disabilities, the predicted increase in this population, and the market share this population represents indicate that travelers with disabilities make up a considerable portion of hospitality customers. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), passed in 1990, ensures that individuals with disabilities have equal access to most of the same places as individuals without disabilities. By March, 2012, most lodging facilities were required to comply with Title III of the ADA, which includes accessibility requirements for recreational amenities such as swimming pools.

However, 24 years after the passage of the ADA, the U.S. Department of Justice (USDOJ) has continued to identify and prosecute lodging facilities for noncompliance. Regarding aquatics amenities specifically, anecdotal information also indicates that when aquatics accommodations in lodging facilities (e.g. pool lifts) are installed, they are infrequently used, despite the popularity of aquatic activities with individuals with disabilities. The purpose of this study is to evaluate lodging facilities with aquatics amenities in the Thousand Islands tourism region of New York State for compliance with Title III of the ADA and to verify the use of aquatics amenities by lodging patrons with disabilities. This study has implications for staff training, customer satisfaction, and service for all guests.

Methods

In 2014, a regional assessment committee was formed to increase tourism to the Thousand Islands region of New York State. As part of the regional assessment, the researchers will evaluate the lodging facilities in the region that have aquatics amenities for compliance to Title III of the ADA. In addition to using ADA guidelines for these evaluations, the researchers will recruit and train individuals with disabilities to participate in the site evaluations to help identify the subtler or additional barriers that may hinder use of aquatic amenities. In addition, these individuals will participate in small focus groups to help identify aquatics amenities usage, usage barriers, and recommendations for increased usage. The researchers will also survey lodging operators regarding their understanding of ADA mandates and the use of aquatics amenities and accommodative equipment by guests with disabilities.

Results/Discussion

Lodging facilities that have technically complied with Title III of the ADA may still have physical barriers that impact the use of amenities by individuals with disabilities. Intrapersonal, interpersonal, and policy factors can also affect whether an individual with a disability will avail themselves of guest amenities. This study will add to the discussion on how the Thousand Islands and other tourism regions can better attract travelers with disabilities, not only through structural compliance to the ADA, but by creating a network of solutions to maximize the use of ADA accommodations.

References Available Upon Request.

CONSUMERS' PREFERENCES OF AAA DIAMOND RATINGS

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Introduction

Many hotels have pursuits to increase AAA ratings, as higher ratings indicate better services, amenities, and possibilities of charging premium prices (Abrate, Capriello, & Fraquelli, 2011; Lollar, 1990). However, do consumers' always prefer hotels with a higher rating? This study is an exploratory study that aims to examine customers' preferences of AAA rating categories.

Methods

The sample of this study was university alumni. This sample was chosen because alumni generally have more financial and travel opportunities. Data were collected using an online survey, which was sent to 2,000 randomly chosen email addresses from a list of university alumni. The survey asked several demographics questions as well as questions related to preferences of hotel type (i.e. one-diamond, two-diamond, etc.). After removing those that skipped more than 50% of the questions, 195 responses were analyzed resulting in a usable response rate of 9.75%.

Results/Discussion

Several interesting findings were revealed. First, a rating of three-diamonds was preferred by the largest amount of participants, while five-diamond hotels were preferred by the smallest amount of participants. This finding should not be interpreted as five-diamond hotels are not attracting enough customers; it simply suggested that they are receiving a smaller percentage of potential customers, which might not be a serious issue as only 0.4% of AAA approved hotels are able to achieve the five-diamond rating (AAA News Room, 2014).

Second, a high percentage of people age 26-30 and those over 60 preferred hotels rated three-diamonds and lower. Particularly, more than 50% of all that preferred one-diamond hotels were people who were over 60 years old. Senior participants' strong preference of one-diamond hotel was unexpected and might be due to their possible needs to save money for future costs of medical expenses, unforeseen incidents, and retirement living expenditures. Third, three-diamond hotels tended to be the most preferred among participants whose annual household incomes were $189,999 or lower. Fourth, a higher percentage of males preferred one-diamond hotels than did females.

The results provide information for determining marketing strategies. One-diamond hotels could target male customers and people who are over 60 years old. For two-diamond hotels, there are three potential markets: people who are 26-30 years old, people who are over 60 years old, and people with less than $40,000 of annual household income. Managers of three-diamond hotels might have the largest pool of potential customers. However, among people who are 41-45 years old and with annual household incomes of $190,000 or higher, a lower percentage of this group appear to be interested in three-diamond hotels. Managers of four-diamond hotels could target people that are 36-45 years old, whose annual household income is $160,000 and above, and possibly international travellers. Finally, five-diamond hotels could target people with an annual household income of $220,000 and above.

References Available Upon Request

THE IMPACT OF GUESTROOM LIGHTING TEMPERATURE ON GUEST PERCEPTIONS: AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY

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Introduction

As hotel guests spend a large amount of time in guestrooms, an understanding of guestroom design and its impacts on guest perceptions are important for both practitioners and researchers. Although Park, Pae, and Meneely (2010) has discussed the influence of lighting temperature on pleasure and arousal, other organism variables need to be examined to understand how hotel guests see servicescape. The purpose of this study is to compare the effects of two lighting temperature, warm light versus cool light, in a guestroom on perceived servicescape and perceived value.

Methods

The methodology of the current study is adapted from interior design literature (Park et al., 2010; Wardono, Hibino, & Koyama, 2012). A between-subject experimental design with two lighting temperatures, warm versus cool, will be conducted. This study will focus on hotel guestrooms because the guestroom of a hotel leave a more lasting impression than any other hotel spaces (Rutes, Penner, & Adams, 2001). A virtual hotel guestroom will be created based on the recommendation of Karlen and Benya (2004). All variables other than lighting temperature will be unchanged across the two treatment conditions.

Photos of the virtual hotel room and the associated survey will be printed and distributed to 200 participants. The participants will be randomized into one of the two treatment conditions (cool vs. warm light). The measurement items will be adapted from previous studies (Countryman & Jang, 2006; Kim, Jin-Sun, & Kim, 2008). The data will be analyzed by multiple regression analysis using SPSS version 20.

Results/Discussion

There will be three hypotheses. First, perceive servicescape is more positive under warm lighting conditions than under cool lighting conditions. Second, perceived value is more positive under warm lighting conditions than under cool lighting conditions. Third, a higher perceived servicescape enhances perceived value. The results are expected to support all the hypotheses.

This study will reveal the causal impact of lighting temperature on perceived servicescape and perceived value, and will indicate the type of lighting temperature that is perceived more positively by hotel guests. The results will provide valuable information on how lighting temperature changes guests' perceptions and what kind of lighting temperature is most appropriate for a hotel environment.

References Available Upon Request

EXPLORING THE IMPACTS OF PERSONALIZED MESSAGES ON TIPPING IN HOTEL ROOMS

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Introduction

Tipping in the service industry represents a unique culture; customers evaluate service providers' effort and reward them by giving a gratuity. Hotel accommodation represents a large segment of the hospitality service industry. However, most studies have focused on tipping behaviour in a restaurant setting. Hunter (2011) reported that only about 30% of hotel guests will leave tips for housekeepers. Limited current research was found related to tipping behaviour for housekeepers. The reason may be that there is less personalized interaction between hotel guests and housekeepers. Hence, the researchers propose that providing a personalized and welcoming message from the hotel management and housekeepers, such as a gratitude card in a hotel room to remind hotel guests of the provided service, will increase tip amounts for housekeepers.

Methods

This study attempts to answer two research questions: (1) Do the personalized messages from hotel housekeepers or management increase the percentage of guests leaving a gratuity? (2) Do the personalized messages from hotel housekeepers or management increase the tip for housekeepers? (3) What kind of personalized message is more effective in increasing tip amounts? The researchers propose a 2 (a message by hotel management versus a housekeeper version) by 2 (print versus hand-written version) factorial experimental design with 4 types of personalized greeting cards plus a control condition (no greeting card) to answer the research questions. Thus, five different conditions will be alternatively implemented in hotel rooms. The study will be conducted in an upscale hotel in a southwestern city in the United States. The time period for data collection will be one year. In order to avoid seasonal influence, researchers plan to randomly pick two weeks from each season to collect data. The housekeepers who participate in the study will be given a report log to record their tips everyday. All other information, including the day of the week, room type, and guest group type will be recorded daily by the researchers. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) will be conducted to determine the results among different conditions.

Contribution of the study

In the lodging industry, housekeepers' work is primarily behind the scenes and housekeepers usually lack interaction with hotel guests. Yet, they are the backbone of hotel operations. If hotels were to encourage the use of greeting cards by individual housekeepers, they might potentially increase the accountability and responsibility each housekeeper takes for his/her work. This could further raise the quality of service and tipping level. Therefore, answering the 3 questions posed by this study could be beneficial for both employees and management in the lodging industry.

References Available Upon Request

AN EXPLORSTORY STUDY OF HOTEL GUEST TIPPING BEHAVIOR INSIDE HOTEL ROOMS

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Introduction

Tipping is a voluntarily behaviour that involves consumers giving monetary gratuities to hospitality professionals as a reward or in exchange for better service. Many front-line service providers expect tips and may rely on tips to maintain a viable standard of living. In the lodging industry, housekeepers, as part of support teams, usually work behind the scenes and lack interaction with hotel guests. The maid service is barely recognized, but it can be considered a major part of hotel service. Some consumers of services believe that, without personal interaction, it is unnecessary to leave a tip. Thus, the researchers propose that placing the gratuity envelope in a hotel room to remind the customer of the provided service and the social norm of tipping behaviour will increase the tip percentage and tip amount for housekeepers. Also, the researchers want to find out whether the use of gratuity envelopes will potentially damage guest satisfaction.

Methods

The study attempts to answer three research question: (1) Do gratuity envelopes for hotel housekeepers help increase the percentage of guests who leave a gratuity? (2) Do gratuity envelopes help increase tips for hotel housekeepers? (3) Will the use of hotel housekeeping gratuity envelopes potentially damage guest satisfaction? The central theoretical purpose of this study is to examine how hotel guests comply with an implied social norm. During the study, researchers will create a personalized message to print on a ‘standard welcome card’ and on a ‘housekeeping gratuity envelope’. Thus, there will be two experimental conditions plus a control condition alternatively implemented in hotel rooms. At the same time a guest satisfaction survey adopted from Ariffin & Maghzi (2012) and Hallowell (1996) will be placed in hotel rooms to collect the guests’ satisfaction level. The study will be conducted at a conference hotel in a southwestern city in the United States. The time period for data collection will be one month. The housekeepers who participate in the study will need to record their tip in a report log every day during the study period. All other information including the day of the week, room type, guest type, and so on will be obtained from the hotel sales department and recorded by researchers. Structural Equation Modeling will be conducted to examine the effect of the housekeeping gratuity envelopes, as well as other factors, on the tip amount and guest satisfaction.

Contribution of the Study

Housekeeping services are the backbone of the hotel operation. However, housekeepers usually receive minimum wages with no tips. By determining potential ways to increase tips for housekeeping employees, this study seeks to increase housekeepers’ motivation and reduce their turnover rate to benefit the lodging industry as a whole. The impact of housekeeping gratuity envelopes on guest satisfaction will be an additional contribution of the study.

