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INTRODUCTION

Science is the knowledge of the existing, which systematically totally covers a sector of issues. Science is one and its purpose is the understanding of all phenomena. Due to human's incapability of mental controling the whole of universal rules, science is divided to partial ''sciences'' and each one covers its objective field.

The science of tourism can be divided in two parts. The sciences of understanding the tourism phenomenon and the sciences of the enterprises of hospitality and their management.

Dealing with sciences leads to complete studies whose purpose is the understanding of the reality. These studies are set to be published in refereed scientific journals. Their publication is judjed for being original, complete and correct, by members of the academic community. Then, these publications are considered as valid and can be used by other researchers for the spread of knowledge.

Aim of the magazine is the spread of knowledge related to the scientific fields of tourism. In Tourism Issues there are being published original articles and obligatorily new researches. The writing language can be Greek , English , French or German. The scripts will be evaluated by three - membered scientific committee whose members have deep knowledge of the specific fields.

Laloumis Dimitris

WRITING GUIDELINES

In "Tourism Issues" can be published original articles and research studies dealing with tourism topics. The articles and the studies should have never been published before.

Every scientific paper should not exceed a maximum of 8000 words and should be sent in electronic form at info@dratte.gr.

The paper can be written in Greek, English, French or German.

Papers should be typewritten in black, double-spaced on A4 or US letter sized white paper and printed on one side of the paper only, with 1 ½ inch margins on all four sides, using 10 pts Arial characters. Pages should be numbered consecutively.

The first page of the paper should include in the following order: paper title, author's name and surname, affiliation, postal address, telephone and fax numbers, email address, acknowledgements. In the case of co-authors, their full details should also appear (all correspondence will be sent to the first named author). Also include an abstract of 200-250 words, and up to five keywords.

The second page should contain the title of the paper, an abstract of 200-250 words, and up to five keywords. Do *not* include the author(s) details in this page.

Subsequent pages: main body of text; list of references; appendices; endnotes (endnotes should be kept to a minimum).

Every paper should be accompanied by a 180-word abstract. The text of the abstract is not allowed to be part of the paper. Also, the author should propose 4 key words associated with the main fields dealt with in the paper. The aforementioned (name, title, abstract and key words) should be given in English and Greek, as well as in the language of composition in case this is French or German.

Tables, figures and illustrations should be referred to and included in the text, in gray tint. Each table, figure and illustration should be numbered consecutively (in Arabic numbers) and titled. Tables, figures and illustrations should not exceed one page and should be kept to a minimum.

The text should be organized under appropriate section headings. Section headings should be marked as follows: primary headings should be typed in upper case and bold (e.g. **INTRODUCTION**); subsection headings should be in upper and lower case and bold (e.g. **Tourism Planning**).

Quotations should be taken accurately from the original source. Alterations to quotations should be noted. Quotation marks (" ") should be used to denote direct quotes. Inverted commas (' ') are to be used to denote a quote within a quotation.

Papers should be supported by references. These should be set out according to the standard Harvard style as follows. In the text references should be cited by the author's name and year of publication in brackets – for example (Miller, 2000; Tribe, 2000, 2001), or '… as noted by Miller (2000)'. Where there are two or more references to one author for the same year, the following form should be used (Smith, 1999a) or (Smith, 1999b). Where references include two authors the form (Clarke & Little, 1996) should be used. Where references include three or more authors the form (Riley *et al.*, 1996) should be used. The reference list, placed towards the end of the manuscript, must be typed in alphabetical order of authors. The specific format is:

- *For papers in journals:* Blangy S. & Nielson T. (1995) Ecotourism and minimum impact policy, *Annals of Tourism Research* 20(2), 357-360.
- *For books and monographs:* Inskeep E. (1991) *Tourism Planning: An Integrated and Sustainable Development Approach*, London: John Wiley & Sons.
- *For chapters in edited books:* Hall C.L. & Jenkins J.M. (1998) The policy dimensions of rural tourism and recreation. In R. Butler, C.M. Hall & J. Jenkins (Eds.) *Tourism and Recreation in Rural Areas*, London: John Wiley & Sons, 19-42.
- *For reports:* Hovland N.P. (1989) *Local Economic Impact for Travelling Business: Examples from the Municipality of Risoer*, report no. 24, Telemark Research Institute, Boe.

Every paper will be examined by a three-member scientific committee. The committee's members cover cognitive fields relevant to the papers' topics and receive the papers with the author's/s' name undisclosed. The judging process will be completed with author's anonymity throughout. The judges will propose to the editorial committee the acceptance or the rejection of a paper to be published or the possibility of publishing an article after corrections suggested by the judging committee.

After the papers' judgement, the authors will be notified, either the judgement has been positive or not. The approved papers will be published according to priority of chronological order.

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AGRITOURISM MARKETING STRATEGY AND TYPOLOGY INVESTIGATION

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ABSTRACT

During last decades, agritourism started to grow significantly in Mediterranean area mostly due to its favourable climate. Within literature, there are many international studies that discuss the concept of agritourism in various ways. Wide-ranging definitions and labels concerning agritourism still create confusion as there is not a transparent and basic understanding of the characteristics that define it.

This paper provides a comprehensive overview on behaviour patterns of agritourists by combining these patterns with the activity-based taxonomy of all definitions of agritourism into a structured framework. The study offers a comprehensive framework that can be used as a basis for more informed debate and discussion, as well as for further empirical research in future.

Key Words: Agritourism; Typology Information Search Behaviour; Tourism Marketing

1 INTRODUCTION

Agritourism has been recognized world-wide since the early twentieth century (Busby & Rendle, 2000; McKenzie & Wysocki, 2002; Wicks & Merrett, 2003). The development of agritourism was specifically fostered when countries established a set of policies consisting of specific guidelines, obligations, and incentives in order to encourage farm diversification through tourism and hospitality services. (Che, Veeck, & Veeck, 2005; Hegarty & Przezborska, 2005; Kizos & Iosifides, 2007; Sonnino, 2004). One example is the LEADER program that offers grants for the promotion of rural development to farmers of the member-states of European Union (E.U.) (Caballe,1999; Cawley & Gillmor, 2008; European Court of Auditors, 2010, p.100). The attempt to understand any phenomenon requires mostly a basic conceptual understanding of the fundamental characteristics that defines it. A review of existing literature shows that there isn't any specific definition for agritourism. One can discover a wide variety of labels and definitions regarding agritourism, such as agrotourism, farm tourism, farm-based tourism, and rural tourism, (Barbieri & Mshenga, 2008; Roberts & Hall, 2001; Wall, 2000), (Iakovidou, 1997; McGehee & Kim, 2004; Sharpley & Sharpley, 1997). This results in a complex structure that combines the agriculture and tourism principles, especially when there is no distinct elucidation regarding the actual meaning of them.

While the tourism literature evidences that several factors influence travelers' behavior to consume tourism products (Lepp and Gibson, 2008; Hsu,Tsai, and Wu, 2009), to date, investigation into the determinants of agritourism consumption remains inadequate in the literature; for example, the relative importance of the various information sources (ICT sources included) used by travellers is not yet systematically analyzed. Given the increasing importance of this particular market segment for destinations, additional research is needed to understand the behavior of agritourists in an attempt to bring further theoretical and practical contributions to this field of study (Ramkissoon, Uysal and Brown, 2011).

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Meanings are the representations of a given activity developed by every person according to their background and experiences (Coulson, 2001, p. 320; Sharpley & Stone, 2010, p. 304). Tourism meanings are usually the result of any natural or social contact that takes place during a given experience (Coulson, 2001, p. 320; Greer, Donnelly, & Rickly, 2008) and can vary according to specific contextual factors including time and place (Greer et al., 2008). According to aforementioned, stakeholders can shape the meanings for agritourism so it is vital to develop successful definitions of tourism-related activities both from the supply and demand sides. (Gilbert, 2003) Apart from that, up to date research has assisted us to understand which bases can be used by tourism destinations to effectively segment tourism markets and these efforts have largely centred upon building tourist profiles for a destination using visitor data (Frochot, 2005).

Trying to analyze the existing theoretical framework for identifying the meanings of agritourism, the sections following deconstruct several definitions of agritourism and present a discussion of the efforts put forth by Phillip et al. (2010) to construct a broad definition of agritourism.

2.1. Deconstructing agritourism definitions

Definitions of agritourism are wide-ranging in the literature. The discrepancies found among the various agritourism definitions relate to three issues: (1) the type of setting (e.g., farm, any agricultural setting); (2) the authenticity of the agricultural facility or the experience; and (3) the types of activities involved (e.g., lodging, education). A fourth ontological issue was proposed to be added, related to the need of “travel”, given the use of the word “tourism” (agritourism) in its label (Arroyo, Barbieri, & Rich, 2012).

The type of setting where the activity occurs forms a big difference of agritourism definitions. The majority of studies claim that agritourism must be carried out on a farm (Carpio et al., 2008; Ilbery, Bowler, Clark, Crockett, & Shaw, 1998; McKenzie & Wysocki, 2002). But, there are few studies discussing different type of agricultural settings, such as farms, ranches (e.g., Che et al., 2005; Tew & Barbieri, 2012) or the inclusion of some types of off-farm facilities, such as farmers’ markets, where various kinds of farm products are taken away from the agricultural production setting to be sold (Wicks & Merrett, 2003; Wilson, Thilmany, & Sullins, 2006). Furthermore, there are different meanings used to define agricultural establishments, especially those related to "farm". European Union defines a farm as an agricultural holding, meaning “economic unit under a single management engaged in agricultural production activities” and which can also engage in non-agricultural activities (OECD, 2001). Finally, thanks to academic developments over last decades there is a clear separation between terms "agritourism" and "rural tourism" (Colton & Bissix, 2005; Kizos & Iosifides, 2007; McGehee & Kim, 2004).

A second commonly found disagreement surrounds the authenticity paradigm related to the agricultural facility and to the experience offered (Arroyo, Barbieri, & Rich, 2012). McGehee (2007) based her agritourism development framework in the U.S. on Weaver and Fennell (1997)'s definition which explicitly excludes activities and experiences that are developed in non-working farms because they deem necessary the commercial aspect involved in this activity. Furthermore, various North American (Lobo et al.,1999; McGehee & Kim, 2004; Nickerson et al., 2001; Tew & Barbieri, 2012) and European (Hegarty & Przezborska, 2005; Kizos & Iosifides, 2007; Sonnino, 2004) studies claim that having a "working" agricultural setting is linked to recognizing this activity as one form of farm entrepreneurial diversification (Barbieri, Mahoney, & Butler, 2008). Phillip et al. (2010) expanded the authenticity debate in the context of tourist experiences by adopting MacCannell's (1973) "front" and "back" regions of authenticity theory. The particular study refers to the difference between providing the visitors an indirect experience of agricultural activities (e.g., through demonstrations, models) from a direct engagement in an agricultural process (e.g., harvesting).

A third definitional disagreement relates to the activities that agritourism comprises which is not surprising given the extent of inconsistencies related to its meaning. Such inconsistencies may be geo-political as they seem to be associated to government policies (Arroyo, Barbieri, & Rich, 2012).

Finally, Arroyo et al. (2012) suggested the addition of an ontological discussion surrounding the definition of agritourism to the preceding debate in relation to the need of "travel", especially because the term "tourism" is embedded in the label most commonly used in the literature to depict this activity (agritourism). None of the agritourism definitions reviewed refers to the need of travel however, some of them may imply some sort of travel when mainly referring to farm-stays or entailing any type of accommodations.

2.2. A typology-based definition of agritourism

The aforementioned discrepancies motivated Phillip et al. (2010) to propose a definition of agritourism through the development of an activity-based taxonomy. Figure 1 illustrates the proposed typology for defining agritourism.

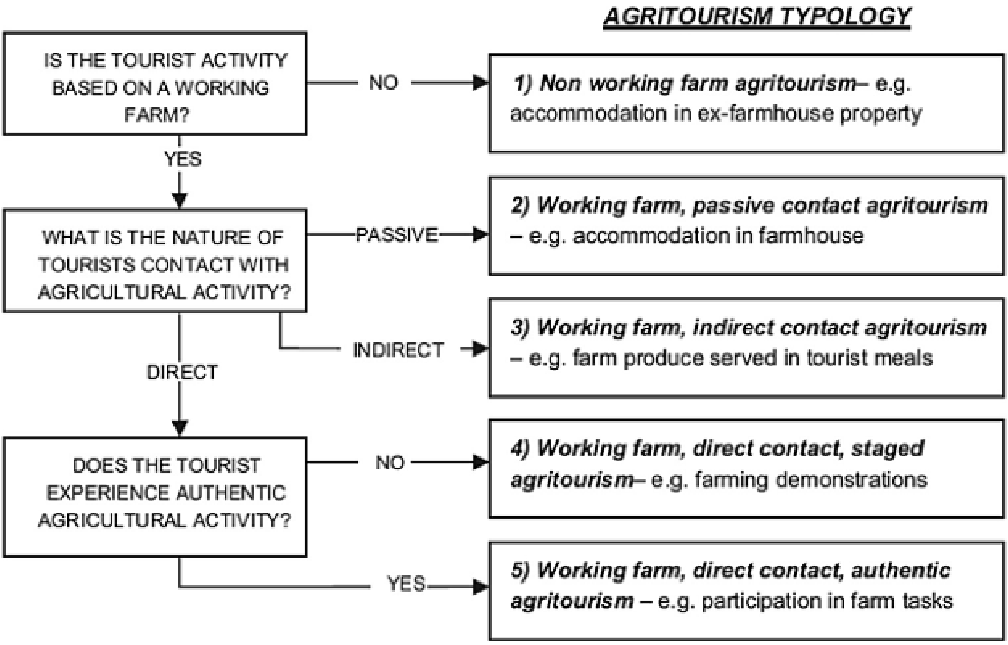

Figure 1 A typology for defining agritourism (Phillip et al., 2010)

The ***non Non-Working Farm agritourism (NWF)*** typology refers to activities where the non-working farm only serves for scenery purposes (e.g., bird-watching on an old mill). Although the majority of the literature excludes from definition of agritourism the tourism not based on a working farm, there are cases that tourists participate in agritourism though other different ways. Examples of NWF agritourism includes farm heritage attractions, tourism activities based on converted farms (e.g. horse riding) or agricultural practices that form part of the tourist product.