References Available Upon Request

IMPORTANCE OF HOTEL REWARDS PROGRAMS: UNDERSTANDING NEW MEMBER EXPECTATIONS & REACTIONS TO SERVICE FAILURE

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Introduction

The proposed study will fill in the current gap in knowledge about new hotel rewards members and their expectations and reactions to common service failures as well as their loyalty to a preferred hotel brand. This study will (a) examine why new rewards members join a specific program; (b) discover what their expectations are; and (c) determine what type of negative experience or circumstance would cause them to switch to a different hotel brand. Previous studies have addressed the concept of hotel rewards programs and tier levels, but there has been a noticeable lack of attention given to hotel guests who have recently joined a rewards program. Recruiting and retaining new members can be a very important instrument for hotels because they can significantly contribute to the development of a loyal customer base for that brand nationwide. The current study will determine the level of loyalty in new hotel rewards members, rather than non-members or long-term members. Learning customer expectations is crucial for a hotel company in order to increase the frequency of stays and guest loyalty levels (Tanford, 2013; Tanford, Raab, & Kim, 2011; Whyte, 2003; Hu, Huang, & Chen, 2010; Stauss, Schmidt, & Schoeler, 2005, Tideswell & Fredline, 2004),

Methods

This study will focus on the population of guests who have joined a hotel rewards program within the last 12 months. The study will look at a variety of demographics and will include both business and leisure travelers. The study will be conducted via a Qualtrics survey with 200 completed surveys required for a sufficient sample size. Hotel managers in different hotel brands including, but not limited to, Hilton, Marriott, Best Western, and Hyatt will be asked to send out emails to their rewards members, preferably the members that have joined in the last 12 months. TechAnnounce will be utilized to recruit survey participants from the Texas Tech University community. The results will be entered into IBM SPSS 21 for analysis. Prior to sending out the survey, a pilot study will be conducted to ensure that the questions are understandable to the average customer.

Discussion

The data obtained could be highly important for hotel management; they could use newfound information about new hotel rewards members' expectations of the rewards program to their advantage. From personal experience in the hotel industry, the researcher has found that hotel managers tend to focus more on long-term members or members of a higher tier level. However, hotel managers should strive to ensure that all rewards members reap the benefits of the rewards program, including new members.

References Available Upon Request

SERVICE JUSTICE: REMEDYING EMOTIONAL LOSS

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Introduction

Emotional labor first conceptualized by Hochschild explains a particular task that service workers perform for the purpose of eliciting the customers' organizationally-desired feelings. In recent years, many studies in various disciplines have examined its effects on labor productivity, job performance, and employee satisfaction. Some argue that support from supervisors and managers can affectively release employees' tensions derived from EL. Others suggest that professional commitment and emotional intelligence are effective methods to resolve negative feelings. While these works shed light on the remedy of EL, neither alone seems sufficient enough to reconcile employees' emotional loss. Most studies of EL position employees as victims of unjust treatments by customers. To a large extent they only address passive tactics to lessen employees' emotional loss. Customers, the essential element in causing EL, are not mentioned. Thus, this research proposes an alternative remedy to promote management's reasonable defense for employees in customers' presence.

Methods

Reasonable and skillful defense is to evoke customers' positive behaviors. Positive behaviors may include appreciation for employees' efforts, apology for previous unjust behaviors or simply rationality throughout conversations. These actions to some extent minimize or amend employees' emotional transmutation. In the current research, participants are frontline employees from the front offices and F&B outlets in 4- or 5- star luxury hotels & resorts in the Caribbean region. Research methods include survey and interpersonal interviews. Ten front desk agents were interviewed in Southern California. Subsequent interviews are to be conducted in the Caribbean to investigate participants' deeper thoughts on EL in relation to daily work. Text analytics is used to extract significant information pertaining to all propositions.

Results/Discussion

The findings after analyzing initial data collected reveal three layers of information. First, supervisors' support to only pacify employees does not affectively resolve emotive loss. Second, the perceived value of emotion is mixed for hotel employees; financial rewards significantly motivate employees, but cannot act alone to eliminate emotive loss. There are two implications: 1) Hotel employees are not compensated enough for their physical and emotion labors. 2) Emotion is a non-quantifiable object and money cannot measure emotional loss. The latter closely relates to the final result: support from management in front of customers to mediate EL is the most effective therapy that employees seek but have not received.

Inequality vastly exists in service encounters. While employees feel downgraded and humiliated, management is reluctant to appropriately defend them. From a humane perspective, employees' psychology in unjust situations is to be studied further. The topic is significant as it divulges employees' psychological struggles concealed by the smiling face. It provides an alternative angle for researches in employee satisfaction and service excellence.

References Available Upon Request

DISTRIBUTION STRATEGIES OF RESORTS AND LUXURY HOTELS

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Introduction

Historically many luxury hotels have opened hotels disproportionately on United States' soil. This has changed in the past two decades as hoteliers understood the advantages of investing in lucrative global markets, most recently (and significantly) in the Asia-Pacific and Middle East & Africa regions. New hotel placements by the Ritz-Carlton hotel chain are outlined, culminating in a current distribution by global region for the Ritz-Carlton luxury brand. This portfolio mix is then compared with competing luxury brands including: Four Seasons; Sheraton; Fairmont; Waldorf Astoria; and Westin. The purpose is to determine if the Ritz-Carlton's strategic global portfolio appears to be in line with its competitors.

Methods

This study began as an investigation of where and when Ritz-Carlton properties were opened, similar to how Wal-Mart stores were dispersed across the United States. These geographic data points revealed an apparent tendency toward local soil during the earlier years of the Ritz-Carlton's evolution; however, post 9/11 exposes what appears to be an increased focus on acquiring global properties. The Ritz-Carlton's focus on these two regions was the impetus to inspect other luxury hotel global strategies to see if they were also pursuing the Asia-Pacific and Middle East & Africa regions. The results from these luxury hotels reinforced the hypothesis that these two key regions are apparently the new global hot spots and they are being aggressively pursued by other luxury hotel chains. Descriptive statistics are utilized to explore the self-reported openings and forecasted openings. These data were retrieved from each of the six hotel brand's websites and may not include forecasted locations a brand may wish to keep proprietary; however, an analysis of each brand's current global portfolio and their proposed new hotels give an overall indication of the respective global corporate strategy for each luxury brand. Finally a combined view is presented showing what each brand's portfolio mix would look like if each brand expands as forecasted on each respective website.

Results/Discussion

Although the study is not yet complete, the preliminary results show that the Ritz-Carlton chain is well diversified – especially with respect to their competitors' luxury hotels' global mix. The descriptive statistics demonstrate how there appears to be a convergence in global strategy among luxury hotel chains such that hoteliers appear to be focusing much effort into the Asia/Pacific region as well as the Middle East/Africa region. The Ritz-Carlton's efforts to focus more on these two regions appear to be in line with the strategies of competing luxury chains; therefore, the Ritz-Carlton appears to be well situated to take advantage of these lucrative global market segments. The implications of this study suggest there is a perceived competitive portfolio proportion of global distribution of luxury hotels.

References Available Upon Request

CUSTOMER PERCEPTIONS OF QUALITY IN HOTEL SERVICESCAPES

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Introduction

Photos posted on hotel and booking websites allow guests to create first impressions of a hotel based solely on visual appearances of the servicescape (Mummalaneni, 2005). Kotler (1973) describes servicescapes as "an important tangible component of the service product that provide cues to customers and create an immediate perceptual image in customers' minds." Servicescapes have the ability to play an important role, either positive or negative, on the customers' impressions (Bitner, 1992). This study seeks to provide evidence that the hotel guestroom servicescape appearance in an online setting is of great importance during the guests' decision making process when making a hotel reservation.

Literature Review

There are numerous factors to consider when evaluating perceived value and quality of hotel rooms in this study. Personality characteristics and the expectations of customers will impact the subjective perceptions of servicescapes. Increases in Internet usage in recent years for the purpose of booking travel and hotel reservations has also become an important factor leading to this research. Due to the increase in internet hotel bookings, the importance of visual evidence through online mediums is very important to customers as they are deciding between various hotel locations.There are several factors that play a role in consumer's perceptions of value and quality. To provide information on how image perception is developed, Lin (2004) utilized the Gestalt psychology model to explain how individuals form opinions about the image of servicescapes, which leads to emotional responses and appraisal. It was determined that there is a strong relationship between environmental cues associated with service delivery and business image (LeBlanc and Nguyen, 1996).

Mummalaneni (2005) completed a study to determine the influence of online shopping environments on consumer behavior and influences. It was determined from this study that the ambience of a website design influences the number of items purchased and this influence is mediated by the pleasure variable of the M-R model (Mummalaneni, 2005). Adversely, the amount of time spent viewing websites was influenced by arousal and not pleasure (Mummalaneni, 2005).

Methodology

The goal of this study is to determine the levels of perceived value and quality consumers have of hotel guestrooms prior to booking. The primary research question to be answered is: which hotel attributes do consumers perceive to be the most valuable and highest quality based on online hotel guestroom servicescapes? Respondents will be shown photos of hotel rooms and asked to rate them using on Mehrabian and Russell's (1976) pleasure and arousal dimensions. Guests will also be asked to rate their likelihood to reserve a room based on two cognitive factors known to influence purchasing behaviors (Buckley, 1991): value of money, and quality of merchandise. The data will be analyzed to determine which hotel attributes customers perceive to be the highest quality and provide the most value.

References available upon request

CUSTOMERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE VALUE OF HOTEL LOYALTY PROGRAMS

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Introduction

Hospitality organizations are repeatedly searching for strategies to increase satisfaction and loyalty. Multiple studies have examined the relationship between satisfaction and loyalty within the hospitality industry and have suggested that there is a positive relationship between satisfaction and loyalty (Barsky, 1992; Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Getty and Thompson, 1994; McAlexander, Kaldenberg, and Koenig, 1994). Growth in the industry has offered customers a variety of choices and has created a competitive playing field. Managers must adopt strategies to increase competitive advantage (Kandampully & Suhartanto, 2003). One way to do this is to offer customers participation in a loyalty program or a frequent guest program (Uncles, Dowling, & Hammond, 2003). However, loyalty programs can also be developed for many reasons including as part of a defensive market strategy, strategies to hold onto existing customers (Sharp & Sharp, 1992), ensure customer retention, encourage active purchases and motivate the customer to accumulate rewards (Lewis, 2004).

Review of Literature

Loyalty can be measured in two ways, behavioral and attitudinal (Kandampully & Suhartanto, 2000; Baloglu, 2002). Most loyalty programs focus on behavioral loyalty because they encourage a behavior (i.e. repeat purchase) from the customer (Baloglu, 2002). According to Crick and Spencer (2011) the value of a loyalty program is based on rewards, elite status, and convenience. Intangibles and tangibles are bundled to create the perceived value of a loyalty program across brands (Zeithaml, 1988; Tsang & Qu, 2000). According to various researchers (e.g. Voorhees & Mcall, 2010; Keh & Lee, 2006; and Leenheer, Van Heerde, Bijmolt, & Smidts, 2007), a valued loyalty program can increase customer retention, willingness to pay premium prices, spending, positive word of mouth, and motivate customers to be engaged in the product. According to research by Xie and Chen (2013), loyalty programs offer perceived value in four dimensions: functional value, psychological value, externality, and financial value. The results showed that psychological value, intangibles and emotional recognition, are key drivers for active loyalty among loyalty program members across brands. The purpose of this study is to determine why hotel loyalty programs exhibit less perceived value with customers and what factors impact perceived value.

Methodology

The sample for this study will be chosen from the database of an Eastern United States hotel management company. The company manages, Wyndham, Hilton, Choice, and Carlson properties. The participants will consist of currently registered loyalty members and previous loyalty members who have stayed within the last six months. Customers will be surveyed using a 5-point Likert scale to determine if the value of the loyalty program is meeting their expectations. There will be several open-ended questions for the customers to discuss their particular likes and dislikes of the loyalty program, as well as, the benefits used most. Results will be analyzed using descriptive statistics and regression analysis to determine the relationships between the benefits, and which benefits impact perceived value.

References Available Upon Request

CONSUMER PERCEPTIONS AND RESPONSES TO CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR) IN HOSPITALITY

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Introduction

CSR has often been cited as "the continuing commitment by business to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life, of the workforce, and their families, as well as the local community and society at large (WBCSD, 1999, p. 3)." CSR activities in hotels are contended to be driven by a number of factors including profit motives, brand positioning, ethical considerations of managers and owners, societal and regulatory pressure, and employee relations (Mair & Jago, 2010; Han *et al.*, 2009; Butler, 2008; Tzschentke *et al*., 2008b; Kasim, 2007).

Methods

A self-administrated survey will be employed consisting of three sections: CSR activities, consumer responses, and demographic information such as age, gender, and education. Convenience sampling will be used to overcome the constraints of time and budget. In the present study, all five dimensions of CSR activities will be measured comprehensively through an extensive review of CSR literature including environmental CSR activities (Martinez *et al.*, 2013), economic CSR activities (Martinez *et al*., 2013; Maignan, 2000), legal CSR activities (Lee *et al*., 2013, 2012; Maignan, 2000), ethical CSR activities (Martinez *et al.*, 2013; Maignan, 2000), and discretionary CSR activities (Maignan, 2000). Consumers' behavioural intentions will be measured by consumers' intention to revisit and their willingness to recommend the hospitality company to their acquaintances. All measures will be assessed using a 7-point Likert Scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Finally, importance-performance analysis (IPA) and regression analysis will be employed in the present study.

Discussion

The study considers CSR as a multidimensional concept and uses data directly collected from consumers. Results of the study will be important for both academic scholars and industry practitioners. Academically, the study is one of the first attempts to examine the role of CSR with the consideration of its multidimensional nature. Based on Carroll's (1991) classical model with four dimensions (economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary), the environmental dimension is also considered as one of the most important dimensions due to the nature of the hospitality industry. Another significance of the study lies in the perspective of consumers. Existing CSR literature in hospitality area mainly focuses on managers. A fresh perspective to the literature will be added to the present study. Practically, a detailed profile of CSR activities under each dimension in the hospitality industry will be developed. Despite the growing importance of CSR activities in hospitality, there is a lack of understanding about the effectiveness of specific activities under each dimension. Findings of the study are expected to help hospitality managers to better understand the importance and effectiveness of their CSR activities as perceived by consumers. Also, results will help managers adopt appropriate strategies and implement proper CSR activities to achieve desired responses from consumers.

References Available Upon Request

THE EFFECTS OF POLITICAL INSTABILITY ON THE THAI HOTEL INDUSTRY: A CASE STUDY OF FIVE STAR HOTELS IN THAILAND

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Introduction

The hotel industry is very important to Thailand. In 2011, the lodging accounted for approximately three percent of Thailand's GDP (Euromonitor, 2013). However, the Thai hotel industry still needs to overcome the negativity associated with on-going political instability, which has caused the industry to suffer from cancellations, and a decline in new bookings. The objective of this study is to understand the effects of political instability on the hotel industry in Thailand and to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the impacts of political instability on the Thai hotel industry?
2. How was the concept of crisis management implemented during the political crisis in Thailand from 2006-2014?

Methods

This study uses two methods. The first method analyses internal hotel data such as occupancy rate and guest nationalities. The data will be obtained directly from participant hotels or indirectly from the Thai Immigration Bureau and Bank of Thailand. The second method is a semi-structured interview with 24 hotel managers from 14 international hotels throughout Thailand. The data will be collected via snowballing technique. The analysis of the hotel's internal data will be used to compare the data from the interviews with the managers to determine the effectiveness of the manager's performance and opinions of the strategies used during the examined time frame.

Results/Discussion

The results of this study will be produced through recorded interviews. The researcher will transcribe the recordings from the interviews. The data will be coded using CAQDAS qualitative research software. The results from quantitative data will indicate the effectiveness of the strategies that the managers used during the political crisis.

This study will help the Thai government become aware of the problems that hotel practitioners are facing and understand the needs that hotel practitioners might require from the government. This study can also serve government agencies and hospitality practitioners in other locations to learn about crisis management practices and effective strategic management.

References Available Upon Request

BRAND AS AN INDICATOR OF RATE POTENTIAL: AN EXAMINATONOF THE HOLIDY INN AND HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS

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Introduction
Industry professionals assume that guests are willing to pay more for a full-service hotel than a select-service hotel because of the difference in amenities. However, for 22 of 30 days in March 2014, a Holiday Inn Express in Houston was able to command a higher Best Available Rate than the Holiday Inn in that market.). The Holiday Inn was founded by Kemmons Wilson in 1952 as a response to the substandard conditions of motels he had experienced on road trip with his family (Wilson, 1996). The company grew rapidly through the 1950's and 1960's, becoming publicly traded in 1967, and by 1972 had annual revenues in excess of $1 billion (Orrill, 2014). However, the success of Holiday Inn began to decline in the late 1970's and throughout the 1980's due to dilution of the brand by franchising (Bly, 2002), and the company responded by developing the Holiday Inn Express Brand in 1991 (IHG.com, 2010). According to Cornell Professor Chekitan Dev, a successful marketing campaign led to a "rapid market acceptance of Holiday Inn Express [which] began to overshadow its older, tired parent" (Orrill, 2014). With room revenue accounting for 60% to 90% of total revenues, the idea that brand could be a better indicator of rate potential than segment is a compelling and overlooked field of study.

The purpose of this study is twofold:

1) To examine if the rates of the Holiday Inn Express are higher than the rates of the Holiday Inn when the two properties are located within a five miles

2) To examine whether or not brand affected this phenomenon

Methods
The first purpose will determined by examining the BAR rates of twenty geographically diverse sets of Holiday Inn and Express hotels in the United States. A t-test will be run to examine these rates. The assumption is made that price is determined by demand (Smith, 2001). Then, a content analysis will be conducted on on-line from TripAdvisor, Expedia, IHG, and Orbitz reviews to determine the factors that drive the demand for the two brands.

References Available Upon Request

FINDING THE PATTERNS OF LODGING COMPANIES' BRAND PORTFOLIOS: COMPARISON OF NORTH AMERICAN, EUROPEAN AND ASIAN COMPANIES

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Introduction

U.S. lodging companies have evolved from operating companies to management and/or franchise companies over the last few decades (O'Neill & Mattila, 2009) and the trend has been also found in some European and Asian lodging companies. The phenomenon accelerated the lodging companies to develop brands to match markets' needs and keep refining brand portfolios. Thereby, lodging companies based in North America, Europe and Asia are often comprised of a wide-range of hotel brands located all around the world or focused in specific regions. The companies' brands vary from high-end to low-end chains as consumers are at every level of the spectrum although the brand portfolio depends on each company's target clientele and strategies. Brands have been created, revitalized, and expanded over the years, as well as eliminated due to poor performance and change of market trends. Documenting the trends of North American, European and Asian lodging companies and examining the reasons is critical due to the increasing importance of a brand to a company; yet, the empirical evidences are mostly anecdotal and have not been systematically accumulated.

Methods

This paper aims to document the trends of brand portfolios as a result of brand creations, revitalizations, expansions and eliminations and analyze the reasons of such phenomenon. For the trajectories, the data will be collected from American, European and Asian lodging companies' 10-Ks and companies' official websites. The sample period is 20 years, from 1994 to 2013. To identify why the brand creation, expansion, revitalization and elimination was necessary, major newspapers will be reviewed through the LexisNexis database along with 10-Ks and companies' official websites. Theoretical underpinnings of brand creation, expansion, revitalization and elimination will be used to explain the phenomenon. Publically traded companies will be analyzed during this study, due to the accessibility of the relevant information with regard to each company's brand portfolio.

Results/Discussion

With lodging companies all around the world, the patterns and trends of brand portfolio management could be different considering culture, strategic orientation, and so on. Identification and comparison of those patterns and trends can help lodging companies' plan for successful, cost effective brand creation, revitalizations and expansions. The purpose of this paper, will provide the following results for discussion; (1) document the trends of brand portfolios in terms of name of brands, number of brands, and range of segments, (2) compare the trends among the lodging companies in North America, Europe, and Asia, (3) compare characteristics of new brands to eliminated, revitalized, and acquired brands to long-standing brands, and (4) identify the reasons of such phenomenon based on theories. Findings of this study will help lodging companies better understand trajectories of hotel brand portfolio and provide insights to manage their brand portfolio domestically and internationally.

References Available Upon Request

THE EFFECT OF CULTURE ON CONSUMER EXPECTATIONS AND BEHAVIOUR IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY: CASE OF MULTICULTURAL CITIES

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Introduction

Pizam *et al.* (1997) define culture as an umbrella word that encompasses a whole set of implicit, widely shared beliefs, traditions, values and expectations that characterise a particular group of people. The behaviour of individuals will be controlled based on these values, beliefs and more important their tradition. Barnouw (1963:3) states that culture is a way of life a group of people that will be passed from one generation to the other one. Some interesting questions emerge such as:

1) When two cultures collide, which should be pre-eminent? 2) Do cultural differences (intercultural competency) cause any conflicts? 3) When the conflict among intercultural competency will be appeared in service interaction?

Similarly more applied and practical questions may be posed about the hospitality service context such as: 1) How service interaction in the service needs to control intercultural misunderstanding? 2) How the guests and host (customer and service provider) need to attempting to resolve conflicts over cultural differences? There are no simple answers to these fascinating questions, but this research seeks to open the debate. Regardless of Hofstede (1980); (2001) typology and five dimensions of culture in hospitality and service industries it is difficult to elaborate customers' expectations and perceptions based on these five categories. In other words, cultural diversity is an extremely wide area and cannot be managed just based on theories. It is vitally important for the service industry and managers as well as academics to attempt to develop and maintain cultural sensitivity in this industry (cited by Tabari and Ingram, 2014b).

Method

Based on nature of research, qualitative method has been chosen to conduct this research and Template analysis will be employed to evaluate and analysis of data.

Discussion

It seems that intercultural and cultural diversity has been accepted in most research area namely marketing, advertising and management. But there is alack of research and a literature gap concerning the relationship between guests and host in multicultural societies and hospitality. Host (service provider) needs to be sensitive to the cultural nuances that might affect on their relationship with different migrants, who they are guests (customers). In this regard, the researchers assume that major problem is the communication gap between explaining the differences among differ migrants. In other word, ability of good skill of communication does not come naturally. Arguably, the member of the dominant host culture may not develop intercultural sensitivity unless they interact with other cultures in their daily lives.

References Available Upon Request

THE IMPACT OF CONSUMER INNOVATIVENESS ON PRICE FAIRNESS IN UPSCALE RESTAURANTS

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Introduction

Unlike quick-service and casual dining restaurant segments, the upscale restaurant industry is striving for differentiation in food quality and brand image (Ryu, Lee, & Kim, 2012). Consumers who visit upscale restaurants expect prestigious services and are willing to pay premium prices for lavish amenities and dining experiences (Walker & Lundberg, 2005). Due to the relatively high prices involved in producing high-quality service, the revisit rate in the upscale sector is significantly low (Hwang & Hyun, 2013). In order for the upscale market to gain positive post consumption evaluation, consumer perceptions of price fairness must be strategically generated. Consumer innovativeness is a critical construct that ought to be considered in the upscale segment in relation to the innovative image of the restaurant. Indeed, innovative consumers are likely to embrace new menus and services at their onset (Englis & Phillips 2013). Their affinity for innovation bolsters them to highly appreciate creative developments. Given these challenges there is a great need to take into consideration how consumer innovativeness might impact perceptions of price fairness in the upscale restaurant segment. Maintaining an innovative menu, design, ambiance, and high-quality service are crucial elements that distinguish the innovative image of upscale segment; which aims to satisfy targeted customers (Han & Ryu, 2009). This research aims to develop a comprehensive model by exploring consumer perceptions on price fairness as impacted by the causal relationships between customer innovativeness, innovative restaurant image, and gratitude as a post consumption evaluation variable.

Methods

A self-report questionnaire was distributed to panel members through a marketing research company in all 50 states in the United States. Respondents were asked to choose the luxury restaurant brand that dined out most recently and to answer for the survey questions based on the chosen luxury restaurant brand. 5,730 questionnaires were distributed, and 480 customers accepted our survey request. 398 of them were used as valid responses for data analysis.