The **WORKING FARM, PASSIVE CONTACT AGRITOURISM (WFPC)** typology refers to activities that allows farmers to continue their agricultural activities without having interferences by the visitors(e.g., attending a wedding in a vineyard).

The **WORKING FARM, INDIRECT CONTACT AGRITOURISM (WFIC)** typology refers to activities that are more directly related to farm procedures, although the nature of the visitor's contact focuses more on the agricultural products rather than the practice of farming itself (e.g., enjoying fresh produce or meals on site). A number of authors focus mostly on hospitality and accommodation components. Examples of WFIC agritourism is the consumption of agricultural products served in accommodation or café's or through sale to tourists at farm shops.

The **WORKING FARM, DIRECT CONTACT, STAGED AGRITOURISM (WFDCS)**typology refers to activities through which visitors experience agricultural functions but through staged scenarios and predetermined tours (e.g. touring an operating cider mill). Other examples of WFDCS agritourism include farming demonstrations (e.g. milking cows) and direct physical contact with farm animals (e.g. feeding or petting animals).

Last but not least, the **WORKING FARM, DIRECT CONTACT, AUTHENTIC AGRITOURISM (WFDCA)** typology refers to activities where tourists fully participate in farm tasks. Visitors work and contribute to the farm economy in return for accommodation and food. There are limited opportunities one to experience WFDCA agritourism so there are not many examples discussed in the literature.

3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND CONCLUSIONS

All the previously mentioned approaches demonstrate the complexity of the agritourism phenomenon, illustrate a range of approaches in its typology, and emphasize a concern with determinants, information sources, decision making, and segmentation. The results of this study have important implications from managerial perspectives at the tourism destinations. The present study can help managers carry out this task in a more informed and strategic manner by examining agritourist consumption and consider the effects that information has for the agritourists at destinations. This information increases the economic impacts from travel and tourism in the destinations, adopting the necessary measures to reinforce the forms of information analyzed in this study in order to attract the suitable target market. This article supports the view that developing alliances with well-positioned, knowledgeable distribution channels is especially important for the assessment of tourism policies and coordination in the communication process with more traditional media in order to have a unified message from all media that reaches the public should also be part of the marketing strategy, be part of the advertising campaign or the promotion of the destination (Kavoura and Katsoni, 2013). The research implies that a segmentation based on the information search behavior is an appropriate way to develop marketing strategies and target marketing communications.

Fundamental technological shifts have a profound impact on the perception, consumption and construction of tourism spaces, and their local development outcomes, and 'traditional' regional communities have new tools through which to disseminate their concerns, and may, via global networks, gain new 'community members' that can represent their interests around the world (Katsoni and Venetsanopoulou, 2013). It seems evident that tourism boards can have a significant impact on these processes, and the present findings will possibly help in outlining a cursory examination of these issues.

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CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR IN TOURISM: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INVOLVEMENT AND EMOTIONS

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ABSTRACT

This paper performs a content analysis on the literature focused on the emotions and involvement in tourism consumer behaviour. The scope of this research is to cover two of the most critical aspects of consumer behaviour. Involvement and emotions that are the two biggest elements that drive tourist consumer behaviour on tourist activity. We aim to define the concepts and understand its relevance in the behaviour of tourists on tourist activity in leisure tourism destinations. The methodological approach used is a content analysis to show definitions, mixed results, frameworks, different theoretical and practical approaches, comparisons and blend of various scales of involvement scales and emotions with the confrontation of authors. These results show that constructs are increasingly prominent on travel behaviour and are increasingly being explored and investigated in leisure sciences. The findings provide theoretical support bringing together a consensus on definitions. The content analysis produces insights on how the concepts and definitions of involvement and emotions were clarified and defined in a more holistic way.

Key Words: Involvement 1, Emotions 2, Tourists' behaviour 3, Content analysis4

1 INTRODUCTION

A review of involvement and emotions to the level of tourist behaviour has been under progress and conceptualizations, with different approaches from different authors. To Isaac (2008) the consumer behaviour area is the key to explain and understand all marketing activities applied to develop, promote and sell tourism products. The involvement and emotions are crucial concepts of the research in consumer behaviour (Soscia, 2013).

However, there are still some critical gaps in the knowledge about tourists' emotions and involvement linked to their touristic experience that have to be overcome. The involvement construct has grown and attracted more and more interest by researchers, because of its theoretical and practical value (Alexandris et al. 2012). Although studies have been developed on the role of emotions in consumer behaviour those have only been empirical applied in the tourism field studies to a very limited extend (Hosany & Gilbert, 2009). However, while the majority focuses primarily on the role and impact of emotions in consumer behaviour generally, with some exceptions (e.g., Zins 2002). To our knowledge to this date, no studies have been undertaken in order to understand the synergetic role of involvement and emotions of tourists in their tourist activity on leisure vacations. Although the study by Sparks (2007) address the factors that help to predict tourist behavioural intentions when planning a wine tourism vacation, is limited because focuses on wine tourism and is need to check its assumptions into a broader context. Leisure marketing is emerging as new area of research, it is, therefore, crucial to understand the principles of marketing and also understand the leisure activity (Shank 2009). In its investigation Prayag, Osany & Odeh (2013) their results direct link between tourists' emotional responses and behavioral intentions. According to Martín & Rodríguez del Bosque (2008) cultural values could play a significant role in tourism through important effects on the behaviour of tourists in general. In this context, there are more and more studies that explore the influence of culture on tourism behaviour and preferences(Litvin, Crotts, & Hefner, 2004). The examination of theoretical and practical implications of involvement and emotions definitions in tourism consumer behaviour and the reasons for this examination are threefold:

First, as an emergent approach, the consumer behaviour in tourism represents a growing study domain, to develop and understand the tourists' performance on the leisure sciences (Gross & Brown, 2008), and the involvement construct has received a great deal for attention in recent years in tourism and leisure domain (Gursoy & Gavcar, 2003). Second, to explore and provide some insights of the connection between involvement and emotions that will help to predict tourist behavioural intentions. Third, contribute to the development of scientific knowledge about a clarification of the concepts of involvement and emotions and their relationship on consumer behaviour in tourism.

Most conceptualizations and operations of emotions and involvement that have appeared in the leisure literature (, i.e. Sparks (2007); Gross & Brown (2008); Kyle, Graefe, Manning & Bacon, (2003); Huang, Chou & Lin (2010); Alexandris et al. (2012) and Lee & Shen (2013)) suggest a holistic approach, as they all adapted work and concepts from in psychology, marketing and consumer behaviour.

The purpose of this investigation is to examine the conceptual definition and the relationship between the two constructs within a vacations leisure context. This is crucial to better understand the definitions of the involvement and emotions in consumer behaviour in tourism to better define the boundaries and overlaps between these two concepts. A content analysis of key conceptualizations of travel behaviour in terms of specific research would be beneficial for the following four objectives:

First, it would promote the clarification and articulation of the main constructs (involvement and emotions) in a deeper semantic perspective. Second, it would integrate different perspectives and methodological approaches (scales and frameworks). Third, it analyses the evolution over time of the leisure involvement dimensions and emotions that have been introduced. Finally, it would complement and advance this knowledge about the impacts on travel behaviour. This paper is divided into two sections. The first section was based on the involvement construct. The second section consists by emotion construct. Nevertheless, it is hoped that by linking some key concepts and approaches in the leisure studies field, this article will encourage further research that will bring our knowledge of tourist behaviour in area of leisure studies. The main contribute of this work is to enrich the body of knowledge on tourist behaviour by examining in depth the multidimensional nature of involvement and emotions concepts, as well as his value as his on tourist activity.

2 PAPER FORMAT

Methodological approach and conceptual framework

In consumer research, the use of content analysis on the texts must be scientific, objective, systematic, quantitative and generalizable description of communications (…) (Kassarjian, 1977), used in a particular item of the text (Silverman, 1977). This methodology – content analysis – is applied in this research as a tool for consumer research, as shown Sayre (1992). It´s represents a major topic on the role of content analysis in consumer behaviour research that's based on definitions and detailed studies (Kassarjian, 1977). This paper use the systematic content analysis mentioned in the body of research literature before. The content analysis methodology to consumer research has been introduced by Kassarjian since 1977. According to Kassarjian (1977), this methodology "... integrates the set of studies in terms of themes, we are in a better position to describe current knowledge and practice, evaluate theoretical progress, identify gaps and weak points that remain, and plot a course for future research". From ever, content analysis has described as "a vital and popular technique in the consumer researcher's toolkit", (Mulvey & Stern, 2004). Methodological papers have demonstrated the effective use of this content analysis through the differentiation of various types of scientific studies.

Involvement analysis

Involvement is a construct originated from social psychology, specifically in the 1940s. The history of involvement started very early. Zaichkowsky (1986) pioneered the conceptualization of involvement and its theoretical and empirical explanation and described three main application areas of involvement. In light of this, the first area of involvement research was advertising measuring if advertisement were truly relevant to the receivers. The second area of involvement research is the relationship between consumer and product and the product category perceived by the consumer. The third area is in the broad field of consumer behavior and marketing, specifically its contribution to purchase decisions (Zaichkowsky, 1986). Some of the major researchers use the construct of 'involvement' to better understand how and why consumers form particular attachments with product classes (Kapferer and Laurent, 1985a; Slama & Tashchian, 1985; Zaichkowsky, 1985; Richins & Bloch, 1986), such as cars, music or advertising. Involvement is a multifaceted concept because it´s can be used to describe the personal importance, for individuals, of a broad range of objects, such as products/services, brands,

activities, advertising, and decisions (e.g., Kim, 2005). Based on the dominant literature involvement is conceptualized in two ways: unidimensional concept (e.g. Zaichkowsky, 1985) and multidimensional construct (Kapferer & Laurent, 1993). Therefore there is a contrast between these authors, due to different conceptualizations that are widely cited in a growing of studies. In their empirical to authors contend that the impact of different facets of involvement in the research results are not always equal (Carneiro & Crompton, 2010). Involvement knowledge has also progressed through the application of theories developed in other disciplines as tourism and leisure marketing, and some research streams have been developed, tested and widely reported in journals. Thus, the area of tourism has contributed much to the development of the concept of involvement. Involvement was developed in consumer behaviour and the involvement has aroused interest by a great number of scholars that analyzed these constructs in their researches, thus they considered this construct valuable (e.g. Sherif & Cantril, 1947; Bloch, 1981 a,b; Bloch & Richins, 1983; Zaichkowsky, 1985; Kapferer & Laurent, 1985 a,b; Mittal 1995; Dholakia, 1997; Gabbott & Hogg, 1999). Bloch & Richins (1983) were they introduced the term "self-involvement" in order to explain engagement which exists only in cases where the consumer is identified with the brand choice or decision. The involvement is a special importance construct due to its potential effect on peoples' attitudes, because of its interaction with several elements such as the tendency to a certain activity or object, and its behaviour related or towards to some activity or product (Beatty & Smith, 1987; Slama & Tashian, 1985). Douglas (2006), states that involvement can be seen on the interest an individual shows for some product and on the importance given to the purchase decision. The involvement of consumer behaviour is based on the causes or sources, which are described as antecedents and consequences (Zaichkowsky, 1985; Bloch & Richins, 1983), was presented in Table II. As argued by Zaichkowsky (1985) and Bloch & Richins (1983) there are three factors that can influence involvement, i.e. (1) person´s variables, (2) product variables and (3) situational variables. The first factor is related to the characteristics of the person individual, where the needs, importance, motivation, interest and values motivate the consumer to a particular object or product, thus creating involvement. The second factor is associated with the component and the physical characteristics of the object, causing differentiation are associated with further stimulating factors because they increase interest. The third and final factor is situational depending on the benefit and value in terms of purchase and use at a given time. Iwasaki and Havitz (1998) suggested that the antecedents of involvement can be classified in two types of characteristics: individual (values, attitudes and needs, for example) and social (situational factors, social and cultural rules, for example).
However, Laurent and Kapferer (1985) postulated on the existence of four antecedents, which are: (1) the perceived importance of the product as well as its personal significance

(interest), (2) the associated risk the purchase of the product, which turn the background into two segments: the perceived importance through the negative consequences when you make a wrong choice (importance of the risk) and perceived importance of making a wrong choice (risk probability). (3) The remaining antecedent is the symbolic or sign value that consumers attach to a product, its purchase or consumption (nominal value). (4) The last final antecedent is the hedonic value that consumers attach to the product, your emotional involvement and autonomy to promote pleasure and also affect (pleasure). Andrews, Durvasula and Akhter (1990) grouped the previous antecedents differently, and in three different groups: (1) personal needs (personal goals and consequences values, cultural, the degree to which the subject has significance ego-related, personal value of the object, purpose and importance of personality factors) and (2) situation and decision factors (purchase occasion, object usage, perceived risk of the decision, magnitude of the consequences of the decision, the decision imminent, degree of irrevocability of the decision and the degree of responsibility).

About the antecedents' context, the above authors have inspired interest from a discussion of the involvement of the theoretical issues and implications for consumer behaviour. In general, Zaichkowsky is the author that presents a more integrated and detailed conceptualization, because she segments the antecedents of involvement, in situations in that the same occur with advertisements, with products or with purchase decisions. Laurent and Kapferer also suggested an integrated set of involvement antecedents, where the antecedent of risk associated the purchase of the product was further explored, for their double significant. However, Iwasaki and Havitz and Andrews, Durvasula and Akhter classify the antecedents of involvement in an approach more simple and general, only two types of antecedents in the same line of thought. As well as the antecedents, the consequences have also a role in this process depending of the involvement. In the perspective of Zaichkowsky (1986), there´s a set of possible consequences of involvement, which derive from involvement with advertisements; involvement with products and involvement with purchasing decisions, as shown in Table II.

For Andrews, Durvasula & Akhter (1990), the consequences are due to the engagement intensity, direction and duration of the effects engagement and divided into three components: the first component refers to (1) Research behaviour: increasing demand and buying behaviour, the increasing complexity of decision, the largest layoff of time evaluating alternatives and greater perception of differences in product attributes. (2) The second component is processing of information: the total growth in activity and targeted response cognition: the largest number of personal calls, the more sophisticated coding strategies and increased memory and understanding. (3) And the third component is the persuasion, that´s based in convincing arguments, in that attitude change is greater. Laurent and Kapferer (1985) also enunciated five behavioral consequences of origin from the involvement: (1) demand maximization of satisfaction on brand choice according to a selection process (buy many brands, waiver of time and analyze various products), (2) the active search for information through alternative sources, (3) likely to be influenced by reference groups, (4) the probability to express your lifestyle and personal characteristics on brand choice and (5) cognitive processing in communication, through the stages of awareness, understanding, attitude and behavior. There are still various perspectives and approaches of the involvement consequences in literature. Conceptual consequences of involvement have differed with different issues and contexts of marketing. Researchers and much research concentrate on the role of multiple dimensions of antecedents and consequences of the involvement on generic consumer of products and services marketing literature. From this perspectives, the involvement construct has earned attention not only in the field of consumer behaviour, but also recently in leisure marketing research, specifically the leisure consumer (Horner, S. & Swarbrooke, J., 2005).

In this paper it is used to summarize and guide a content analysis of principals differences between the conceptualization of the involvement construct by the most contributive authors. In marketing, the involvement concept appears in two different contexts or meanings: involvement with the product and involvement with the purchase of a product (Kapferer & Laurent, 1985a). Therefore the lasting involvement establishes a connection with the situational involvement, but situational involvement does not connect with the lasting involvement (Kapferer & Laurent, 1985a). Thus, in situations where the purchase of a product does not cause desire, interest and pleasure, the consumer only takes the final purchase decision based on price or brand, which only implies the existence of a transient or situational involvement. Involvement is a hypothetical variable, hence it cannot be measured directly (Kapferer & Laurent, 1985b). Rothschild (1984) suggested that involvement has three forms or types: enduring, situational, and response. To make a distinction between enduring and situational involvement types it is used the notion of duration to highlight these differences (Richins & Bloch, 1986). In this paper we present the main involvement concepts used in consumer behaviour, as shown Table I.

Table I
Main involvement concepts

Author	Definition
(Mitchell, 1979)	internal state variable that reflects the amount of arousal, interest, or drive evoked by a particular stimuli or situation that mediates consumer behavior
Beatty and Smith (1983)	degree to which a particular situation engenders involvement
(Rothschild, 1984)	State of motivation, arousal, or interest with regard to a product, an activity, or an object
Park and Mittal (1985)	"goal-directed arousal capacity' governed by two sets of motives: cognitive and affective"
Celsi & Olson (1988, pp. 211)	"perceived personal relevance"
Johnson and Eagly (1989, pp. 293)	"motivational state induced by an association between an activated attitude and some aspect of the self-concept"
(Dimanche, Havitz & Howard, 1993)	degree to which consumers engage in different factors of the consumption process: product, advertising, information search, information processing, decision making and the act of purchase
Laaksonen (1994)	cognitive based, individual state, and response based
Mowen & Minor (1998)	perceived personal importance and the importance consumers give to the purchase, consumption and disposal of a good, service or idea
Blackwell, Miniard and Engel (2001)	relationship between a person and a product
(Kim, 2005)	multifaceted concept because it´s can be used to describe the personal importance, for individuals, of a broad range of objects, such as products/services, brands, activities, advertising, and decisions
Douglas (2006)	the interest an individual shows for some product and on the importance given to the purchase decision
Michaelidou, Nina and Dibb & Sally (2008)	"individual difference variable found to influence consumers' decision making and communication behaviors"; "relationship between an individual, an object and a situation"

According to Table I, there is no a single precise definition of involvement and it is derived because the different applications. Involvement in consumer behaviour is classified by conceptualization, classifications and types. To Laaksonen (1984) there are three groups to definition the involvement cognitive based, individual state, and response based.

Table II: Summary of principals differences between the conceptualization of the Involvement construct by the most contributive authors

Table II

Summary of principals differences between the conceptualization of the Involvement construct by the most contributive authors

Antecedents	Consequences
Authors	
Laurent & Kapferer (1985)	
Antecedents	**Consequences**
1. Perceived importance of the product (interest); 2. Risk associated with the purchase of the product: the importance of risk and probability of the risk; 3. Symbolic value; 4. Pleasure.	1. Demand maximization of satisfaction on brand choice through an exten 2. Active search for information through alternative sources; 3. Likely to be influenced by reference groups; 4. Likely to express their lifestyle and personal characteristics in brand ch 5. Cognitive process of communication: stages of awareness, understandin
Zaichkowsky (1986b)	
Antecedents	**Consequences**
1. Person factors with advertisements and with products: needs; importance; interest and values; 2. Object or Stimulus Factors with advertisements and with products: differentiation of alternatives; source of communication; content of communications; 3. Situational Factors with advertisements and with purchase decisions: purchase/issue and occasion.	1. Elicitation of counter arguments to ads and effectiveness of as to induce 2. Relative importance of the product class, perceived differences in differences in product brand with products; 3. Influence of price on brand choice, amount of information search, tim type of decision rule used in choice with purchase decisions.
Andrews, Durvasula & Akhter (1990)	
Antecedents	**Consequences**
1. Personal needs (personal goals and consequences values, cultural, the degree to which the subject has significance ego-related, personal value of the object, purpose and importance of personality factors); 2. Situation and decision factors (purchase occasion, object usage, perceived risk of the decision, magnitude of the consequences of the decision, the decision imminent, degree of irrevocability of the decision and the degree of responsibility).	1. Research behaviour: increasing demand and buying behaviour, the inc largest layoff of time evaluating alternatives and greater perception of d 2. Processing of information: the total growth in activity and targeted res of personal calls, the more sophisticated coding strategies and increased 3. Persuasion, that's based in convincing arguments, in that attitude chang

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The main differences of the concept of involvement have to do with the different areas and multiple contexts including involvement such as advertising (Andrews, et al., 1990; Zaichkowsky, 1994; Greenwald and Leavitt, 1984); product class (e.g. Kapferer & Laurent, 1985a; Kapferer & Laurent, 1993; Michaelidou & Dibb, 2006); purchase decision (e.g. Mittal, 1989;Slama & Tashchian, 1985; Huang, Chou & Lin, 2010) and leisure (e.g. Havitz et al., 1994; Gursoy & Gavcar, 2003; Iwasaki & Havitz, 2004; Kyle & Mowen, 2005).

However, it is clear that there is some overlap in the wrapping concept. The construction involved is connected with the nature of the motivational state consumers. When consumers are involved, pay enough attention, realize the importance and behave differently than when they are not involved (Zaichkowsky, 1986). In essence, this analysis posits that various definitions are required to conceptualize and complement the involvement in consumer research.

There are different perpectives to analyse the measurement dimensions and variables of the involvement. Methods for measuring involvement in consumer research were introduced are in Table III.

Table III

Involvement measurement dimensions and variables analysis

Methods for measuring involvement in consumer research	
Authors	Object of study/dimensions
Laurent and Kapferer's CIP	Risk, symbol, interest and pleasure
Zaichkowsky's PII	Advertising, products and purchase situations
Zaichkowsky's PIIA	Personal, rational and emotional ad relevance and high and low involvement guy with advertising.
Mittal's PDI	Understand the differences of the marks, the importance of the product, the notion of risk that arises through the purchase of a product and the importance it holds to purchase in person's life.
Bloch's IPCA	Interest in cars, the ease with which you talk about the topic, list of cars with the most important values or needs and use the car as an expression of the person.
Tigert et al.'s FII & FIF	Time of purchase and innovativeness in fashion, fashion as interpersonal communication, interest in fashion, the level of information for fashion and fashion awareness and reaction to changes in trends.
Marshall and Bell's FIS	Represents a general measure of involvement in the process of provisioning of food and not just for a specific food product or brand.

Levels of consumer involvement were discovered and investigated early in the literature based on product's pleasure value, sign value, risk Importance, probability of purchase error, attitude, perception, commitment, familiarity, brand importance, optimum stimulus level, for example (Hupfer & Gardner, 1971; Traylor, 1981).

There are two central aspects in the leisure involvement research, their dimensions and the behavioural manifestations of the consumer (Hing, Breen & Gordon, 2012). Most studies have focused on the dimensions of leisure involvement, since Laurent and Kapferer (1985) have advanced the application of Consumer Involvement Profile (CIP). Laurent and Kapferer (1985) suggest the involvement should not be measured by the antecedents (product's pleasure value, sign or symbolic value, risk importance and probability of purchase error) isolated from each other, but with the antecedents grouped to measure consumer involvement. Thus, this set of antecedents gives rise to the CIP. There has been general consensus with regard to the multidimensional nature of leisure involvement (Kyle et al, 2007; Lee & Scott, 2009).

Table IV
Involvement dimensions in leisure activities

Authors' scales	Dimensions
(Havitz & Dimanche, 1997)	Perceived interest/importance, perceived pleasure, and sign or symbolic value
(Scott & Shafer,, 2001)	Centrality to lifestyle
(Hwang & Chen, 2005)	Place attachment and interpretation satisfaction
(Gross & Brown, 2006, 2008)	Lifestyle and place attachment into tourism
(Lee & Scott, 2009)	Interest/importance and pleasure dimensions have been combined into an attraction dimension
(Lee & Chen, 2013)	Leisure involvement and place attachment on destination loyalty

However, there is still disagreement over the nature and definition of these dimensions and which ones are more salient to understand the nature of leisure involvement (Hing, Breen & Gordon, 2012). With the introduction of CIP and other new changes emerged based on this, the level of factor structures (Havitz & Dimanche, 1997), in which some dimensions remained, others were excluded and others added. In leisure tourism, the applications of involvement consists of three dimensions – ATTRACTION (Funk, Ridinger, & Moorman, 2004), SELF-EXPRESSION (Selin & Howard, 1988) and CENTRALITY TO

Table V

Summary studies of involvement in leisure, tourism and marketing context

Author	Object of study
(Stone, 1984)	Leisure involvement has been found to influence time and/or intensity of effort expended
(Havitz & Howard, 1995; Kim et al., 1997; Venkatraman, 1988)	Leisure involvement has been found to influence frequency and length of participation
Park (1996)	Relationship between involvement and attitudinal loyalty
Jamrozy, Backman & Backman (1986)	Involvement and opinion leadership in tourism
(Bloch, 1993; Kim et al., 1997; Siegenthaler & Lam, 1992)	Leisure involvement has been found to influence money spent
Iwasaky & Havitz, (1998)	Relationship between involvement, commitment and loyalty
(Kim et al., 1997)	Leisure involvement has been found to influence miles traveled and ability or skill
(Bloch et al., 1989; Kim et al., 1997)	Leisure involvement has been found to influence ownership of equipment/books and number of memberships
(Watkins, 1987)	Leisure involvement has been found to influence information search behaviour
(Gahwiler & Havitz, 1998; Havitz et al., 1994; Iwasaki & Havitz, 2004; Kyle & Mowen, 2005)	Leisure involvement has been found to influence and preferences and evaluation of activity components such as facilities and providers
Kyle e Chick (2002)	The social nature of leisure involvement
Gursoy & Gavcar (2003)	International Leisure Tourists' Involvement Profile
Michaelidou & Dibb (2006)	Product involvement: an application in clothing
Kyle et al. (2006)	Relationship between motivation and enduring involvement
Sparks (2007)	Wine tourism vacation: factors that help to predict tourist behavioural intentions

(Gross & Brown, 2008; Kyle, Graefe, Manning & Bacon, 2003)	Relationship between involvement and place attachment
Huang, Chou & Lin (2010)	Involvement theory in constructing bloggers' intention to purchase travel products
Ritchie, Tkaczynski & Faulks (2010)	Motivation and travel behaviour of cycle tourists using involvement profiles
Alexandris et al. (2012)	Involvement with active leisure participation
Ferns & Walls (2012)	Enduring travel involvement, destination brand equity, and travelers' visit intentions: A structural model analysis
Hing et al. (2012)	A case study of gambling involvement and its consequences
(Filo et al. 2013)	Sport tourists' involvement with a destination
Yeh (2013)	Tourism involvement, work engagement and job satisfaction among frontline hotel employees
Lee & Shen (2013)	The influence of leisure involvement and place attachment on destination loyalty: Evidence from recreationists walking their dogs in urban parks

LIFESTYLE(Havitz, Dimanche, & Bogle, 1994). The principals and most dimensions of leisure involvement were introduced are in Table VI.