Results/Discussion

The structural framework of this study highlights the need for both restaurant managers and hospitality researchers to induce positive post consumption evaluation in consumers by managing consumer perceptions of price fairness. This research will establishes the need to take into consideration customer innovativeness, innovative image of restaurant, and gratitude as integrated ways to enhance favorable behavioral intentions. Further, this study will contribute to hospitality literature on appreciation and gratitude for novel amenities and customer behaviors in a restaurant context. Such efforts will require taking into account the fine details of tangible and intangible services, in order to create novel and memorable moments for luxury restaurant customers.

References Available Upon Request.

CUSTOMER REACTIONS TO "SECRET MENUS" IN ETHNIC RESTAURANTS

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Introduction

Experiencing authentic cuisines and cultures is a primary goal of ethnic dining. However, many ethnic restaurants have adapted their dishes to better match the American palate by avoiding some authentic ingredients (i.e., Americanized menu). In order to keep their original customers happy, some ethnic restaurants also have a second, more authentic menu (i.e., "Secret menu"). This practice is prevalent as thousands of online posts can be found by conducting a search using the keywords "ethnic restaurant" and "secret menu". At first glance, the two-menu strategy sounds like a win-win situation. However, research examining customers' reactions to Americanized versus authentic menus is lacking. This research will examine the joint impact of offering an authentic menu and the presence of other customers on customer satisfaction.

Methods

This study will utilize a 2 (Authentic menu: offered vs. not offered) × 2 (Other customer: majority are Asian vs. Caucasian) between-subjects, factorial design. Participants will be asked to read scenarios portraying dining experiences in a Chinese restaurant. The offering of authentic menu and ethnic composition of other customers will be manipulated in the scenarios. Incidental need to belong, incidental need to be unique, and satisfaction with the dining experience will be measured in the survey.

Results/Discussion

We expect that that mainstream American customers' satisfaction decreases when an authentic menu is not offered. However, authentic menu offering influences satisfaction through the activation of two distinct psychological motivations, depending on the ethnic composition of other customers. Specifically, we predict that being surrounded by Asian (Caucasian) customers will activate the need to belong (need to be unique) when an authentic menu is not offered. Such heightened psychological needs will consequently lead to declines in customer satisfaction. The current study will contribute to the hospitality/service literature by examining customer's specific psychological motivations in the context of ethnic dining.

References Available Upon Request

INVESTIGATING IMAGE CONGRUANCE IN MILLENNIAL CONSUMERS AND QUICK SERVICE RESTAURANT CSR

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Introduction

The Millennial cohort of Americans, born between the years of 1982 and 2000, numbers approximately 80 million (Howe, and Strauss, 2009). This consumer cohort, aged between 14 and 32 years old, expect a variety of choices to customize their food selection and personalize their experience (Morrison, 2013). Meeting the Millennials' expectation for food choices and corporate social responsibility (CSR) may prove inherently difficult for quick service restaurants to achieve. Consumers are growing increasingly aware of CSR practices and choose to associate themselves with brands and services aligned with their own values. Consumers develop devotion toward brands with which they perceive shared common traits (Fournier, 1998). Self-image congruence refers to the alignment of consumers' self-concept and the image projected on the consumer through association with a brand, product or a store (Kressman, Sirgy, Herrmann, Huber, Huber, and Lee, 2006). Matching consumer ideal self-image with brand image leads to self-congruity, which is an important consumer purchase motivator, leads to increased brand loyalty (Sirgy, 1985). Millennials who place a high value on corporate social responsibility and sustainable practices are not frequenting quick service restaurants in expected numbers. This growing absence from the customer base is of grave concern to companies like McDonald's that have seen a 16% decline in visits from the Millennials to quick service restaurants.

The purpose of the study is to explore the connection between Millennials' attitude toward CSR practice, the congruence between self-image and store image, and their intentions to revisit quick service restaurants. Based on the discussions above, the following hypotheses are proposed:

1) Image congruence in Millennial Generation Consumers has significant impact on their attitude toward CSR practices;
2) Millennial Generation Consumers' attitude toward CSR practices influence their intent to revisit the fast food businesses.

Research Design

The surveys will be conducted using a convenient sample of Millennial aged college students. A screening question will be asked at the beginning of the questionnaire to qualify the respondents place in the Millennial generation cohort. Only qualified respondents will be invited to finish the survey. The first section will investigate congruence between consumers' self-image and quick service restaurant image. The second section will examine attitudes toward the CSR practices in the food service businesses. The third section will evaluate consumers' intent to revisit the food service businesses. The last section is to collect demographic and socio-economic information of respondents. It is expected that 400 surveys in a usable format will be collected. Regression Analysis will be used for the data analysis.

Results

The outcome of the study will be useful for operators and marketers of quick service restaurants adjust their CSR practices and methods by which they communicate them to their potential Millennial customers.

References Available Upon Request.

FACTORS AFFECTING OLDER ADULTS' DINING BEHAVIORS AND PREFERENCES IN THE U.S.: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

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Introduction

Starting from year 2011, approximately 10,000 Americans have joined and will join the older population (i.e., 65 years or older) every day through 2030. Previous studies concerning senior market segment in the restaurant industry primarily focused on managerial perspectives without considering factors of aging itself. Thus, the purpose of the current study is to identify factors in all three aspects of aging (i.e., biological, psychological, and social) that affect older Americans' dining behaviors and preferences using a holistic, qualitative approach. Specific objectives are to explore:

1. *How* biological, psychological, and social aspects of aging influence older adults' restaurant patronage and selection.
2. *Why* these attributes have impacts on the senior market segment.
3. *What* the conceivable factors affecting older Americans' dining behaviors and preferences are.

Methods

Individuals with a chronological age of 65 years or older are considered as older adults and will be the target population of this study. Only those who dine out at least once a week will be invited for interviews to ensure that the participant belongs to the genuine senior market segment with purchasing power. Due to the lack of previous studies recognizing the three pillars of aging and their impact on dining preferences and behaviors, in-depth interviews will be conducted with approximately 15 older adults identified through purposive sampling in Kansas and surrounding areas until data saturation is reached. Interviewees will be recruited from retirement communities, religious organizations, and other groups identified by Center on Aging at Kansas State University.

Interview questions will be developed based on the three pillars of aging to explore the impact of older diners' health status and physical needs (biological), emotional states (psychological), and interpersonal interactions with the party they dine out with and also with service providers in restaurants (social) on their dining behaviors and preferences. Interview script will be reviewed by five experts in hospitality management and gerontology for content validity and usability and revised as needed. To respect older adults' energy and time, each individual interview will last approximately one hour. All interviews will be audio-recorded, transcribed, and labeled by themes to develop categorical systems that describe older adults' dining behaviors and preferences and associated factors.

Results/Discussions

Based on findings, hospitality scholars and practitioners may increase their understanding towards the aging population and develop further research. Ultimately, we aim to find ways to improve elders' dining experience, perceived quality in restaurants, and prepare the restaurant industry for the aging society.

References Available Upon Request

MULTI-GENERATIONAL HOTEL BRANDING: INVESTIGATING BRAND IMAGE, AWARENESS, LOYALTY AND PERCEIVED VALUE IN MILLENNIAL-FRIENDLY HOTELS

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Introduction

Given new technology availability, hotels may soon eliminate check-in procedures altogether. Hilton Hotels and Resorts intend to enable guest check-ins, room selections and room access via smartphones in limited hotels by 2015 (Solomon, 2014). This is one of several strategies hoteliers are hoping will attract the next generation of consumers. In the hotel industry, companies strive to gain a competitive advantage by engaging the most profitable customers at the appropriate time. This strategy is a standard marketing practice; hotels must juggle their current highest valued customers, while keeping an eye on potential future consumers. In the last five years, as millennials have begun to prove their purchasing prowess, a select group of hoteliers have begun shifting their marketing focus away from Baby Boomers and Gen X toward this promising younger market segment (Morrissey, 2012). Morrissey (2012) indicates this ‘in with the new, and out with the old’ concept has led hotel companies to remodel or rebrand existing hotels to draw a younger demographic. Some of the features intended to attract younger consumers include free Wi-Fi, modern fitness facilities, fashionable bars, and events such as wine tastings. These amenities generate a social environment which millennials desire. Product design revisions aimed toward generational target marketing are necessary given the competitive and transient nature of the hospitality industry.

Methods

An online questionnaire will be distributed via Qualtrics software to approximately 300 respondents across three generational groups: Gen X, Gen Y (millennials) and Gen Z. Thirty-five (35) questions will address brand awareness, brand loyalty, brand image, perceived value and future purchase intention of millennial-branded hotels. SPSS will be used to compute descriptive statistics and conduct factor and reliability analysis of the data.

Results/Discussion

No previous studies have examined millennial-friendly hotels from a branding standpoint. Results generated from this study are expected to provide marketers with information that may assist them in finding additional ways to court the millennial consumer. Hoteliers who have not yet implemented millennial-friendly strategies may be enticed to do so once results from this current study have been made available, particularly if generational reactions to these types of hotels are favourable.

References Available Upon Request

CONSUMER PERCEPTIONS ABOUT SANITATION CONDITIONS AND EMOTIONAL RESPONSES IN HOTELS

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Introduction

Room quality is one of the most influential factors in terms of travelers' overall satisfaction and likelihood of returning (Choi & Chu, 2001). Among hotel attributes, cleanliness is regarded as one of the most important attributes by hotel users (Ananth, DeMicco, Moreo, and Howey, 1992; Atkinson, 1988; Knutson, 1988; Lewis, 1984; Wilensky & Buttle, 1988; Callan, 1996; Lockyer, 2000, 2002). Lewis & Nightingale (1991) stated that cleanliness is, in fact, the main reason influencing travelers' hotel switching behavior. Relatively little research however, has been conducted on what areas of hotel room cleaning are most important to guests.

The purposes of this study are to 1) synthesize and identify sanitation dimensions in the hotel guest room setting 2) identify the most important dimension that influences guests' perceptions about hotel room cleanliness 3) determine and compare sanitation dimensions that influence guests' emotional and behavioral responses.

Methods

A panel of six industry experts will first be consulted to determine the cleanliness dimensions in a hotel room. Five positive emotions (*acceptance, contentment, happiness, interest, joy*) and five negative emotions (*anger, contempt, discontent, disgust, worry*) that were previously validated as responses to sanitation dimensions in a restaurant study will be applied to this study. These emotions are also among the 25 most frequently cited emotions in psychology literature (Izard, 1977; Mehrabian & Russell, 1974; Plutchik, 1980; Richins, 1997; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988).

The sample size for this study will be a minimum of 400 respondents who have stayed at a hotel in the last six months in the U.S. The data will be collected by hiring an online research company. A survey link method will be utilized. This study will use a scenario-based approach to describe the sanitation conditions in a hotel room. One scenario with all clean dimensions will be used as a control to compare with the other scenarios in which one dimension will be altered to describe dirty conditions.

Results/Discussion

This study will determine hotel cleanliness dimensions and identify the most important dimensions for hotel guests and their emotional responses. The results of this study will improve our understanding of guests' perceptions about cleanliness in hotels. In addition, the results will show what influences guests' behavioral responses. These findings will be useful for hotel guestroom managers for training their housekeepers, remodeling guestrooms, and for planning short and long-term cleaning needs. This study also provides a model for future sanitation studies in other service businesses, such as a cruise ships, spas, etc.

References Available Upon Request

HOW CULTURE AFFECTS TIPPING BEHAVIOUR? A STUDY OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

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Introduction
U.S. National Tourism Office indicated that in 2014 The United States will have 72.2 million overseas visitors. The influx of overseas visitors will be primarily consisted from countries such as, China, Columbia, India, Taiwan, Brazil, and Argentina (Travel.trade.gov, 2014). Since these countries accounted for a significant portion of the visitors coming to the U.S., hospitality businesses, such as restaurants, should try to understand how their cultural norm and attitudes affects their behaviour regarding common hospitality norm in the United States. This study focuses on tipping. Consumer tipping is unique, because it excludes specified obligations that are enforced by law (Lynn, Zinkhan, Haris, 1993). In contrast to the economic transactions of buying and selling of goods or services, tipping is a voluntary obligation that is enforced by social norms and/or individual conscience (Lynn,Zinkham, Harris, 1993; Ozar,2004; Mok & Hansen, 1999;Chi, Grandey, & Diamond, 2011; Lynn & Sturman, 2010). In addition the prevalence of tipping within the United States hospitality culture makes it unique for American hospitality. Previous research had looked at tipping primarily from its behavioural standpoint. There has been little research that examined the effect of an individual's cultural background on their tipping behaviour and attitude. Furthermore, few studies have examined these issues within the context of the destination's tipping norm. The purpose of the study is to examine the effect of cultural attitudes on international visitors' tipping behaviour in the United States. The objectives of this study are the following: to identify predictors of tipping by individuals from different cultures; to examine the effect of an individual's cultural norms on their tipping behaviour and lastly to investigate the differences between various cultures and tipping behaviour.