The construct of involvement in tourism research applies to a wide variety of consumer behaviours and marketing contexts. On field of leisure and tourism literature, most research chooses to use the multidimensional construct of involvement, with three facets as attraction/pleasure, centrality, and sign (Beaton, Funk, & Alexandris, 2009; Havitz & Dimanche, 1997). Involvement has a central impact on comprehension of the experience of leisure and tourist behaviour (Reid & Crompton, 1993), largely due to its effectiveness as a predictor of consumer behaviour in leisure (Gross & Brown , 2006) . It is for this reason that the engagement has been widely examined in the leisure and tourism area (Gursoy & Gavcar , 2003;Havitz & Dimanche , 1997; McGehee et al., 2003). Most studies of leisure and tourism apply in contexts of activity (Havitz & Dimanche , 1995; Lee , Kim & Scott , 2008) , but also some additional research have been applied in the decision of traveling (e.g., Cai , Breiter & Feng , 2004).

The involvement has been explored extensively within multiples contexts and meanings on marketing and consumer behaviour disciplines. For an overall view, the Table V summarizes a set of studies about involvement in leisure, tourism and marketing context.

Table VI
Main emotions concepts

Author	Definition
Descartes (1649)	Emotions were a series of automatisms and human behaviours different than cognitive processes
Izard (1977)	1. "The experience or conscious feeling of emotion" 2. "The processes that occurs in the brain and nervous system" 3. "The observable expressive patterns of emotions (particularly on the face)"
Cohen & Areni (1990)	"Emotions are described as episodes of intense feelings that are associated with a specific referent and instigate specific response behaviours"
Bagozzi et al. 1999, pp. 184)	"...mental states of readiness that arise from cognitive appraisals of events or thoughts; has a phenomenological tone; is accompanied by physiological processes; is often expressed physically (e.g., in gestures, posture, facial features); and may result in specific actions to affirm or cope with the emotion, depending on its nature and meaning for the person having it"
Fridja (2007)	Short-lived, are short-lived in the field of consciousness, require immediate attention and motivate behaviour

Emotions analysis

In the literature of psychology emotions have been extensively investigated by the rich body of researchers in different fields of knowledge. Aristotle was pioneer to emphasize the emotion. In past years, after Descartes, most important studious on the emotions have been Darwin, Ekman, Damásio and Goleman (Consoli, 2010). The role of emotion in tourism has received unprecedented recognition in the field of tourism and marketing. The emotions establish a strong importance in the comprehension of consumer behaviour and even the definition of experiences and also enhance consumer reactions and on tourist (Prayag, Hasany & Odeh, 2013; pp.119).

Table VII
Hierarchy of consumer emotions

Negative affect			
Anger	Fear	Sadness	Shame
Angry	Scared	Depressed	Embarrassed
Frustrated	Afraid	Sad	Ashamed
Irritated	Panicky	Miserable	Humiliated
Unfulfilled	Nervous	Helpless	
Discontent	Worried	Nostalgia	
Envious	Tense	Guilty	
Jealous			

Positive affect			
Contentment	Happiness	Love	Pride
Contented	Optimistic	Sexy	Pride
Fulfilled	Encouraged	Romantic	
Peaceful	Hopeful	Passionate	
	Happy	Loving	
	Pleased	Sentimental	
	Joyful	Warm-hearted	
	Relieved		
	Thrilled		
	Enthusiastic		

The effort to define the term "emotion" has a long history in the discipline of psychology and marketing. There are many definitions of emotions as the authors investigate, and each focusing on different manifestations or components of the emotion, but all reflects the theoretical basis of psychology. Several authors' present definitions and each of these definitions have its origins in several theories (psychology and sociology). In the field of emotion has been great variety of definitions that have been proposed for many authors that diverged in the literature of psychology. Izard (1977), whose emotion scale has been applied in a number of studies to consumer behaviour research, presents three definitions of emotions as shown Table VI, in the cast of the main concepts of emotions. The emotions are a valence affective reaction to perception of situations (Richins, 1997).

Laros and Steenkamp (2005) in our study about emotions in consumer behaviour: a hierarchical approach, the hierarchy of consumer emotions supporting the different emotion structures, i.e., positive and negative effect. The final result can be seen in Table VII.

Table VII
Emotions analysis

Emotions dimensions in consumer research

Authors	Dimensions	
Izard's DES	Interest, joy, anger, disgust, contempt, sadness, fear, shame, guilt and surprise.	
Plutchik's primary emotions (PTE)	Fear, anger, joy, sadness, acceptance, disgust, expectancy, surprise	
Mehrabian & Russell (PAD)	Pleasure, arousal and dominance	
Watson, Clark & Tellegen (PANAS)	Positive affect: enthusiastic, active and alert Negative affect: anger, contempt, disgust, guilt ,fear, and nervousness	
Richins's CES	Positive: romantic love, love, peacefulness, content, optimism, joy, excitement Negative: anger, discontent, worry, sadness, fear, shame, envy, loneliness	
Baumgartner et al's anticipated and anticipatory emotions	Anticipated	Positive: relieved, satisfied, happy, proud Negative: disappointed, annoyed, regretful, stupid, guilty, angry at self
	Anticipatory	Positive: optimistic, confident Negative: worried, anxious, uncomfortable
Hosany & Gilbert (DES)	Joy, love, positive surprise, satisfaction	

Emotions have been the target of large and important research investigation in marketing literature applied consumer behaviour literature. In this area, there is a rich group of researchers who normally uses and adapts the theoretical scales of emotions. Thus, there are four scales of emotions that have been widely used in marketing as the primary method of research as follows: Mehrabian and Russell (1974) PLEASURE, AROUSAL AND DOMINANCE (PAD); Izard (1977) DIFFERENTIAL EMOTION SCALE (DES); Plutchik

(1980) eight primary emotion scale (PTE); and Watson, Clark and Tellegen (1988) POSITIVE AFFECT AND NEGATIVE AFFECT SCALES (PANAS). However, Richins (1997) developed the Consumption Emotion Set (CES), therefore considered that the scales that which had been developed presented limitations to assess the range of emotions during the consumption experience. The CES comprises of 16 dimensions and the difference of this scale compared to the previous ones is that consists in the exception of envy, loneliness, peacefulness and contentment, and to Richins (1997) and Bagozzi et al. (1999), its measures achieved satisfactory reliability.

Hosany & Gilbert (2009) argues that these scales have limitations when you want to capture emotions associated consumption, although useful for situations in which they were originally developed. In addition to these, there are Baumgartner, Pieters and Bagozzi (2008) with anticipated and anticipatory emotions, i.e., future oriented emotions. More recently, Hosany and Gilbert (2009) contributed with develop of DESTINATION EMOTION SCALE (DES). The following emotions scales analysis, there are different methods for measuring emotions on consumer context and this content analysis examines different authors' perspectives. Different methods and scales have been used by several authors throughout time to measure emotions, for several empirical investigations in consumer research, as shown in Table VII. In summary, the different scales analyzed to measure the emotional states developed by scholars prove that there are wide variations in content. This content analysis of measures of emotions shows several differences between their content depends of study subject.

Different scales on consumer research context have been originally development in various field studies and different forms in marketing and consumer behaviour. As the scales are designed for a behavioral amalgam studies, Table VIII presented their applications in field study.

Table VIII
Emotions

Emotions	Field study
Izard's DES	Across various consumption settings, variety of consumer research contexts.
Plutchik's primary emotions (PTE)	Advertising research
Mehrabian & Russell (PAD)	Environmental psychology
Watson, Clark & Tellegen (PANAS)	Consumption emotions
Richins's CES	Diversified consumer contexts
Baumgartner et al's anticipated and anticipatory emotions	Decision-making
Hosany & Gilbert (DES)	Measuring consumers' reactive emotions

A rich body of studies has examined the influence of emotions on leisure marketing, hospitality and tourism. The main studies are attached in Table IX, for a straightforward query.

In summary, this overview shows that studies in the global tourism focus on studying behavioural intentions, cognition, satisfaction, purchase decision and decision-making, customer loyalty, emotions as a segmentation variable for leisure and tourism services, its relationship with overall satisfaction, tourists' emotional experiences and intention to recommend, emotional responses towards tourist destinations, tourists' emotional experiences and satisfaction and emotions and their interactions with personality in a vacation context. Previous research advance that there is a positive correlation between positive emotions, satisfaction and behavioural intentions (Bigné et al. (2005); Yuksel & Yuksel (2007) ; Grappi & Montanari (2011) and Han & Jeong (2013)).

Yet, there is a dichotomy between positive and negative emotions in this context, because when negative emotions are introduced as antecedents of satisfaction and/or behavioral intentions, the contradictory results emerge (Prayag, 2013).

Table IX
Main past studies of emotions in global tourism context

Author	Object of study
(Floyd (1997); Zins (2002); de Rojas & Camarero (2008); del Bosque & San Martin (2008))	The relationship between emotions and overall satisfaction
(Barsky & Nash (2002))	The relationship between emotions and customer loyalty
(Bigné & Andreu, 2004)	The emotions as a segmentation variable for leisure and tourism services
(Bigné, Andreu, & Gnoth, 2005)	The relationship between emotions, cognition, satisfaction and behavioural intentions in the context of theme parks
(Jang & Namkung, 2009)	The relationship between emotions and behavioural intentions
(Chuang (2007); Kwortnik & Ross, 2007))	Influence of emotions on decisions to purchase tourism and leisure services
Yuksel & Yuksel (2007); Grappi & Montanari (2011)	Examine emotions as antecedent of satisfaction and behavioural intentions
(Hosany, 2008)	The dimensions of emotional responses towards tourist destinations
Hosany & Gilbert (2009)	The relationship between tourists' emotional experiences, satisfaction, and intention to recommend – to measure tourists' emotional responses toward destinations
(Moreno, Molina & Moreno, 2012)	Tourist's satisfaction, image or emotions?
(Prayag, Honay & Odeh, 2013)	The role of tourists' emotional experiences and satisfaction in understanding behavioural intentions
Lin et al. (2014)	Changes in emotions and their interactions with personality in a vacation context

Generally, the tourism potentiates a positive experience with satisfying and pleasurable emotions (Mannell, 1980) and the tourism experience offers unique moments with a high personal value and an emotional charge of the consumers (McIntosh & Siggs, 2005).
To Hirschman and Holbrook (1982), field study of emotions in the consumption experience is mostly associated with product categories with high hedonic charge. In this perspective,

leisure travel may be included in this type of product, according to their hedonic character. The experiences provided by touristic destinations are emotionally attractive and, the more important are, without a doubt, the emotional "promises" of touristic destinations that increase the tourist's involvement in the process of decision making and his perception of the unique characteristics of the destination (Goossens, 2000). Emotions are always part of the touristic involvement, in fact, the tourist's decision usually involves rationality but also emotion, and, although they seem hardly connected, they both participate, as executable factors, in a good decision process (Damásio, 1994). Emotions also influence the choice of a brand, because they identify what's more important for the consumer (Damásio, 1994). Emotions are the most important aspect of consumer behaviour. Emotional factors are particularly powerful in the process of purchase decision on vacation. Sometimes, tourists make their vacation decisions according to their personal emotions (White & Scandale, 2005). Therefore tourism is no exception; on the contrary, holidays in touristic destinations provide tourists a great deal of experiences (Gnoth, 1997). Following the ideas previously exposed, the experience given by tourism is, by itself, a complex amount of factors (Buhalis, 2000; Swarbrooke, 2002), namely social, emotional, economical and psychological (Bowen, 2001). The role of emotions and the type of emotional response are, due to its essence, delicate and somewhat complex, because emotions can play different roles, meaning, of cause, mediation, effect, consequence and moderation depending of the involvement (Bagozzi, Gopinath & Nyer, 1999). In recent years, emotions and feelings has been of attention by researchers in recent consumer behaviour literature. They concluded that emotions and feelings play an important role in processing information (Sirakaya & Woodside, 2005). In the same way, the tourist's satisfaction comes from the emotional experiences provided by a destination or event (Lee & Jeong, 2009). Overall, the experience is rich in tourist emotions and tourists are constantly engaged in their own experiences they produce (Hosany & Gilbert, 2009). Goossens (2000) also assigns a very important role for the emotions because they increase the involvement of tourists in decision process and also increases the perception of the uniqueness of the destination, so the emotions are a predictor in the selection and consumer behaviour. As previously mentioned, tourist's emotions are an extremely important element when it comes to choose to travel; in fact, a leisure trip means an opportunity to be "more" happy and fulfilled. The more negative aspects of our existence are related to our daily life (Krippendorf, 1987). For tourists, leisure vacation are an escape to daily routine, a way to experience feelings of freedom, escape and a world of new and different feelings and experiences that, consequently, produce higher levels of happiness and improve, as reward, their well-being (Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004). Accordingly, emotions and satisfaction influence behavioural intentions (Baker & Crompton, 2000; Bigné et al., 2005; Soscia, 2007; Faullant et al., 2011 and Walsh et al., 2011). Goossens (2000) highlights the emotions and feelings as strong predictors in motivating tourists to plan a trip and postulates that these two factors have a prominent role in the selection and consumer behaviour. In this sense, Peter & Oslon (2009, pp.309) also extol that emotions and feelings in consumers' decision, as well as its impact on changing consumer behaviour. Gnoth (1997) and Chuang (2007)expresses that emotions also affect decisions to purchase tourism and leisure services. In the line of that, the emotions have different effects on behavioural intentions (Zeelenberg & Pieters, 2004; Soscia, 2007).

Content analysis of emotions and involvement

Within the psychology literature, there are two fundamental approaches to studying emotions: dimensional (valence based) and categorical (emotion specificity), (Prayag, Hosany & Odeh, 2013).

The contributions in social psychology literature demonstrate that individuals are closely connected to their societies (Litvin, Crotts, & Hefner, 2004). In fact of this, there is a cultural approach to the concept of emotions. But according to Fridja (2007) the emotions motivate behavior, have a short duration, are short-lived in the field of consciousness and require immediate attention. There is also a behavioral versus cultural approach (Fridja, 2007; Litvin, Crotts, & Hefner, 2004). Cultural norms play a predominant role, and impact on nature and constitution of emotions in how they are expressed and managed (Keltner, 2003; Mesquita, 2001).

Then it is considered that the concept of emotions encompasses the management of multidimensionality. For the content analysis of the concepts of emotions, it is possible to consider that on literature of emotion the major problem has been the growing set of different definitions that have been proposed and some definitions are relatively precise, while others are quite vague, in various contexts and approaches (Kleinginna & Kleinginna, 1981).

Although the involvement is quite comprehensive in psychology and consumer behaviour literature, the current definitions of psychological involvement and leisure involvement developed and evolved from Rothschild's definition and actually are equally instructive (Funk, Ridinger & Moorman, 2004). The adaptation of the engagement construct has emerged, while the areas of forward applied to study the involvement. Many studies have conceptualized the involvement as a multidimensional construct (Havitz & Dimanche, 1997; Havitz & Howard, 1995; Laurent & Kapferer, 1985; McIntyre, 1989; Wiley, Shaw, & Havitz, 2000). Although the characteristics of multidimensionality of engagement remain the subject of much discussion and attention, initial conceptual framework argued by Laurent and Kapferer remains widely prevalent. Consistent with previous leisure literature, we treat the involvement concept as a multidimensional construct. But agreement is not full, some researchers have approached involvement from a unidimensional perspective (e.g., Kim et al., 1997; Reid & Crompton, 1993), although a vast majority of empirical evidence supports and treats its multidimensionality (Havitz & Dimanche, 1997, 1999; Iwasaki & Havitz, 1998; Wiley et al., 2000).

A critical content analysis of involvement and emotions constructs produces insights for a critical assessment of the literature. Table IX shows the content analysis of involvement and emotions constructs most cited by the contributive scholars and researchers, specifically the principal and frequent categories. This two constructs are extensively used a large number of studies in consumer behaviour, marketing, tourism and hospitality literature.

Table IX

Content analysis of constructs

Principal and frequent categories	
Involvement	**Emotions**
Psychology and sociology	Psychology and sociology
Particular situation	Satisfaction
Individual state	Mental states
Cognitive state	Cognitive process
Affective state	Valence affective reaction
Motivation state	Feelings
Response based	Consumer reactions
Personal importance	Personal value
Product variables	Consumption
Consumption process	Purchase decision
Antecedents and consequences	Behavioural intentions and satisfaction
Interest	Motivation

The dimensions of each of the concepts presented are those that have a higher frequency and the table attests that dimensions and categories of both concepts are related. This content analysis attests that involvement and emotions are linked and connected. In light of the content analysis, there is a consistent and valid relationship between involvement and emotions in consumer behaviour in tourism.

Discussion and implications

The following content analysis on constructs, methods and their relevance's it´s quite prevalent the study of emotions and involvement with services, products, including tourism, has been extensively explored within marketing and consumer behaviour disciplines. On a superficial level of this content analysis, the results presented show that emotions and involvement demonstrate greater progress and scientific development to the level of marketing and consumer behaviour. The combined use of emotions and involvement has not yet applied by marketing researchers and tourism. The use of the emotions and Involvement constructs only occurred separately in marketing studies, leisure and tourism.

More specifically, although it is acknowledged that consumers have both emotional to their immediate environment (Machleit & Eroglu, 2000) yet no empirical study has investigated and explored the dimensions of emotional responses of tourists in tourist activity. To Otto and Ritchie (1996)the tourist destinations are rich in terms of experiences and attributes and contributes to potentiate an emotional response even greater.

However, to date, the relationship between involvement and emotion on tourist activity involvement has not been explored and this is another limitation on the current study. This kind of knowledge is particularly valuable for better understand the consumer behaviour tourist in tourism. Understanding how tourists involve in leisure tourism destinations can provide a better comprehension of the dynamics of the tourist consumer behaviour and the nature and role of tourism in society.

A number of studies must attempt to understand the influence of emotion in tourism, leisure marketing and hospitality and also the impact of involvement to understand the relationship of these two constructs, through the measurement of emotions and of involvement in tourism.

3 CONCLUSIONS

In recent years, much research include on the role of emotions in the generic marketing and consumer behaviour literature, however empirical studies in the field of tourism remain limited and require more scientific developments. The present content analysis concludes that involvement and emotions constructs has been shown to play a crucial role on tourists´ behavioural intentions on leisure, marketing and tourism. To address this knowledge gap, the current content analysis follows a methodical process in exploring and explanation of emotions and involvement constructs of tourists' emotional experiences in their touristic activity. The study offers important implications for theorizing emotion in the context of tourist destinations. A key theoretical contribution of this study is the development of a content analysis about of these two constructs that maintains the tourist behaviour to provide direction for future research on consumer behavior in tourism. The consumer behaviour in tourism area should focus on relationship between involvement and emotions. It's clear that this field study needs more advance and scientific knowledge on the subject. This research can mean as an important starting point on tourist behaviour, a number of future scientific studies can be developed to explore the consumer in tourism in general and the involvement and emotions on travel behaviour in tourist activity in particular.

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DECODING & CRACKING THE ANOMALY OF TOURISM INFORMATION: THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE TOURISM SOLUTIONS GENERATOR TO DESTINATION COUNTRIES

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Abstract

In 2014, there is still a significant failure in the field of tourism information. The F.I.T - Free Individual Tourist - constitutes 40%-70% of the world's tourism market & 90%-95% residents in any country. Google and Microsoft Internet portals and various "Search Engines ",as well as other sophisticated technologies do not provide the "appropriate solution" for the F.I.T.

The researcher has arrived at the conclusion that a change of perception and unification, and of the operative systems is required in order to create one integral combined system. The researcher suggests building a unified system which operates as a “Tourism Solutions Generator” (T.S.G-see **Fig 1** p 20),functioning as Tourism Customer Service on a Geographical Basis, by changing the mode of thought from “Search Engine” to “Getting Solutions” as part of the D.M.O.

T.S.G will lead to improvements in Tourism Economy and the establishing of new norms for touring and tourism managerial destinations.

There is a lucrative market for investors and/or governments for N.T.Os as a new growth engine. (Look for short explanation in :http://youtu.be/8zuN4eQKy-c)

Keywords

Anomaly (of tourism information and the use of said information)

Human elements .

"Tourism Logic" (thinking, habits, activities, etc. During travel and at leisure)

" Quality Tourism Information" – q.t.i = de-luxe (information)

Terminologyas a short Dictionary

Accessibility (to T.S.G via smartphone, electronic or chip developed by the researcher)

F.I.T-Free Individual Tourist, which constitutes 40% -70% of the world's tourism market (o.n.s-uk, 2010)(note 79)

Human Factor (operating human elements/materials).

Here & now, ad hoc planning (in tourism situations). done by the f.i.t.

Myth. "An idea or story which many people believe but that does not exist or is false: The idea that money makes you happy is a myth…" oxford dictionary 2003 - p 556 . copyright - oxford university press 2001.

Tourism Skills & Tourism Culture. (Travel Tool Books-T.T.B-144 tourism skills of the tourists making the trip, going abroad pointed 5000 elements)

Tourism Experience Content (information). (produced partly by Q.T.I)

Tourist Life Cycle. (1-8 stages of going abroad)

Tourism Branding (first 3 out of 5 strata of information regarding the destination)

T.S.G – A new system called tourism solutions generator (replacing the approach of "search engine"). T.S.G for: The "Free Individual Tourists" – F.I.T (families, youth, businessmen, etc.), For Tourism Destinations (National, Regional, Municipality & Sites Levels)***,*** forall tourism products and services (private businesses or organizations such as attractions, accommodations, art galleries, museums, restaurants, farms, wineries, sports, markets, car rentals, festivals, etc.) fortechnologies and telecommunication companies.(see ***fig 1*** p 20)

"Pump" information- the F.I.T "pumps" Q.T.I from T.S.G at any time, in any place, by any technological means.

Introduction to the Gaps in F.I.T Tourism Information:

2012 recorded over one billion international tourist arrivals (stay-overs). In 2020, the W.T.O. expects 1.5 billion tourists (UNWTO, 2010). In addition, there will likely be between 2-3 domestic tourists, cultural tourists and vacationers, with 90%-95% being F.I.T in each country. Most tourists require information while planning trips and/or during travel, including data on sites, attractions, all types of accommodations en route, etc. In 2013, tourists continue to use primitive organizational systems worldwide, when advanced technologies already exist which are not adapted to the F.I.T.'s concerns.

Despite the existence of Internet "Search Engines" and cellular technologies in the field of tourism information, it must be emphasized that said information (Vogt, 1995) still includes a significant failure to provide "appropriate solutions" for F.I.T. These sources of tourism information are partial or out of date, and may not be available in the tourist's native language, or are not available in the right location in real time. Advanced technologies cannot provide useable "Quality Tourism Information"- Q.T.I (Appendix 2) at any given moment in any given location, by any means of communication, at the right price, in real time, on a personal (Note 76,79) basis, based on "Tourism Logic" (W.T.O/UNEP, 1992) (WTO-BC, 2001) (W.T.O, 2000) "…Lack Of Personal Contact…" (Note 25) The architectural structures of advanced technologies are not integrated. (Note 2, 3) (Tazim and Jim-Hyung, 2003) (Christina and Hailim, 2008) & "Automatic Technologies Are Not Suitable For selling complex products" (Like Tourism & Leisure Products) (Economist, 3/2004).

Research Objective:

The aim of this research is to find the connections between destinations & tourists' difficulties in coping with various problems. The F.I.T must be provided a "Total Solution" in every possible situation, at any time. This requires applicable methods strategically (N.T.O), operationally (D.M.O) and tactically (F.I.T) to improve both branding and tourism economy.

Breaking The Myth of "Smart Technologies":

The axioms are that tourism information is a field that constitutes a positive and critical part of the F.I.T.'s mission: however, no system – hardware or software – exists in the world today (2014) with the ability to provide a comprehensive solution of "Quality Tourism Information" -Q.T.I (Note 10,11,12,13) for the F.I.T in real time. See "Terminology Dictionary". (Note ONS-UK, 2010 & Note 6)

Interaction between Human Factors, Content, and Technological Methodology:

Tourism as a worldwide movement is built on three foundations: the "Human Factor", Content, and Technology. The research process examines interaction between these three foundations, including the collection, analysis (Tourphonet, 1992-2006) (Note 15) and data consolidation from 25 quantitative and qualitative researches and surveys, as well as 5 empiric pilots in which more than 6000 people and more than 500 managerial decision-makers participated. The research diagnoses over 100 formations of "human materials" (Appendix 4) produced by the "Human Factor" (Note 14) in tourism situations.

Over 500 types of motivations (niches) for tourism and leisure have been uncovered, presenting more than 100 different kinds of tourism products and services (Appendix 5) that may be of use to the F.I.T. The research exposes 144 subjects of "Tourism Skills" (Appendix 6) required by any tourist, and defines over 30 variables required for any kind of planning and execution of travel abroad, vacationing, trips, tours or excursions (Note 35) (Note 34A) (Note 18-33).

Furthermore, the research points out over 200 indicators which testify to previous attempts in the field (Note 36, 42-45) to provide the human need for "Qualitative Tourism Information". Observations in 9 countries have been analyzed (Note 20-24, 48, 51), presenting approximately 70 subjects of the "Learning Curve" (Note 46, 47). The research consists of 700 pages covering a span of 22 years (1990-2012), and includes analysis of the links between researches in terms of interfaces, diagnoses and identifications of new phenomenon (Appendix 3), apparent and hidden obstructions, contextual analyses and discussions, and global experiments (Note 42,43,44,45).

During the pilots, over 35,000 contacts/minutes were logged by customers inquiring about over 600 topics, covering over 10,000 destination sites, 4000 touring/hiking routes, and about 3000 types of events. The operating staff ("Informatours") consisted of 26 operators at peak time during the tests in back & front rooms. (Kenneth,Saeven and Roger 1995)(Note 15) (Tourphonet, 1992-2006).

The Problem for the End User (F.I.T):

Defining the problem requires focus on the F.I.T "tourist". The researcher finds that communication and technology companies ignore the "Human Factor" of the F.I.T. (Note 79) who desperately needs assistance.

The "potential tourist" and the "visiting tourist" are interested in relevant information before & during the trip cycle. The problem is providing/receiving the relevant "Quality Tourism Information" (Note 40) (Note 10-13, 52) and/or combinations of various types of content (Appendix 2 & 5)(Note 3,69).