Methods
An online questionnaire will be distributed to 300 international students in a Midwestern university. The survey questionnaire will consist of three main parts: (1) Cultural and individual attitudes toward tipping, (2) Rating of service attributes, (3) Tipping behavior of respondents' in their culture. To be qualified in this study, students must be a non-residents of the Untied States, 18 years or older, and must have had a dining experience within the last year which involved tipping. ANOVA and Multiple linear regressions will be used as primary statistical analysis for this study. Both techniques will be used to examine the effect of group differences in cultural attitude and service rating toward tipping. Analysis will also be done based on gender, frequency of dining, country of origin and degree status. Furthermore, familiarity of tipping norm in the U.S. will be tested as a potential moderator between cultural attitude and tipping behavior.

Potential Contributions
Findings of this study will improve an understanding of the effect of cultural background norm on tipping behaviour. This study is different from previous studies, as it examines the effect of individual's cultural backgrounds on tipping behaviour in the destination country, in this case the United States.

References Available Upon Request

PICTORIAL MENU IN AUTHENTIC CUISINE EXPERIENCE: AN EXPERIMENTAL APPROACH TO CUSTOMER CHOICE

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Introduction

The study examines the effect of pictorial menus and menu labeling on customers' post-choice satisfaction and post-decisional confidence for authentic cuisine experience. The debate on the role of item pictures in menu design is continuous among practitioners. Common understanding shows photos increase the items' sale and affect consumer decision-making. However, there is a lack of empirical studies to support the positive effect of using images in menu design.

According to priming theory, mental representation affects the information processing and behavior. Previous studies showed the effect of background watermark on consumption of particular food item in the menu. In addition, literature suggests pictures of appetizing foods activated the right insula and the left orbitofrontal cortex, both gustatory processing areas, which produce conceptual inferences about taste.

On the other hand, accuracy of choice is a central part of decision-making related to decision quality. Post-choice satisfaction and post-decisional confidence are two critical elements in studying consumers' decision making. Based on the literature, the current study will combine mental representation, brain pictorial processing, and customer decision-making research in the context of restaurants. As a result, higher post-choice satisfaction and higher post-decisional confidence for pictorial and labeled menus are expected in this study.

Methods

This study will use 2×2×2 between subject experimental design to examine the effect of "Food Picture" (No photo and item's photo), and "Food Label" (No label, and/ or description, and/ or nutrition facts) on item selection frequency, post-choice satisfaction, and post-decisional confidence. A minimum of 480 samples will be selected from people with no previous knowledge of menu items and willing to have an authentic food experience. The study will control for the effects of the physical environment, price, other tables' sights, asking the waiter and demographic variables.

Results/ Discussion

The results of the study will provide insights for managers and practitioners to choose the proper mix of pictures and descriptions to transform the ethnic foods into a public choice. The study will contribute to the literature of menu design and consumer choice psychology by filling the gap in pictorial menu design and consumer choice in ethnic cuisine context and extending the knowledge of post-choice satisfaction and post-choice confidence.

References Available Upon Request

TRANSCENDENT EXPERIENCE IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY: A MODEL WITH EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE, LOYALTY, AND WILLINGNESS TO PAY

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Introduction

Customers are exposed to various experiences in everyday life such as restaurant visits and hotel stays, however, how consumers evaluate their experience remains unexamined. If customers consider a service experience as transcending, it can increase customer retention. Research has identified a transcendent customer experience (TCE) as a combination of flow and peak experience. Additionally, consumers' emotional intelligence (EI), is found to be important at the time of the service experience. Therefore, this research investigates the influence of consumers' EI in creating TCE in positive negative and neutral customer experience conditions. Since EI is found to be significant in negative (vs. positive) situations, this research also tests the moderating role of the valence of customer experience in the relationship between EI and TCE. In addition, the research aims to test the outcomes of EI namely customer willingness to pay (WTP) and loyalty to the service provider.

Methods

A survey-based experiment will be used to test the relationships between the identified constructs. 200 responses will be collected from students from a large Midwestern university using Qualtrics for the first study. For the main study, an online survey will be sent to "Amazon Mechanical Turk" (MTurk) (www.mturk.com) labourers using online survey tool, Qualtrics. Customers' WTP and loyalty will be measured on a five-point Likert scale. EI will be measured using ability based CEIS scale to measure respondents' perception, facilitation and understanding and management of emotions. A combined CEIS scale will be used for the final analysis. Customer experience manipulation will ask participants to write about their positive, negative or neutral restaurant experience happened in the past 6 months followed by the manipulation check questions. A 3(customer experience: positive, negative, neutral) X 2 (EI: high, low) experimental design using ANOVA will be conducted to check the main effect of EI on TCE and the interaction effect of EI and the valence of customer experience on TCE. An analysis of mediation using SPSS will be conducted to test the effect of TCE on WTP and loyalty.

Results/Discussion

The main effect of EI on TCE will establish the role of consumers' EI in evaluating a customer experience as transcendent. Additionally the role of TCE on customers' WTP and loyalty would provide important implications towards the role of TCE on customers' long-term relationship with service providers by paying a price premium for a brand that is evaluated to offer transcendent experience to customers.

References Available Upon Request.

COMPARISON OF PLANNED AND UNPLANNED TRIP BEHAVIORS OF FESTIVAL

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Introduction

Many studies of tourist behavior have been conducted by assuming that tourist act on their plans. However, there are many unplanned behaviors that occur in tourism activities that existing research cannot account for. Thus, the purpose of this study are 1) to analyse the differences between planned visitors and unplanned visitors, and 2) verify the fact whether unplanned behavior influences the degree of activity, experience, satisfaction, and loyalty. To achieve these goals, this study categorizes behaviors according by whether planned or not: planned behavior and unplanned (spontaneous) behavior. Applying this concept to festival visitors, the study classifies the visitors by whether they planned before visiting or not. The focus of this study is to investigate the differences in the state of experience, activity in the festival, satisfaction, and loyalty between planned visitors and unplanned visitors. By exploring their differences, this study might suggest possible directions for organizing festivals such as promotion, planning programs, attractions, and so on.

Methods

Using a questionnaire designed to verify the differences, the survey conducted festival's visitors who were more 19 years old and employed a random sampling method and a self-administered questionnaire. During a 3 days period (from September 23rd to 25th, 2011), a total of 234 surveys were collected. Of those, 8 incomplete or duplicate responses were identified and removed. To verify the hypotheses, the study used statistical methods such as frequency analysis, t-test, and factor analysis.

Results/Discussion

First, by examining the results, there were differences in the activity level and the state of experience between the two groups. The planned visitors made schedules of the festival program, accompanying persons and participating programs. For this reason, the planned visitors' activity level was higher than the unplanned visitors. However, there were no differences in the state of experience such as "deviation", "sociability" whether they had planned or not. It could be stated that it is a characteristic of Performing Arts Festivals rather than those of ordinary local festivals.

Theoretically, this study attempted to conduct analysis on the differences in two groups divided by the planned visits or the unplanned visits. In terms of the practical implications, it could be stated that practitioners should pay more attention to deviation factors in order to meet visitors' satisfaction. In addition, in order to attract the unplanned visitors the practitioners need to increase various pre-publicity and stimulation factors such as diverse attractions, dining, entertainment, and so on.

References Available Upon Request

SAME-SEX WEDDINGS VS. HETEROSEXUAL WEDDINGS: WHO'S THE BIGGER SPENDER?

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Introduction

The 2012 census reported there were 639,440 same-sex, unmarried partner households in the United States (Census.gov, 2014). Growing acceptance and legalization of same-sex marriages in the United States over the coming years should provide the travel and hospitality industries with a new marketing segment that will increase spending by lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) consumers. This new show of sexism among the LGBT community has enticed destinations to jump on the 'pink' train and increase their marketing budgets' focus on the LGBT traveler.

The LGBT community has been designated as a small segment (most reports estimate 3-5%) of the United States population; however, now that states are legalizing same-sex marriage, those who have not been able to marry now can or will be able to; thus, contributing a potentially massive boost in sales and revenue to the hospitality and tourism industry. Since 2004, 25 states plus the District of Columbia have legalized same-sex marriage. States legalizing same sex marriage saw an increase in travel, sight-seeing, dining and lodging revenue from same sex couples in addition to their wedding guests.

The purpose of this study is to determine if there is a significant difference in the amount of money spent on same-sex weddings versus heterosexual weddings. With the growing same-sex marriage law consideration in the United States, the hospitality and tourism industry could soon see a great need for promoting, planning and hosting same sex weddings.

Methods

A self-administered survey will be developed to measure if there is a difference between heterosexual wedding costs and LGBT wedding costs. Questions will focus on: 1) demographics, 2) occurrence of spending and cost during the wedding process, 3) desires, 4) locations and 5) amenities. The questionnaire will include a 5-point Likert scale along with various questions associated with wedding planning, purchasing and demographics. Additionally, researchers will attend both same-sex and heterosexual wedding expos.

Results/Discussion

Results of this study will be forthcoming. Data Analysis will exercise factor analysis, regression and correlations. This is an exploratory study focusing on the impact of LGBT weddings versus heterosexual weddings in today's society. The hospitality and tourism industry and marketers will greatly benefit from the results of this study as well as businesses associated with weddings (i.e., caterers, florists, photographers). As this is a rather untapped area in today's research, if states continue to legalize same-sex marriage, the economic impact will have significant economic improvements on the hospitality industry as a whole.

References Available Upon Request

DETERMINANTS OF REPURCHASE INTENTION: PERCEIVED RISK AND PERCEIVED VALUE AS A MEDIATOR

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Introduction

With the advancement of Web 2.0 and the rise of the sharing economy, new travel booking models have emerged. These influences not only change the way consumers buy products and services (Cheung, Chan, & Limayem, 2005), but also their traveling preferences (Wen, 2009). Airbnb, a peer-to-peer transaction-based online marketplace that matches hosts who wish to share their spare space with travellers who are looking for accommodations, is becoming popular among travellers (The Economist, 2013). Millions of individuals participate in sharing their unused places and rooms through fee-based transactions even though Airbnb is involved in tax and safety issues (Sacks, 2011). Unfortunately, to date, little research has been conducted on these fee-based online communities in the hospitality context. To explore the repurchasing behaviours of Airbnb consumers, this study extends the Chen and Chang's (2012) research framework on consumer repurchase intention (RI), perceived value (PV) and perceived risk (PR) into the realm of the peer-to-peer economy, specifically in the context of Airbnb. This study proposes several hypotheses to test the relationship between PV, PR and RI. In addition, this study has identified three extended antecedents through a content analysis— perceived authenticity (PA), electronic word-of-mouth (eWoM) and price sensitivity (PS) — and proposes that each of them would exert influence on PV, PR and RI.

Methods

This study will focus on Airbnb consumers who will be recruited from a specific database. Participants will be required to have experience using Airbnb. The survey has a total of 33 questions. All of the measuring items have been adapted from the literature and use a five-point Likert scale from 1 to 5 rating from strongly disagree to strongly agree. As convenient sampling is used for this study, potential systemic errors are taken into consideration. To increase the content validity of the study and the reliability of the questionnaire, a pretest will be carried out with 10 graduate students that have used Airbnb. Based on the feedback from the pretest, corresponding change will be made before the development of the online survey. The database company will help distribute the survey to their panel members and direct participants to complete the survey. 400 complete data sets are expected to be collected by the end of January, 2015. Structural equation modelling (SEM) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) will be used to analyse the data.

Discussion

PA is anticipated to have positive relationship contributing to PV and RI as travellers today may tend to seek unique and local experience through Airbnb. EWoM is expected to increase Airbnb consumer's PV and RI but decrease PR. Finally, PS should positively influence PV and RI while negatively influences PR. This should indicate that Airbnb consumers not only are sensitive to the price and value online reviews, but also look forward to seeking unique and local experience from their accommodation. Airbnb can extend their branding strategy based on the results. Destination constructs like PA is worth examining further in the tourism and consumer behaviour studies.

References Available Upon Request

UNDERSTANDING SPA CONSUMING BEHAVIOR: AN EXTENSION OF THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOR

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Introduction

Since late 1990's, a health spa has become an important hotel amenity for travelers (Monteson & Singer, 2002). Monteson and Singer (2002) confirmed that more than 80% of hotels guests contacted at luxury hotels and resorts chose a particular hotel resort that facilitates spa services. Also, Tabacchi (2010) concluded that more hotel guests look for spas in the hotels they are staying at and thus it is important for luxury hotel and resort organizers to facilitate spa services to meet guests' needs and eventually increase its financial performance. While the spa industry has been rapidly growing, there is still a lack of clarity in its spa-consuming motives and spa-goers' decision-making process. Therefore, the main purpose of this empirical research is to examine spa consuming behaviors by applying and extending the theory of planned behavior (TPB). The outcomes of this research can help luxury hotel/resort marketers and spa operators understand the complicated decision-making process of spa-consuming behaviors and develop marketing strategies to meet the needs of spa goers.

Methods

Pilot study and panel discussion were conducted to test the reliability and validity of measurement items, resulting in final set of measurement items. A 7-point Likert scale was used with *1 = strongly disagree* and *7 = strongly agree*. The Qualtrics, an online survey service company, administered the questionnaire and collected the study samples. The modified TPB model was tested through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modeling (SEM), using AMOS 17.0. Prior to the SEM test, descriptive statistics were conducted to profile respondents using various demographic variables. In the SEM process, the proposed structural framework was tested using covariance matrices with maximum likelihood estimation. Following the two-step approach recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988), a CFA was first performed to determine whether the measured variables reliably reflect the hypothesized latent constructs. In the second step, the structural model was estimated to examine the causal relationships among the latent constructs.

Results/Discussion

The structural model will be estimated to examine the causal relationships among the latent constructs. Overall model fit measures will be used to evaluate the structural model fit. The standardized path coefficients will then be used to report the causal relationships among the constructs and the relative importance of the exogenous variables (attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control, and spiritual wellness) toward the endogenous constructs (behavioral intention).

References Available Upon Request

A STUDY OF INTRA-TOURIST GAZE IN THE CONTEXT OF A CRUISE EXPERIENCE

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Introduction

Gazing at other tourists is an inevitable part of the tourist experience. Gaze involves more than just what is physically observed through the eyes. It is also associated with impression, attitude and impact. In the tourism field, recent studies of gaze behavior have pertained to the tourist-to-tourist gaze. However, the existing literature defines the intra-tourist gaze solely as a power that tourists have over other tourists. This research attempts to expand our understanding of the intra-tourist gaze from a human behavior perspective. The specific research questions examine the impressions and attitudes formed when a tourist gazes at other tourists, the psychological impacts of the gaze on tourists who are being gazed at and the potential behavioral changes induced by gazing behavior. Additionally, the relationship between the intra-tourist gaze and tourists' satisfaction is examined. The intra-tourist gaze behavior is studied in the context of a cruise experience for the fact that the cruise ship is a confined space where the tourist-tourist gaze is intense.

Methods

In order to answer these research questions, personal interviews with eighteen cruise tourists have been conducted using a funnel approach introduced by Morgan (1997). Specifically, the discussion begins with a less structured approach and moves into a more structured discussion of specific questions (Huang and Hsu, 2009). The focus of the interview is the most recent cruise vacation taken by participants, although previous cruise experiences are also tapped when appropriate. Participants are asked to tell their story about the fellow passengers they met (if any) to identify the gaze interaction between them. They are also asked to describe other critical incidents that occurred during the cruise trip, as well as their overall satisfaction with their cruise experience. At the end of each interview, demographic information, such as age, original home country and marital status of every participant is collected. Interviews are recorded on tape and transcribed. Qualitative research software Nvivo 10 is used for data analysis. Two coders are involved in the process of coding text. A coding comparison query is run to assess the inter-tater reliability of the coding.

Results/Discussion

The research is anticipated to demonstrate that tourists generate impressions or attitudes of other tourists by observing them and that the tourists who are gazed at and realize the gaze may have reactions to the gaze. These reactions can be psychological or behavior changes. Moreover, the intra-tourist gaze, a visual domain interaction, may not have an impact on tourists' entire cruise satisfaction experience. Intra-tourist gaze is an under-researched area in tourism. This research could add to the conceptualization of the tourist gaze in theory. Moreover, this research could lead to the development of better strategies to manage tourist-to-tourist interactions in order to improve their overall satisfaction.

References Available Upon Request

RISK COMMUNICATION WITH ELABORATION LIKELIHOOD MODEL: IMPACTS OF H1N1 PANDEMIC ON INDEPENDENT RESTAURANTS

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Introduction

Associated with the rising consumer concerns, food safety hazards and incidents have crucially negative consequences on the food industry in many ways, such as price fluctuations, decreased consumption of products, and damage to the industry pertaining to the incidents. Among many food-related hazards, pandemic disease is perceived to be a devastating factor in restaurant industry. Restaurants need to effectively communicate the risk attributes and promote food safety when persuading consumers to purchase foods and menu items. However, effective risk communication and persuasion has not been well understood in terms of consumer perception (Frewer, Howard, Hedderley, & Shepherd, 1997). This study aims to fulfill the research gap. The purposes of the present study are (1) to understand the impact of pandemic diseases outbreaks on the consumer perception and information process; and (2) to examine the relationship between risk communication and consumer intention to purchase a risk-related menu item in independent restaurants.

Methods

Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) suggests that an individual's cognitive efforts in processing an argument depend on one's likelihood of elaboration. The ELM postulates two different routes of persuasion; central and peripheral. The central route of persuasion refers to a careful scrutiny of message content. The peripheral route reflects an attitude change process that is generated by positive or negative cues (Petty & Cacioppo, 1981). Based on the ELM with 10 hypotheses including information quality, source credibility, risk cognition, attitude toward the risk, restaurant cognition, attitude toward the restaurant, purchase intention, and involvement, multi-dimensional measurements will be used. By applying quantitative approach with survey method, Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) first will be conducted to test the measurement model for the construct and structural equation modeling will be used to test the validity of the proposed model in a holistic approach.

Results/Discussion

This study is expected to reveal that there are two different routes (central and peripheral) of elaboration based on the levels of decision involvement. Based on 10 hypotheses with one moderator, authors could argue that results of this proposed research will be able to provide (1) an overview of best practices related to risk communication, pandemic disease, and decision making process in independent restaurants and (2) theoretical contributions by demonstrating a dual route of persuasion in decision making process.

References Available Upon Request

MAKING IT TASTE BETTER BY DOING GOOD: THE EFFECTS OF RESTAURANT CSR ACTIVITIES ON CUSTOMERS' FOOD PERCEPTION

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Introduction

This paper proposes that restaurants' CSR activities can create halo effects for customers' expectation, taste and likeness for food. The halo effect indicates that an individual's evaluation of one attribute of an entity strongly influences or biases one's perception of other attributes of the same entity. The factors that act as halos in food consumption or choice, such as organic signs, packaging, and menu descriptions, have been identified. The previous studies show that non-sensory information can influence customers' sensory perceptions. The present study will expand the previous findings by exploring how restaurants' CSR activities influence consumers' perceptions about food regarding expectation, taste and overall liking. We hypothesize moderating roles of the type of CSR activities (food related, food unrelated) and type of food items (yogurt, macaroni and cheese). For dependent variables, pre-consumption perception (general preference for food) and post-consumption perception (taste and overall liking) about food will be measured. Since an individual's expectation of food can impact evaluations on post-consumptions perception about food.

Method

The study will conduct an experiment in a sensory lab. Each participant will be seated in an individual booth and be asked to read a scenario about a restaurant. A total of 120 participants will be recruited and randomly assigned to one of three CSR initiatives (Food related CSR, non-food related CSR, and control). Participants in the food related CSR condition will read about a restaurant that is involved in CSR activities related to food and nutrition, such as serving locally grown, nutritious food. Participants in the non-food related CSR condition will read about a restaurant that is involved in other types of CSR such as environmental issues. The last third of participants will be a control group who will read a scenario with general information about the restaurant without CSR activities. After reading the scenario about the company, each participant will be asked to answer a question about pre-consumption expectations of the food item on the screen. After answering these questions, the actual food items will be served. Participants will taste the food items and be asked to complete post-consumption evaluations for taste and overall liking. ANOVA will be used for statistical analysis for the three types of CSR.

Expected Results

Participants would expect more positively about the food and consider it more delicious and favorable when the restaurant participates in CSR activities. When the restaurants' CSR activities are congruent with their core business, the activities have a greater impact on consumers' food perception. Furthermore, when participants taste healthy food, the impact of CSR activities would have more positive effect than they taste unhealthy food. Findings of this study may provide practical implications to restaurant managers for their decision on the type of CSR activity they would focus on for customers' better food experience.

References Available Upon Request

CONSUMERS' MOTIVATION TO PATRONIZE SUSTAINABLE FOOD PRODUCTS AND OPERATIONS

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Introduction

A growing awareness of issues regarding health and sustainability has led to an informal sustainable food movement within the United States. In essence, the goal of the sustainable food movement is to promote food that is "healthier for people and the planet" ("Sustainable Food Definition," 2014). Consumers may use words like green and good to describe sustainability, which is an indication of food production and consumption inside the community, to produce local healthy food products (Aiking, & Joop, 2004).

Methods

The target population for this study is consumers at a Midwestern region in the United State of America. The sample selection for this study is a stratified random sample to ensure that the participants are familiar with the concept of green restaurants, and they are made up of a group comprised of individuals of appropriately diverse demographic and psychographic characteristics. Data collection will be based on online data collection via Qualtrics survey platform. The common measure of reliability is the Cronbach's alpha and the usual criterion is a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .70 (Harris & Ogbonna, 2001). The instrument is made up of five parts. Part I will be used to measure the consumers' perception of sustainable food products. Part II will be used to measure importance of sustainable food products and operations to consumers. Part III will focus on consumers' willingness to pay and factors that motivates them to patronize sustainable food products and operations, and part IV will be used to measure consumers' perceptions of what viable substitutions for inadequately sustainable food products are. Part V will be used to collect some demographic and psychographic data. Data will be analyzed with Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Frequency will be used to screen the data for any irregularities. Descriptive statistics will be used to measure consumers' perception of sustainable food products, consumers' perceptions of viable substitutions for inadequately sustainable food products, and to measure the importance of sustainable food products and operations to consumers. Inferential statistics will be used to analyze consumers' willingness to pay and factors that motivate them to patronize sustainable food products and operations.

Results/Discussion

Research into sustainable operations in the lodging sector of the hospitality industry have led researchers to identify potential guests and develop propositions for increasing the sustainability of operations while controlling for the higher costs that such sustainable efforts often entail (Barber, 2014). Likewise, the food and beverage sector of the hospitality industry must work toward budget-conscious sustainable food products and operations. Results are expected provide valuable insight into consumer behavior that would facilitate the development of sustainable but consumer-friendly restaurant menus.