Access to this information is necessary (Note 5) in real-time at multiple points before (Note 68) and during the trip: while bookings and orders are being taken (often earlier), payment, advice, directions being changed, etc. This requires interaction between the "Human Factor", Content and Technology.

<u>The problem of the destination</u>

The country as a tourism destination faces a major problem: it is unable to organize and provide "Quality Tourism Information" (enhanced by the researcher) in real-time despite available portals. No branding information, practical tourism information, or experiential information is provided from one place, in one contact."…The first to reach the tourist with relevant information will win him over and ultimately win this battle..." (Wahab, 1976)

The problem of the Internet myth

In the eyes of the public, any situation can be resolved because "…the Internet provides **EVERYTHING** you need…" (Look at Terminology of Myth) , (Keller, 1998) (Woters, 2010) (Buhalis, 2009) (Busch, 2001) (SDM, 2003)(Appendix 1).

This research shatters the myth of omniscient tourism internet portals & "Search Engines" regarding tourism information for the F.I.T. in real time. (Note 702+702A) The fallibility of several technologies in this field (Internet, Apps, GPS, Smartphone etc) is also explored. Existing technologies (2014) do not provide an adequate solution (Appendix 1 & Note 1, 8,52A) for the F.I.T. (Note 69,79)

Over the years the Internet has been branded and identified as the ultimate tourism information provider, thus creating a myth that is hard to dispel but which must be disproven. The Internet provides solid information about hotels, flights, car rentals and major events and attractions, across millions of websites, but without "Tourism Logic". Moreover, these technologies cannot resolve existing problems due to the uniqueness of the challenges facing the tourist whose interests, motivations, expectations and behaviors cannot be factored into the overwhelming amount of information provided by the architecture of the Internet to date. (Appendix 1) (Anomaly). Nevertheless, this is not a valid reason to reject the contribution of these technologies (internet) to the world tourism industry as a whole.(WTOBC, 2001).

The Big Picture: X, Y, S, T, L, D

The researcher has identified several new phenomena (Appendix 3) such as the "Anomaly of tourism information and the use of said information", as well as the style of the "Tourism Experience". (Note 48) (Paz-Tal, 2005) (Uriely, 2005) (Note 17) "…from destination collectors to experience seekers…" (Buncle, 2006)

In addition, the technological ability of the F.I.T. to receive "Quality Tourism Information" at once, via special kits (Note 40), is also a new field in creating the accessibility to Q.T.I. The research identifies "Tourism Logic" (Paz-Tal, 2005) which brought the researcher to understand that the Internet protocol alone (e.g. "Search Engine"& App & Smartphone etc) (Appendix 1) cannot provide "Quality Tourism Information" for F.I.T, thus requiring the development of new items which are presented by the T.S.G. One of them is an algorithm which developed as a model, a formula, and technology in itself.

This new formula, called **T.I.P** - **T**ouring **I**ndividual **P**lanning (Paz-Tal, 2005) (Paz-Tal thus: ET EL, 2000) – constitutes a new approach including software, processing & some aids that were not in use anywhere in the world previously. This new model/formula was developed in order to provide fast solutions for the F.I.T. (Note 9) (ONS-UK, 2010) to allow "…closing the loop-from information to booking C.L.C - Contact Life Cycle…" (Note 5) (W.T.O: Team 2003) [326]

"Tourism Human Engineering" is a mechanism which was developed (Economist, 2004) to identify and deal with the "Human Factor" on the emotional, experiential, associative and psychological levels. There are more than 100 "Human Elements" (Appendix 4) such as dilemmas, uncertainty, physical and mental fatigue, etc. This mechanism, assisted by "Pazit" software, enables the provision (Note 68) of a personal solution:**S** for **T** specific time, for **L** location and **D** distribution by all types of technologies, offering a "solution package" for the F.I.T. in real-time (thanks to the developed **C**all **C**ontact **C**ontent **C**ontext **C**onnecting **C**enter **= C**6) (Note 3), in addition to a related "Quality Tourism Information" (appendix 2 & 5) provider by means of the T.I.P. Algorithm and 11 integrated combinations of tourism data (Note 2) & other means (Jamal and Jim,2003). So at the end of **X** seconds or **Y** minutes, a personal solution can be distributed to the F.I.T via all technologies, on-line, on-Call, on-LiveChat, on-SMS, on-Fax,on-View,on-Board, etc.

A Change Of Strategy

The researcher, having checked and analyzed the "tourist problem", approaches the field of branding (Pizam, 2009) problems in a country. Lately (2009), the W.T.O. –World Tourism Organization – has published (Note 4) its consideration of branding a touring destination, in which it analyses the stages of transforming a citizen of any country into a de facto tourist, as well as the mechanism for choosing touring destinations. These considerations are well-integrated (Geng,Chi,Christina and Hailim, 2008) (as proposed by the researcher) in the branding aspects that have been decided at any destination.

The researcher has concluded that a change of perception in the joint strategy, the thinking lines and the operative strategic and tactical systems (Eshet, 2009) must be conducted (in the World Tourism Industry, Note 2) in order to create one combined integrated (Jamal and Jim, 2003) system. This is due to the fact that the concept of tourism information contains 5 strata of different information types, which, over time, create a perception that consolidates into a psychological picture in the eyes of the population as to the touring destination. It is now possible to create access to tourism information via "Ongoing-Tailor-Made" new methodology (Paz-Tal, 2005), creating the advanced technology to distribute the content as information through all cellular possibilities (Note 78) as an integrated tool with the "Human Factor" to get "Quality Tourism Information" at the personal initiative of the F.I.T end-user (emphasizing that the technology alone cannot do so).

The Latest Innovation:

Technologies such as Internet sites, editors (Erenest & Yang, 2006), middlemen, Portals, crowdsourcing, "Like creators", "Balloon (Lot) creators", Tweeters, Facebook "friends" (salaried or not) and "Group Whatsapp" cannot provide QTI in real time (Note 52A,69).(Travel-Gold-Rush by Oxford Uni & Amadeus, 2010)

The researcher has identified & emphasized that for the first time, it is possible to transfer all data solutions from a unified place and time, from 11 combinations of tourism information, from X resources. All 5 strata of information will be instantaneously transferred. This unification makes it possible to "close the loop" (Note 5). This must be operated 7/24/365 (Tourphonet, 1992-2006) (Note 15,52) worldwide, as "closing the loop" for the basket of tourism products (weiermair 1998 & 2001) from inquiry to booking is an iron-clad rule (Note 5) and must be exploited, as well as additional new rules of "Tourism Management" (Kotler, 2003) (Paz-Tal, 1998), only at the appropriate time for the F.I.T & his Tourism Motivation (Buttle,2006).

The Practical View

An interactive single-or multiple-contact personal system (Note 69,76,79) has been developed (Wallace thuse: ET AL, 2004) based on the T.I.P. model for (Note 9) Tourism Individual Planning. A tourist can communicate from anywhere in his/her home country or while traveling, using any type of cellular or Internet phone, smartphone, e-mail, apps, livechat, etc., receiving immediate answers (Note 67) as "Quality Tourism Information" (Appendix 2 & 5) from specially-trained multilingual, multifunctional, multicommunicational "informatours" 24 hours a day (Note 5, 46) (" …do not forget the "human touch" … "people still want to talk…"…people want "Quality Tourism Information…"…people want fast reactions…") (WTO, 2000). Travelers who do not find their way can be given immediate help, and other "human elements" (Appendix 4) can be added (e.g. emergency medical assistance [Appendix 6] or advice on visiting areas with security or technical problems). By request, information (such as maps or graphs) can be distributed immediately via any channel following an inquiry. This service is comparable to first-class & first-aid local expertise (augmented by second & third aid provided via digital, visual, textual and audial methods available anywhere and anytime). The options offered are based on suppliers of tourism services after crosschecking and are presented in an equal-opportunity random-systematic order when more than one is available – as such, any advice is impartial.

Besides the findings, more than 60 conclusions were crystallized. As for the F.I.T. tourist (Note 77, 79), a "comprehensive solution" (Note 8, 9) is needed for the information problem (details are noted in the research). Indeed, solutions are offered that the traveler/tourist wants and needs, in order to provide an answer to his "Tourism Mission" (Millington, 2006), which enables him to utilize his economic, mental and experiential abilities.(Pollock,1995a,1998b,2001c,2001d)

This kind of systemic, organizational and technological solution combines in its transmission medium an "Emergency Room", a multidisciplinary and multifunctional human being (SDM, 2003 & 2010)(Note 23) (Paz-Tal, 2002)(Note 46) using all available technologies. This solution includes a multidisciplinary database organized via "Tourism Logic" (Appendix 3) which simultaneously answers all the tourist's needs. This modern solution is defined by the researcher as **T.S.G** – the **T**ourism **S**olutions **G**enerator (which will replace the "Search Engine").

The Maine Conclusion - A New Tourism Approach Worldwide

The changing trend of global tourism from Mass to Individual (UNWTO, 2009) (Note 6) and the growing importance of information to Individual Tourism as leverage for Tourism Economy (United Nation NY, 2005) (Wanhill, 1994) have led to the Maine conclusion to develop of T.S.G.: Paz-Tal's "Tourism Solutions Generator" as a "Tele-Communication Info-Reservation Tourist and Commercial Service" based on the T.I.P. model. (Note 9) and C6 as a unique one-stop shop & more. (Wallace,2004).

The Economic Rationale

The T.S.G. offers the D.M.O. (Destination Marketing/Management Organization) a source of revenue based on "Tourism Economy" (Note 7) (Caroline and Fiona, 2008) (Note 64).

Field tests were conducted (Note 15, 35, 40, 46, 52) and included thousands of calls and requests for information, which provided integrated, interactive solutions to complicated customer requirements. Among the users utilizing the system were customers of major organizations such as Diners Club, Visa, Isracard, a daily newspaper, the Nature Protection Association and others.

There are 5 key players in defining the market segments for T.S.G. services: 1.Telecommunication & Technology Companies, 2.Incoming & Domestic tourist & travel markets (family, youth, managers, etc.), 3. Government markets (N.T.O), 4.D.M.O, Municipalities, Regions, L.T.O, 5.Tour services and product providers (Museums, Attractions, Accommodations, etc.) (Appendix 2 & 5) (Note 76)

The T.S.G.'s new approach with modern technologies will provide the tourist with an opportunity to receive "Quality Tourism Information" (Appendix 2 & 5) regarding any destination in the world. With growing global tourism, this can be a lucrative market.

In the future it is intended for Tourphonet™ as a T.S.G. system to be a worldwide service, a telecommunication info-reservation tourism system and service provider based on global distribution of C6 - call/web unique centers in almost every country, some with 1-5 TSG.

T.S.G. Accessibility Via New Technology

The T.S.G. system provides full access (Note 40) (Paz-Tal, 2005) (Tourphonet, 1992-2006) (ITI Ltd, 1992-2006) to all necessary information both for the tourist and the destination country.

The beneficiaries of the contact are the D.M.O, tourist service providers, local P.T.T. and the hosting destination. Since the tourist has limited time at the destination, "…the easier the accessibility to relevant information, the more time will be used on better spending…" (Weiermair, 1998)

Available product information increases the purchase of those products/services. With the availability of modern technology and communication, the T.S.G.'s new accessibility mode creates new norms of touring & emphasizes tourism management for local, regional & national tourism economy.

Summary

1. Today (2014) the Internet's architectural structure cannot adapt itself to fully suit context-specific individual requirements.(Note 69,79) (Kitaro, 2012) (Note 77, 702) The Internet alone cannot provide meanings (Note 702) relevant to specific individuals or findings (A + B – C) and so on. The Internet (Apps, Smartphone, portals etc…) is a great tool to distribute content = Q.T.I, but it cannot fully provide the nature of the content, the organization of the content, the "contents" of the content, the components of the content, the amount of content components, and the relevant content, on time, on site, in any personal conditions (11 points out of 50 points).
2. Today (2014), there are no "Supporting Tourism Centers" (as "Customer Service") in any country.   T.S.G. (as the Maine conclusion) fulfills this need (Note 79) on a geographical basis. (T.S.G. may become part of the D.M.O. or standalone) "The T.S.G. system is a global system that can be easily tailor-made to numerous destinations and types of tourists…" (Note 66)
3. The research provides & identifies & develops new phenomena & aids like Anomaly, Tourism Logic, Pumping, Pazit software, Algorithm T.I.P & more, which become the practical to use worldwide.
4. The research proves that without T.S.G, a small country loses about $3.8 billion (at the period of the research) solely because T.S.G. is not in use.
5. This T.S.G approach is designed to meet the needs of all participants in the touring process: the F.I.T, the service providers, the telecommunication companies, the D.M.O-municipalities and the regional & national governments. Thus, each of these players would be interested in participating in the T.S.G. service, and the business solution (Note 8) it provides.

As the author has demonstrated above, there are several different economic models to choose from, and the investor (public, private or a combination of both) will need to consider which one is suited best to meet his short & long-term requirements.

T.S.G. as a practical way , can begin to make initial dollar profits after 9-24 months, after which it will gradually spread throughout the world to other countries.

Appendixes (6 out of 12 in the original research)

Appendix 1

Why is the Internet less accommodating to the F.I.T tourist needs than the TSG approach by the T.I.P. Model in real touring situations?

The Internet cannot provide detailed, relevant and specific information to individual F.I.Ts in real-time. The Internet's architectural structure is sectarian, and will inevitably "drown" the tourist with unnecessary, inaccurate and impersonal information. Additionally, the Internet cannot cope with complex or open-ended questions, and cannot organize its information according to Tourism Logic or Quality Tourism Information requirements. Answers provided by the Internet are not integrated to include all possible aspects of the tourist's needs (accommodation, transportation, site information, relevant points of interest, etc.) Because the Internet is "open-source", it does not add any special anecdotes or advice for the tourist in specific locations ("Remember to take a raincoat when visiting the waterfall"). (6 points out of 50)

Appendix 2

What is “Quality Tourism Information”- Q.T.I ?

Quality Tourism Information is the total amount of information needed by the Free Individual Tourist. This includes all practical information and data, suggestions, recommendations and explanations, guidance, orientation (navigation), saving reservations, alternatives, route planning, personal knowledge, integrated information from different sectors: all provided in one centralized contact suited to the F.I.T. Q.T.I contains all existing information in the field, and can change over time during the trip, adapting to the evolving needs of the customer. (6 points out of 40) (part of the Anomaly)

Appendix 3

The following terms (and more) have to be understood as new & modern terminology in order to realize the functional and business potential in the new T.S.G. approach (included in the original research):

1."Tourism information is a product in itself". (Buhalis,2008)

2. “Quality Tourism Information” (Enhanced by the researcher)

3. Information is a "key factor" for F.I.T & for the Tourism Economy.(Wahab,1976)

4. “Ongoing-Tailor-Made” new methodology.(Paz-Tal,2005)

5."The Anomaly of tourism information and the use of it ".(Note 68,79)

6. C6 -An unique-inform supermarket. Call, Contact, Content, Context, Conn.., Center. (Pollock,2001)(Paz-Tal ,2013)(Note 68)

7. Seven foundational principles for the tourist and the linkage and relations of each one (creating the right balance of them for the F.I.T.):

1. Time
2. Geographical space
3. Experience
4. Finance
5. Patience
6. Risk
7. Information

8."Reengineering tourism information systems and their use."(Buhalis,2009)(Note 19)

9."Tourism logic" containing more than 60 elements.(Paz-Tal,2013)(Note 68)

10."Total tourism information solution"

11."Here & Now" tourism situation & planning.

12.“Human factors”, "Human materials", "Tourism Human Engineering".(Note 68)

13.Changes in the tourism "Game Rules".

14.Tourism information multiplication factors.

15.Mobile usability, relevant information - the main factor in tourism.

16.Tourism economy

17.G.G.T.I.-based tourism information, showing data on "Tourism Logic"(Note 68)

18.T.I.P-Tourism Information Planning Model & Algorithm.(Note 68)

Partial: 18 points out of 47 points & more (part of the Anomaly).

Appendix 4

The human elements (conditions) affecting the tourist before, during and after touring situations which the Internet and related technologies are currently incapable of dealing with:

Dilemmas in decision-making, expectations of specific destinations, disorganized attempts to gather information, orientation (navigation), skepticism, uncertainty and anxiety, budget, patience and fatigue, frustration due to overexposure to irrelevant information. 14 factors out of more than 100. (Part of the Anomaly)

Appendix 5

The categories and diversity of tourism information provided by the T.S.G. in one contact: Tourist sites and attractions, restaurants, animal farms, zoos, spice farms, agricultural tours, bicycle renting, trails motorcycles, scooters, pubs, bars, clubs, music coffee shops, kiosks blooming flowers, nature trails, spas, workout centers, sport clubs, rooms to let, concerts, quires, musicals, magicians, clowns, singers, outdoor activity centers, cultural events, festivals, happenings, street performers, B&B, motels, hotels, ranches, camping sites, renting tents, caravan rentals & parks, apartment, suites, gas stations, sailing, beaches, camping supplies, field schools, nature sites, boats, canoes, sailing kayak rentals, barges, canal trips, eco-tourism, bird-watching centers, hiking trips, museums
(35 out of 528 types of family tourism products or services [part of the Anomaly])

Appendix 6

ANANAS is an all-inclusive “Travel Tool box” (T.T.B) The “T.T.B” provides the rules for do’s and do not’s within the travel / tourism culture and required skills. It deals with ALL aspects of travel such as booking, health insurance, medication on the road and onboard, international credit and debit cards, Consular services, Visas, Search and rescue, and points of interest in the tourism field (know how to traveling)

The T.T.B is delivered in 6 parts, 12 touring areas, 33 topics, and over 80 tourism subject skills, altogether 144 chapters encompassing over 1500 A4 pages with more than 5000 tips. (Part of the Anomaly)

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Tourism **S**olutions **G**enerator– **TSG** Developed by **Dr. Gershon Paz-Tal** Belong to V 5 - 31518/13

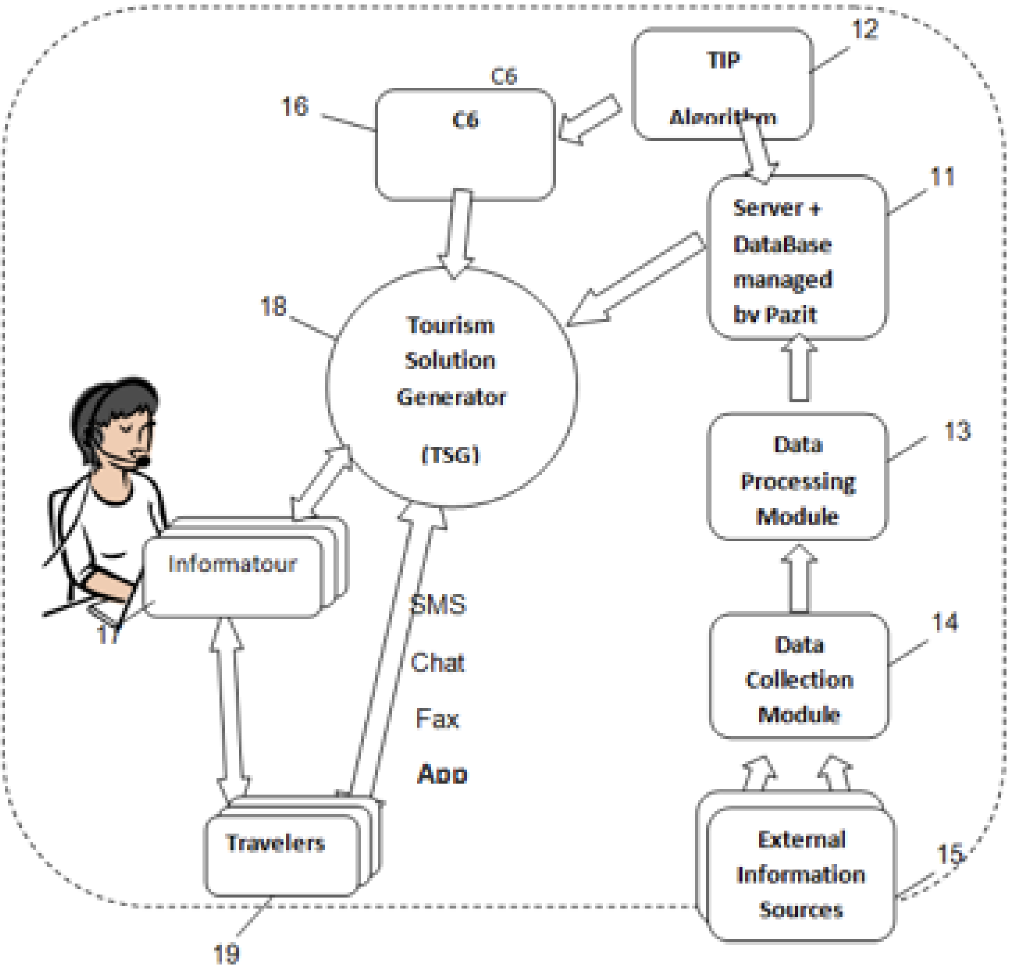
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Fig. 1

FACTORS AFFECTING TO REVISIT OF THAIS' TOURISTS WITH LOGISTIC REGRESSION: A CASE STUDY OF HUA-HIN IN PRACHUAP KHIRIKHAN PROVINCE, THAILAND

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ABSTRACT

Tourism has been becoming the major sources of industries and incomes because of the associated links of the World's economy. The revisiting of Tourists is regarded as the key factors to the successful Tourism Industry. Thus the significant of the tourism research in relation to marketing field is one of the strategies to enlarge the numbers of tourists in Hua-Hin, Prachub khirikhan Province in Thailand where the natural tourist destinations have been well-known for Thai and foreign tourists, particularly beautiful beaches and other attractions nearby. The research aims to study factors of the revisiting of Thai Tourists. The study selected the simple random sampling method with 385 tourists by questionnaires. The analysis of the data used logistic regression to identify the significant factors of the revisiting. The study indicated that the lengths of stay and service quality by 75.3% of accurately statistic logistic results were the significant factors towards the marketing strategic plans for stimulating Thai Tourists to revisit Hua-Hin and expand the numbers of visitors.

Keywords: Tourism industry, Revisit, Logistic regression

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the largest industries because it relates to the world economy as the major sources of incomes for communities and countries. In the past, the goal of marketing is to create as many new customers as possible but the finding new customers will be insufficient at the present. The enterprises should also focus on loyalty marketing or retention marketing (Shoemaker & Lewis, 1999). Many of tourism marketing researches have concentrated on repeat visitation as an antecedent of destination loyalty or the subjects of factors affecting repeated visitations and destination loyalty which is vital for tourism businesses from the economic perspective (Ahmad Puad Mat Som et al., 2012). For example, Hui, T.K. et al.(2007) assessed the satisfaction, recommendation and revisiting Singapore of different tourist groups Europe, Asia, Oceania and North America who departed from Singapore Changi International Airport. In addition, Haque & Khan (2013) explored factors influencing of tourist loyalty in case study on tourist destinations in Malaysia for making strategic marketing plans to encourage tourists to visit in Malaysia. And Suriya (2005) studied factors affecting revisit to Lampang province, Thailand as well. With many destinations relying on repeat business as a consequence revisiting intention has become an important research topic (Assaker et al., 2010). Particularly, adopting the repeated visitations was considered in the marketing competitions of attractions (Ahmad et al., 2012) because this increases the numbers of tourist visitors, retention and provoke into tourists but revisiting be measured in a temporal approach for more meaningful findings. (Mohammad &Ahmad, 2011)

Hua-Hin district in Prachuap Khirikhan province has been becoming one of the most popular tourist destinations in Thailand. The varieties of attractions including natural resources interest local and international tourists to visit Hua-Hin and raise the numbers of visitors every year for instance the total of tourists raised up 1,931,581 in 2011 and up to 2,603,308 in 2012. The trend is likely to increase every year (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2012). These entice the business owners to invest and build more the attractions nearby Hua-Hin. Consequently, the varieties of places enable the tourists more choices to visit without the limitations of only visiting beaches. Therefore, based on a literature review above attract the researcher to identify the key factors that affect repeated Thais' visitor Hua-Hin, Phachuap Khirikhan and analyze the data with the logistic regression.

The paper is structured by the briefly review of the factors employed with repeated visitation and the research methodology used in this study. Subsequently, it followed by the results of the data analysis through descriptive statistics and a logistic regression indicating the significant predictors and the conclusion the study results.

Factors affecting to revisit of tourists

The five associated factors affecting to revisit of the tourists in this research including lengths of stay, destination image, service quality, novelty seeking and distance to destination.

Lengths of stay is the categorical variable about travel characteristics which are many researcher using in the questionnaires. Ahmad et al. (2012) and Nakornthab & Chancharat (2013) investigated determinants which influence to the lengths of stay's visit in Chiangkhan, Thailand.

Destination image is built to entice the tourists and expand the successful opportunity of the business (Graham, 2004) because the destination image influences to the decision making of the tourists (Coshall, 2000; O'Leary and Deegan, 2005 cited in Haque & Khan, 2013) and were the most important destination attributes and travel motives for repeat visitors to Sabah (Ahmad Puad Mat Som et al., 2012). Moreover, (Guy et al., 2010) showed a positive image of the destination enhances future intentions to return by Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) methodology.

Service quality is used to evaluate the expectation and the actual services of the customers (Parasuraman et al. 1985 cited in Haque &Khan, 2013). The gentle and compassionated service business can be brought the numbers of customers and incomes. If any attraction can reach the customers' expectations, the increase the numbers of tourists can be possible (Kamndampully and Duddy, 2001 cited in Haque & Khan, 2013). And the results from Ivyanno & Nila (2012) revealed that service quality has a positive influence on future behavioural intentions.

In tourism, the one of major antecedents of revisit intention is novelty seeking (Jang & Feng, 2007 cited in Ahmad et al., 2012). Novelty seeking and distance to destination become the powerful factors that are found to be affected to revisit of the tourists (Haque & Khan, 2013 and Jang & Feng, 2007). Distance from destination is suggested to be a useful antecedent to support the theoretical model especially novelty seeking seems to be more beneficial on revisit intension. (Badarneh & Ahmad, 2011) In tourism, novelty seeking is also investigated as an enhancer for tourist's satisfaction (Crotts, 1993 cited in Ahmad et al., 2012).

According to the study, the researcher allocated the Independent variables and Dependent variable which followed by the theory of the research as collected data and data analysis by using logistic regression.