References available upon request

THE EFFECTS OF PERSONALITY TRAITS AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIENCE ON CUSTOMER COMPLAINT BEHAVIOR IN HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

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Introduction

In a service setting, personality traits and emotions may affect how people express their feelings when they are dissatisfied. This study will investigate the extent to which personality and emotional intelligence can affect customer complaint behaviors, complaint motivations, and post-complaint behaviors. The research questions are: 1) How does personality affect customer complaint behavior; 2) How does emotional intelligence affect customer complaint behavior; and 3) Do personality traits and emotional intelligence affect customer post-complaint behavior and complaint motivation?

Methods

This quantitative research will survey a sample of consumers in the online environment recruited through a modified snowball sampling technique. First, twenty participants will be chosen from researchers' social networks to complete an online survey at the end of which they will be asked to recommend several persons suitable to participate in the study. The online survey will include five dimensions that will examine: (1) Big Five Personality Scale, (2) Emotional Intelligence, (3) complaint motivations, (4) complaint behaviors, and (5) post-complaint behaviors. The five dimensions will be assessed on a 5-point Likert-type Scale from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. Data collected will be analyzed using SPSS where analyses of variance (ANOVA) will be conducted to test for differences in emotional intelligence, complaint behaviors, compliant motivations, and post-complaint behaviors based on the five personality traits. To test for the influence of personality and emotional intelligence on behavior, a multiple regression will be used.

Anticipated Results/Discussion

It is anticipated that customers with higher level of emotional stability, agreeableness, and conscientiousness are more likely to control their temper and prefer a complaisant way to voice their dissatisfaction. On the other hand, customers with higher level of extraversion and openness are more likely to release their negative emotions and prefer an aggressive way to voice their dissatisfaction. The results obtained from this research will be applicable for hoteliers and researchers to better understand how to solve complaints in an efficient way based on the interpersonal factors at play.

References Available Upon Request.

AN EXPLORATION OF QUALITY SERVICE IN THE ALABAMA BREWING SECTOR

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Beer tourism has emerged as a strong and growing area of special interest tourism globally, and is an increasingly significant component of the regional and rural tourism product of many US states. Indeed, many states are now perceived to be in the midst of what has been described as a 'beer tourism boom'. In addition to San Diego, CA, places like Boston, MA Burlington, VT, Grand Rapids, MI and Denver, CO woo drinkers by offering tours of breweries and educational sessions on the production and evaluation process (Dotinga, 2014). While overall beer sales continue to decline across the US, the growth in the craft brewing sector continues to hit double digits. Brewers Association figures for 2013 indicate that there has been a doubling of craft breweries in the US from 1500 in 2002 to just under 3000 in 2012.

Alabama is typical of most states in that it has experienced a 500% increase in the number or operational craft breweries over the last five years. In 2013, 30 licensed breweries were reported in Alabama compared to 17 in 2012. That said, beer tourism is a relatively infant tourism sector (Vasquez, 2014) and despite optimistic growth expectations the sector is confronted by a range of critical development issues, which have the potential to adversely affect its sustainability and long term profitability. One such issue is that of visitor satisfaction with the beer consumed and consumer perceptions of the service quality experienced during the visit to the brewery tasting room. As with most wine tourism operators most of these operations offer some form of tasting room for visitors to engage in the sensory evaluation of their product. The goal being that this same product will remain top of mind when visitors return home and engage in the process of purchasing their next craft beer offering. Naturally both product and service quality are essential to the overall visitor experience and longer term purchasing behaviour. As Kleban and Nickerson (2011) put it "The popularity of the product and increasing competitiveness in this industry has yielded a heightened concern about the quality of craft-brewing services among producers and consumers".

In stressing the importance of quality to the tasting room experience this project has two overriding aims. First to investigate the conceptualisation and measurement of service quality and its importance to the craft beer industry and secondly to report the findings from a study of visitor perceptions of service quality throughout the Alabama Craft Brewing Industry. The study will employ a mixed methods approach to explore these key research themes (1) phase one of the research will be largely qualitative and involve a series of one-on-one interviews with brewery managers across the state of Alabama (2) Phase two of the research will involve a quantitative study of consumer perceptions of service quality as they relate to the tasting room experience. The results will be of significance in that they will shed light on the operationalization of the service quality construct as it pertains to service delivery during the tasting room experience and inform continuous quality improvement efforts of regional breweries as they continue to develop their beer tourism product.

References Available Upon Request

MUSIC'S INFLUENCE TASTE, QUALITY ATTRIBUTES, AND LIKING OF MUSCADINE JUICE

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Introduction

The muscadine grape is native to the southern region of the United States and has been in production for over 200 years (Olien, 2001). Sensory marketing is defined as "marketing that engages the consumers' senses and affects their perception, judgment and behavior." (Krishna, 2012) This cross-modal approach utilizes the interaction between the various senses in the creation of the optimal customer experience of a brand. Music's role in shaping the behaviors and attitudes of customers has been well documented in recent studies. Further, the impact music has on sales has been well explored. In one such study, North, Hargreaves, and McKendrick (2000) showed music to have a positive effect on consumer interaction.

Music's influence on customer satisfaction was investigated by Magini and Thelen (2008) while having classical music being played in a fine dining restaurant increasing arousal states. Crisinel et al. (2012) found that response of the tastes correlated with the music in the background.

Research has revealed a complex interaction between the formation of the concept of flavor utilizing multiple portions of the neural complex (Small, 2012). Auditory and language portions of the brain have been found to be actively involved in the formation of the memory of a food's flavor (Prescott, 2012).

Findings indicate a complex semantic association between sound and flavor within the brain (Plassmann, et al., 2012). In another study, amplitude of background noise was shown to diminish the actual perception of salty and bitter flavors in foods (Woods, Poliakoff, Lloyd, Kuenzel, Hodson, Gonda, and Thomas, 2011).This study will review the existing literature regarding how sensory marketing fits into the current models for the branding process and, specifically, how auditory cues may be used in the development of future hospitality marketing strategies. In particular, music will be examined as a variable in the consumer's experience of flavor and brand association.

Methods

A self-administered survey will be developed to measure if there is a difference between taste, quality attributes, and liking of muscadine grape juice. Data Analysis will exercise ANOVA to test for differences among music types, quality attributes, and like of muscadine grape juice. This study is an experimental design focusing on music's impact on muscadine grape juice. Questions will focus on: 1) demographics, 2) taste (flavor) 3) quality of juice and 4) liking of juice. The questionnaire will include a 9-point Likert scale.

Results/Discussion

Results of this study will be forthcoming. The hospitality and tourism industry and marketers will greatly benefit from the results of this study as well as businesses associated with viticulture (growing of grapes) and the consumer's experience. As this is a rather under marketed area in today's research.

References Available Upon Request

THE EFFICACY OF THE HEALTH BELIEF MODEL IN PREDICTING CRUISE SHIP PASSENGERS' PERCEPTIONS AND BEHAVIORS REGARDING NOROVIRUS DISEASE INCIDENCE

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Introduction

The purpose of this study is to understand passengers' perceptions and behaviors towards Norovirus prevention. Some of the challenges facing the cruise ship industry include the prevention of foodborne illness outbreaks and unregulated passenger behaviors. Norovirus is the leading cause of outbreaks on cruise ships and foodborne illness in the United States (CDC, 2014). According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 2014), "about 20 million people get sick from Norovirus each year, most from close contact with infected people or eating contaminated food." While Norovirus outbreaks that occur onboard a cruise ship receive a great deal of attention getting headlines, less than 1% of all outbreaks actually occur at sea. However, Norovirus is estimated to be the second leading pathogen contributing to hospitalizations and the fourth leading pathogen contributing to deaths (CDC, 2014). Furthermore, Norovirus is listed as one of the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) "Big Six" pathogens due to its highly contagious nature and ability to cause severe illness (NRAEF, 2014).

Methods

The Health Belief Model (Stretcher & Rosenstock, 1997) will be the theory used to understand the failure of passenger's adoption of disease preventing behaviors onboard a cruise ship. Demographic variables are expected to significantly influence passengers' beliefs in regards to the HBM (perceived severity, susceptibility, threat, benefit and cost of illness). Additionally, the variables of the HBM will in turn influence the likelihood or intention of passengers engaging in healthy behaviors. The main variables will be examined through the lens of two sub-variables, recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), for healthy cruising among passengers. The two sub-variables are handwashing and social distancing. According to the CDC, handwashing remains the number one factor in the prevention of foodborne illness. Social distancing measures reduce the transmission of Norovirus by limiting contact frequency between infected and susceptible individuals. A scenario-based survey will be distributed through Amazon's Mechanical Turk crowdsourcing marketplace. Participants will be asked to answer questions related to demographics, handwashing and social distancing behaviors in the context of a Norovirus outbreak during a 7-day Caribbean cruise scenario. A panel of experts will review the preliminary survey followed by a pilot study to evaluate measurement scale reliability. Data will be studied using correlational analysis and ANOVA.

Results/Discussion

Results are expected to offer useful information for the Vessel Sanitation Program (VSP) in promoting healthy cruising behaviors among passengers.

References Available Upon Request

THE MEDIATING ROLE OF TRUST ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND CUSTOMER LOYALTY

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Introduction

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) has attracted considerable attention for practitioners and academicians (Lee, Singal, & Kang, 2012). However, a few studies have been focused on to investigate how the CSR is related to customer loyalty in the hotel industry. This study aims to investigate the effect of mediating role of trust on the relationship between CSR and customer loyalty in hotel context. This study will provide insight for management to use CSR activities to enhance customer loyalty in the hotel industry. The results of this study will help hotel executives and managers implement CSR activity as a strategy tool to build customer trust which can ultimately enhance customer loyalty.

Methods

Using online survey, data will be collected from guests of hotels located in the South Central area of U.S. Participants will be provided with a brief explanation for the purpose of this research and then, asked to response to the questions based on their perception they received after reading the scenario at the beginning of the survey.

Two sets of questionnaire will be developed for measuring participants' perceptions of hotel CSR activity, trust, and customer loyalty. Each questionnaire consists of a different level (low participation and high participation) of CSR activity scenario and following four sections: (1) perception of CSR activities- 4 items, adopted from Levy and Park (2011); (2) customer trust-5 items, adopted from Morgan & Hunt (1994); (3) customer loyalty-4 items adopted from Henning-Thurau *et al.,* (2002); (4) demographic information. A seven-point Likert scale anchored from (1) *strongly disagrees* to (7) *strongly agree* will be used.

First, descriptive data analysis, including frequency, and mean with standard deviation, will be used to create general profile of the respondents using SPPS 22.0. Second, confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) will be performed to ensure model fit with AMOS. Finally, Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) will be employed to test the proposed hypotheses.

Results/Discussion

The findings of this study will be especially useful for both academics and practitioners. From a theoretical perspective, this study will contribute to current literature by introducing trust as a mediating variable, which have been not studied in CSR and customer loyalty literature in hotel context. In terms of practical implications, this study will provide practical insight for management to understand and to implement CSR activity as a strategy tool to build customer trust which can ultimately enhance customer loyalty towards hotel.

References Available Upon Request.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN UNIVERSITY DINING SERVICES: MODELING THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PERCEPTION, SATISFACTION, TRUST, AND BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS

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Introduction

University dining services (UDS) usually provide in quick service restaurant (QSR) setting and they serve a unique exclusive customer base in educational environments. Due to massive amounts of energy and food consumed in over 4,700 universities and colleges in the U.S., those institutions can play important roles in influencing the environment (Chen *et al*., 2011) and saving financial resources (Eagan & Keniry, 1998). UDS has customers that are more likely to be exposed to CSR information and have more channels to communicate with corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities. These conditions encourage UDS to perform more CSR behaviors, which is defined as "the managerial obligation to take action to protect and improve both the welfare of society as a whole and the interest of organizations" (Davis & Blomstrom, 1975). This study focuses on a relationship between customer CSR perception of UDS and customer loyalty which would ultimately increase department potential sales volume. The findings can motivate UDS to conduct more CSR behaviors. Hence, the objectives of this study are to 1) examine the relationships between CSR perception, customer satisfaction, trust, and loyalty and 2) identify which CSR category contributes the most to customer intention to repurchase, willingness to recommend to others, and willingness to pay a premium.

Methods

This study examines customers' perception about UDS' socially responsible activities, which are categorized into food nutrition quality, employment, community involvement, and eco-friendly manners. We investigate the relationships between customer perception and loyalty with three items (i.e. intention to repurchase, willingness to recommend to others, and willingness to pay a premium). Mediating roles of customer satisfaction and trust are also examined. This study employs an online survey with students, faculties, and staffs within universities, using Likert scale questions. Descriptive and path analytic techniques are used to test hypotheses.

Implications

For the universities that have not started any CSR practices, administrators of those institutions can determine which parts of CSR affect customer behaviors significantly. Specific programs can be built up to raise customer's awareness of CSR, which can maintain better budgeting but pursue exceptional outcomes. On the other hand, for the universities that have attempted CSR practices, optimal CSR resource allocations can be expected within those institutions. If resources are assigned to a designated program in order to support the most contributing factor, customers' purchase behavior will be motivated due to raise of CSR perceptions.Academically, this study can contribute empirical supports on the positive relationship between CSR and financial performance, which in this study is measured by customer WTPM's attitude (average price increase) and customer repurchase intention (potential future visit).

References Available Upon Request

WHY DO CUSTOMERS OF MEMBERSHIP WAREHOUSE CLUBS EAT IN FOOD COURTS? A CASE STUY OF SAM'S CLUB

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Introduction

Based on the 2010 Warehouse Club Industry Guide a warehouse club offers its paid members low prices on a limited selection of nationally branded and private label merchandise within a wide range of product categories. The most well-known operators in the warehouse club industry are BJ's Wholesale, Cost-U-Less, Costco Wholesale, PriceSmart and Sam's Club. Today's warehouse clubs offer various services to their members. These services include pharmacy, free monthly health screenings, optical needs and hearing aids, members only discounts on gas, tire care and car purchases, personal health and business health insurance, travel auto insurance and most significantly for this study, food courts which serve fast food with reasonable prices.

The purpose of this study is to examine the main reasons of eating in food courts in membership warehouse clubs. In explaining the formation of warehouse customers' intentions to visit food courts, Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) model will be investigated. The analysis of the factors that led to customers' intentions to visit food courts will provide further insight into their decision-making processes, thus helping us better understand their behaviors, which is essential for the development of marketing strategies for warehouse clubs.

Methods

A survey will be used to examine the main reasons of eating in food courts in warehouse clubs while employing the underlying factors of TBP. The target population of the study is Sam's Club members who have eaten in food courts in the warehouse club. The respondents will be recruited from Amazon mechanical turk (Mturk), an online platform which provides researcher an access to consumers. The survey will be prepared in Qualtrics and distributed via Mturk. The TBP variables will be measured by valid and reliable scales that have been tested in the previous studies. In addition, semi-open (but directed) supplementary questions will be asked to get further information from the members. Demographic information will also be collected in the survey. The final research instrument will be pre-tested to ensure validity and reliability. Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, ANOVA and Multiple Regression Analysis will be used for data analysis.

Results/Discussion

This study will help researchers and practitioners better understand the customers' selection of food courts in membership warehouse clubs. In addition, TBP variables in the context of food court preference in the membership warehouse clubs will be examined.

References Available Upon Request

UNDERSTANDING LEISURE TIME BEHAVIOR BETWEEN INTERNATIONAL AND AMERICAN GRADUATE STUDENTS

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Introduction

Due to globalization and an increased number of study abroad programs, the number of students participating in study abroad programs has been increasing in many countries. These students want to participate in study abroad programs to gain work experience, master a foreign language, live in another country, and make international friends (Sanchez, Fornerino, & Zhang, 2006). However, international graduate students have more stress and anxiety because they have to learn a new culture and a new language, in addition to their coursework. Zhao, Lei, Yan, Lai, and Tan (2012) found that international graduate students had higher levels of engagement in educational activities but spent less time socializing and relaxing during their study abroad experience. Physical activity is the cornerstone of a healthy lifestyle and is cited as a key strategy for reducing the risk of chronic conditions and disease (Staten, Miller, Noland, & Rayens, 2005). International graduate student's leisure behavior should be understood to improve the delivery of leisure services to them. The purpose of this research is to explore the differences in leisure-time physical activity between international and american graduate students.

Methods

A sample of american graduate students and international graduate students from universities in the southeastern United States was used in this study. The researchers contacted the president of Graduate Student Association's (GSA) to request their assistance in distributing an online survey to graduate students at their college/university. The survey was sent to graduate students via email, and also posted on some GSA's Facebook page and newsletter. A total of 325 students completed the survey, but 67 were omitted due to incomplete responses, resulting in a sample size of 267 participants. The data was analyzed using SPSS to acquire descriptive characteristics of the sample and to test hypotheses.

Results/Discussion

The purpose of this research was to explore differences in leisure-time behavior between international and american graduate students. The results indicated that differences exist in the leisure-time behavior between international and american graduate students. For example, international graduate students engaged in less physical activity than american graduate students – 2 times per week versus 3 to 4 times per week respectively. In addition, the level of physical activity differed between international and american graduate students, with international graduate students participating more in mild exercise and american graduate students participating more in strenuous exercise. Lastly, there was less diversity in the types of activity that international graduate students participated in when compared to american graduate students. The results from this research may be used to help colleges/universities meet the diversified interests of graduate students and address factors that may limit their participation in leisure-time physical activity.

References Available Upon Request

INTEGRATED RESORT EXPERIENCE SATISFACTION: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF PRE-TRIP EXPECTATION AND POST-TRIP PERCEPTION

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Introduction

The integrated casino resort is an emerging trend in the expanding hospitality gaming industry. Its diversified business model provides a unique and varied customer experience. As operators of integrated resorts strive to close customer service gaps within their complex business, they would likely benefit from increased insight into their guests' pre-trip expectations. Tourists, when presented with so many choices, plan their visits in a multitude of ways. However, research has shown that often times, trips do not go as expected. Changes in plans may or may not be viewed as negative by tourists; nonetheless, there is value in understanding how it affects tourist satisfaction. The proposed research study will analyze the relationships between pre-trip expectations and post-trip outcomes viewed from the guests' perspectives.

Methods

This study will use a survey design that will be added to existing procedures used by an integrated resort operation between the time guests make their reservations, and the time that they complete a survey after their stay. Guests will be asked questions about their activities and their experiences. Questions pertaining to their experience and satisfaction will focus on three areas:

- Trip expectation and experience congruence; activities planned compared to activities actualized.
- Trip budgets versus actual expenditures; over budget, in line with budget, under budget.
- Trip characteristics and Traveler characteristics; in particular, the extent of advance trip planning and the level of spontaneous trip decision-making.

Thematic consumption patterns, if found, will be analyzed against post-trip responses related to overall satisfaction from both resort and total experience perspectives. A research partner that places a premium on personalized services, may find added value in this survey design as it can provide actionable information about guests and their preconceived expectations.

Discussion

The first objective of this analysis is to investigate potential relationships between overall guest satisfaction and the degree in which pre-trip plans and actual outcomes are congruent. A particular focus is placed on the gaming component of the integrated resort experience. For those that do choose to gamble, a potential connection between satisfaction and the win/loss outcomes of the gaming experience may be a significant factor. A secondary research objective is to investigate the factors that may contribute to 'extremely satisfied' guest experiences. Finally, the research seeks to better understand what role, if any, that the diversification of activities plays in overall guest satisfaction.

References Available Upon Request

INVESTIGATING THE RELATIONSHIP OF CORPORATE IMAGE, DELIGHT, AND CUSTOMER CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR

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Introduction

Customer citizenship behaviour (CCB) is defined as customers' voluntary behaviour which can generate great value for the service provider (Lengnick-Hall, Claycomb, & Inks, 2000). Customer satisfaction is seen as an important antecedent of CCB (Eisingerich, Auh, & Merlo, 2014) although perceived justice or commitment also motivates it (Yi & Gong, 2006). Delight is the extreme level of satisfaction and is a more reliable predictor of positive customer behaviour than satisfaction (Kumar, Olshavsky, & King, 2001). In other words, delighted customers tend to stay loyal to the firm (Torres & Kline, 2006), however, few studies have examined the direct association between customer delight and CCB as a proximity) to loyalty). An organization's image, defined as the overall impressions of an organization in the customers' mind, is associated with its physical and emotional characteristics which can influence customer perception of goods and services (Kandampully & Suhartanto, 2000). The tangible attributes of a resort, such as the name, design or product/service as well as the customers' perceived feelings including corporate culture, philosophy or quality, are considered to form customer's attitude about the resort service (Kandampully, Juwaheer, & Hu, 2011). For example, corporate image forms customers' perceived value and quality (Wang, 2010); however, little is known about the critical role of corporate image influencing customer delight. People are likely to actively participate in citizenship behaviour as well as nature activities in terms of the in-resort environment (Lee & Moscardo, 2005). Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to examine the effect of resort image on customer delight and CCB.

Methods

Data will be collected twice, once before and once after a trip to a resort via the panel members who will visit within a month of an online research company. Prior to their visit to an all-inclusive resort, travellers will be asked about two dimensions of corporate image (i.e., functional and emotional aspects). The post-survey which includes three sections (i.e., delight, CCB, and demographic information) will be conducted with those who responded to the first questionnaire after their visit. Measurement items will be developed based on previous studies, such as corporate image from Flavian, Guinaliu, and Torres (2005), delight from Barnes, Ponder, and Hopkins (in press), and CCB from Eisingerich, Auh, and Merlo (2014). A five-point Likert-type scale, where 1=*strongly disagree* and 5=*strongly agree*, will be used. Data will be analyzed using structural equation modelling for testing hypotheses.

Results/Discussion

This study will extend previous research exploring the antecedents of CCB by adding customer delight. In addition, this study will support the application of social exchange theory which has proven to influence of satisfaction and delight on CCB. From expected findings, managers of all-inclusive resorts may want to give more consideration to customer delight, thereby driving customers' voluntary behaviour and benefiting the operation.

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF GAMBLING MOTIVATIONS AND PATTERNS: A COMPARISON BETWEEN AMERICAN AND ASIAN CASINO PLAYERS

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Introduction

Casino industry has become one of the core tourism businesses and a leading leisure activity in the world (Lam, 2007). As the popularization and globalization in gaming industry continue, motivation factors of consumers for gambling have received much attention from researchers. However, few studies have taken cultural differences into account in this study area (Ye, 2009). Therefore, there has been a significant gap in the gaming literature regarding gambling motivation factors and patterns between American and Asian casino players (Ye, 2009). The purpose of this study is to examine similarities and differences of gaming motivation factors and patterns between American and Asian casino players.

Methods

This study will use an intercept survey. In the survey, there will be four sections of questions to respond by participants. The first part will ask the respondents' their purpose of visit to the casino and activities engaged in during their stay. The second part will include respondents' gambling participation and patterns such as frequency of play, game preferences, average expenditure, and length of time playing. The third part will explore gambling attitude and motivation. The last part will obtain respondents' demographic information. In order to collect data, researcher will visit a selected casino resort on the Las Vegas strip area. The target respondents are casino players who had experience in casino gaming activities within the past year. For each cultural group (i.e. American and Asian), 300 surveys will be obtained. Chi-square test and *t*-test will be used to analyse all data generated from the survey.

Results/Discussion

The anticipated results will show that gaming motivations commonly seen among American and Asian casino players will be the sense of excitement, challenge, chance to win, and a form of social event. However, Asian casino players will likely be motivated by higher risk-taking tendency than American casino players. In addition, compared to American casino players, Asian casino players will likely be less influenced by desire for learning and accomplishing based on their gaming activities. Findings from this study are expected to benefit casino operators in planning marketing strategy to target the Asian casino players as well as public policy makers in implementing problem gambling treatment programs.

References Available Upon Request