Table 1 Variable and Characteristics

Variables		Characteristics
Independent variables	Lengths of stay	0 = 1 day , 1 = more than 1 day
	Destination image	1 = strongly disagree , 2 = disagree , 3 = Neither agree nor disagree , 4 = agree , 5 = strongly agree
	Novelty Seeking	1 = strongly disagree , 2 = disagree , 3 = Neither agree nor disagree , 4 = agree , 5 = strongly agree
	Service quality	1 = strongly disagree , 2 = disagree , 3 = Neither agree nor disagree , 4 = agree , 5 = strongly agree
	Distance to destination	1 = strongly disagree , 2 = disagree , 3 = Neither agree nor disagree , 4 = agree , 5 = strongly agree
Dependent variable	Repeated visitation	0 = non repeated visitation, 1 = Repeated visitation

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Collecting data

This study collected the data by questionnaires from 385 Thai tourists who visited Hua-Hin, Phachuap Khirikhan Province, Thailand with the simple random sampling method. The attribution items were assessed, using a 5-point rating scale from 5= strongly agree to 1= strongly disagree. The reliability was at 72.24% which was divided into two parts: general information of the respondents and the information about revisiting. Then the data was analyzed by using logistic regression technique from the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Logistic regression

The analysis and forecast of the results of the variables were separated into two parts (dichotomous outcome; failure and success). The difference between logistic regression and linear regression is that the outcome variable in logistic regression is dichotomous (Hosmer & Lemeshow, 2000). The logistic regression is an effective technique that is used to model the probability of success and adapt with different fields of studies such as tourism, social science and medical science. This technique uses to seek the relationship between dependent variable which involves with two sets of data (Y = 1 means events of the interest, Y= 0 means ordinary events) with X (independent variables) can be qualitative or categorical variables to predict the opportunity of the events of the interest (Y=1)

From $\ln[P/1\text{-}P] = B_0+B_1X_1+...+B_PX_P$

$$[P/1\text{-}P] = e^{B0+B1X1+...+BPXP}$$

by $P = [\, e^{B0+B1X1+...+BPXP} / 1+ e^{B0+B1X1+...+BPXP}]$

and Y is binary and represents the event of interest coded as 0/1 for failure/success;

P is the proportion of successes;

1-P is the proportion of failure;

[P/1-P] is called the Odds Ratio which is used to compare the relative odds of the occurrence of the outcome of interest (e.g. repeated visitation or non repeated visitation) if OR=1 Exposure does not affect odds of outcome, OR>1 Exposure associates with higher odds of outcome and OR<1 Exposure associates with lower odds of outcome;

Xs's are the independent variables;

B_0 and B_i are the Y-intercept and slope; i=1, 2... P

RESEARCH Findings

General information and visiting details of respondents

Table 2 Profiles of respondents

Variables	Descriptions	Percentage
Gender	Male	38.70
	Female	61.30
Age	Below 25	21.29
	25-35	32.21
	Over 35	46.50
Experience of visiting Hua-Hin	Never visit	42.34
	Ever visited	57.66
Lengths of stay	1 day	46.23
	More than 1 day	53.77
Revisit intention	Yes	52.73
	Recommend to other people	47.01
	No	0.26

Table 2 indicated that the majority of respondents were female (61.30%), over 35 years of age (46.50%), Ever visited to Hua-Hin (57.66%), Lengths of stay more than 1 day (53.77%), and Revisit intention (52.73%)

Logistic regression

Table 3 Logistic regression of revisiting of Thais' tourist in Hua-Hin, Thailand with the Enter selection method

Variables	Coefficient	Standarderror	Wald test	Significance	Odd ratio
Lengths of stay	2.115	0.241	77.117	0.000*	8.293
Destination image	-0.207	0.194	1.14	0.286	0.813
Novelty seeking	-0.294	0.216	1.849	0.174	0.745
Service quality	0.467	0.177	6.946	0.008*	1.595
Distanceto destination	-0.025	0.173	0.021	0.884	0.975
Constant	-2.534	1.031	6.04	0.014*	0.079

*****Significant level at 0.05

The results of the logistic regression analysis from Table 3 show Lengths of stay and Service quality were statistically significant (significance < 0.05). The specific logistic regression model fitted to the data was

ln[Revisit/Non-revisit] = -2.534+2.115Lengths of stay+0.467Service quality

This implies that revisiting of Thai tourists in Hua-Hin, Thailand was related to the two independent variables, Lengths of stay and Service quality.

The exponential values of the coefficients are termed “odds ratios”. Therefore, the odds ratio for Lengths of stay was 8.293 indicating that the repeated visitation of Thais’ tourist in Hua-Hin are increased by a factor of 8.293 if the visitor stays more than 1 days compared to 1 day adjusting for the effects of the other independent variable in the model.

The predictor (Service quality) recorded an odds ratio of 1.595. Thus, the odds of the repeated visitation compared with the non repeated visitation increased by a factor of 1.595 for a unit increasing in Quality of service adjusting for the effects of the other independent variable in the model.

If the coefficient of variable was considered, the factors affected the repeating visitation of Thais’ tourist consisted of Lengths of stay and Service quality (positive coefficient and odds ratio > 1). Destination image, Novelty seeking and Distance to destination were predictors which involved with non repeating visitation (negative coefficient and odds ratio < 1).

Table4 Hosmer and Lemeshow goodness of fit statistic with Enter selection method

Chi-square	df	Significance
13.200	8	0.105*

*****Significant level at 0.05

Table 4 displays Hosmer and Lemeshow goodness of fit statistics and Significance equalled 13.200 and 0.105 (Significance > 0.05), respectively. Therefore, the model was exactly correct and fitted with the data.

Table5 Classification Table with the Enter selection method

Observed		Predicted		
		Visitation		Percentage Correct
		Non repeated visitation	Repeated visitation	
Visitation	Non repeated visitation	118	45	72.20
	Repeated visitation	55	167	75.30
	Overall Percentage			74.00

Table 5 reveals the percentage correct of predicting observed from the values with logistic model which corrected by 72.20% and 75.30% with classification cut point 0.5 in group of non repeated visitation and repeated visitation Thais' tourist, respectively. It correctly classified 74.00% of the cases indicating a good fit.

Table 6 Logistic regression of revisiting of Thais' tourist in Hua-Hin, Thailand with Backward (Wald) selection method

Variables	Coefficient	Standarderror	Wald test	Significance	Odd ratio
Lengths of stay	2.126	0.240	78.166	0.000*	8.379
Novelty seeking	-0.412	0.188	4.794	0.029*	0.663
Service quality	0.473	0.172	7.532	0.006*	1.605
Constant	-3.122	0.780	16.024	0.000*	0.044

*Significant level at 0.05

The results of the logistic regression analysis from Table 6 show the Lengths of stay, Novelty seeking and Service quality were statistically significant (significance < 0.05). The specific logistic regression model fitted to the data was

ln[Revisit/Non-revisit] = -3.122+2.126Lengths of stay-0.412Novelty seeking

+0.473Service quality

This implies that revisiting of Thai tourists in Hua-Hin, Thailand was related to the three independent variables, Lengths of stay Novelty seeking and Service quality.

The exponential values of the coefficients or odds ratio for Lengths of stay was 8.379 (more than 1) indicating that the revisiting of Thais' tourists in Hua-Hin would be increased by a factor of 8.293 if the visitor stayed more than 1 day compared to 1 day adjusting for the effects of the other independent variable in the model.

Table7 Hosmer and Lemeshow goodness of fit statistic with Backward (Wald) selection method

Chi-square	df	Significance
14.217	8	0.076*

*Significant level at 0.05

The odds ratio for Novelty seeking was 0.663 (less than 1) indicating that the revisiting of Thais' tourists in Hua-Hin were increased by a factor of 0.663 for a unit increase in Novelty seeking adjusting for the effects of the other independent variable in the model. In other words, Novelty seeking was influential factor on non repeated visitation over repeated visitation of Thais' tourists.

The predictor (Service quality) recorded an odds ratio of 1.595 (more than 1). Thus, the odds of revisiting compared to non-revisiting increased by a factor of 1.595 for a unit increase in Quality of service adjusting for the effects of the other independent variables in the model.

Table 7 displays Hosmer and Lemeshow goodness of fit statistics and Significance equalled to 14.217 and 0.076 (Significance > 0.05), respectively. Therefore, the model was exactly correct and fitted with the data.

Table8 Classification Table with Backward (Wald) selection method

Observed		Predicted		
		Visitation		Percentage Correct
		Non repeated visitation	Repeated visitation	
Visitation	**Non repeated visitation**	118	45	72.40
	Repeated visitation	54	168	75.70
	Overall Percentage			74.30

Table 8 reveals percentage correct of predicting observed values with logistic model which corrected by 72.40% and 75.70% with classification cut point 0.5 in groups of non-revisiting and revisiting Thais' tourists, respectively. It correctly classified 74.30% of the cases indicating a good fit.

5 Conclusion

A binary logistic regression analysis was performed to predict revisiting of Thai tourists in

Hua-Hin Phachuap Khirikhan Province, Thailand from collected predictors such as the lengths of

stay, destination image, novelty seeking, service quality and distance to destination. The specific target Thai tourists' behavior of interest was repeated visitation.

Two predictor variables included in the model by Enter selection method were: a) lengths of stay and b) service quality. For example, the odds of repeated visitation was increased by the factor of 8.293 if Thai tourists stay more than 1 day compared to 1 day and the odds of revisiting compared to non-revisiting would be increased by the factor of 1.595 for a unit increase in Quality of service, controlling for other variables in the model. The logistic model correctly classified 74.00% of the cases.

Three predictor variables included in the model by Backward (Wald) selection method were: a) lengths of stay, b) novelty seeking and c) service quality. For example, the odds of repeated visitation were increased by the factor of 8.379 if Thai tourists stay more than 1 day compared to 1 day, the odds of revisiting compared to non-revisiting would be increased by a factor of 0.663 and 1.605 for a unit increase in novelty seeking (In other words, Novelty seeking was influential factor on non repeated visitation over repeated visitation of Thais' tourists) and quality of service controlling for other variables in the model. The logistic model correctly classified 74.30% of the cases.

As a result, the essential factors affected to repeated visitation of Thai tourists in Hua-Hin, Phachuap Khirikhan Province, Thailand by logistic regression involved with lengths of stay, novelty seeking and service quality. The key finding was that the selected variables are important correlates of repeated visitation of Thais' tourists in Hua-Hin Phachuap Khirikhan Province, Thailand. Notwithstanding, all factors were the strategic marketing plans to stimulate the numbers of the tourists and revisiting numerous times which could increase the loyalty of the destination by revealing empirical results that repeated the intention of Thais' tourists to revisit as well as recommending willingly Hua-Hin to the other people. As a result, to preserve loyal customers that is a crucial contributor to the profitability of business as Hsu et al. (2008) discussed. In addition, repeat visitor should be measured in short term for greater meaningful findings as Badarneh & Mat Som (2011) discussed.

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GIVE ME THE LOWEST PRICE! AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF SPECIAL OFFERS IN THE GERMAN HOTEL MARKET

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ABSTRACT

Since its beginning in 2011, special offers by HRS Deals earned growing interest in the German hotel market. However, the nature of these offerings is still underresearched. On the one hand, hotel managers are enabled to generate better capacity utilization rates – especially in periods of low demand – and to position their hotel in an innovative and guest friendly manner. On the other hand, these special offers are seen to accelerate the price decline in the market and to potentially harm a hotel's reputation.

Therefore, we carefully have collected data on 107 hotels that participated in a HRS Deal between August 2013 and January 2014. Our efforts in collecting this data were threefold. First, we operationalized variables that were directly available from the respective special offer. Second, we complemented this data with information gathered via an intense Internet inquiry. Third, we mystery called the hotels for collecting some more information on their pricing strategy and offer satisfaction.

First results show that 64 hotels are located in a major city (<100k inhabitants), whereby 46 belong to a metropolis (<500k inhabitants). Only 51 hotels belong to the hotel chain industry. Surprisingly, the average classification was quite high (M=3.7 stars; SD=0.5). The resulting special offer price was 51€ (SD=15€; min=29€; max=129€) with an average discount of 52% (SD=3%; max=62%). On average, 3.9 additional benefits – such as Internet access, parking space, table water, or wellness entrance – were included (SD=1.8; max=9). Our additional Internet inquiry resulted in an average capacity of 121 rooms (SD=71; min=25; max=360) with an average size of 24.5m² (SD=8.1m²; min=10m²; max=65m²). Interestingly, the average distance from the hotel to the main station was quite low (M=14km; SD=16.5km; max=78km). Finally, our investigation via telephone indicates that 35 hotels also propose a special offer after the official booking deadline when mentioning the HRS Deal (M=13%; SD=15%; max=51%). While the perceived satisfaction of participating hotels was 5.8 (SD=2.3; scale from 1 [low] to 10 [high]), 30 hotels indicated to proceed in offering such special offers, whereby only five hotels clearly denied. This indicates a high general satisfaction with such special offers.

Key Words: Special Offer, HRS Deals, Hotel Market, Empirical Analysis

1 INTRODUCTION

During the last few years special offers typically distributed via relatively new online channels earned growing interest by hotel managers and customers. However, scholars missed the chance to evaluate the nature of these offers in a systematic way. Therefore, this paper focuses on special offers in the German hotel market. Although other suppliers such as the international corporation TravelBird or the German speaking portal ab-in-den-urlaub-deals.de are present, this paper focuses on special offers by HRS (Hotel Reservation Service) covering more than 250 000 hotels worldwide and having about 80 million users per year (HRS, 2014a). As such HRS in general and HRS Deals in particular represent the most valuable example for the German hotel market.

Figure 1 shows a typical example of such a HRS Deal (HRS, 2014b). The website offers additional information about the respective hotel, including some photos, the relevant location and the evaluation of former guests. The subsequent paragraph provides some more information about the observable phenomenon of these special offers in the German hotel market.

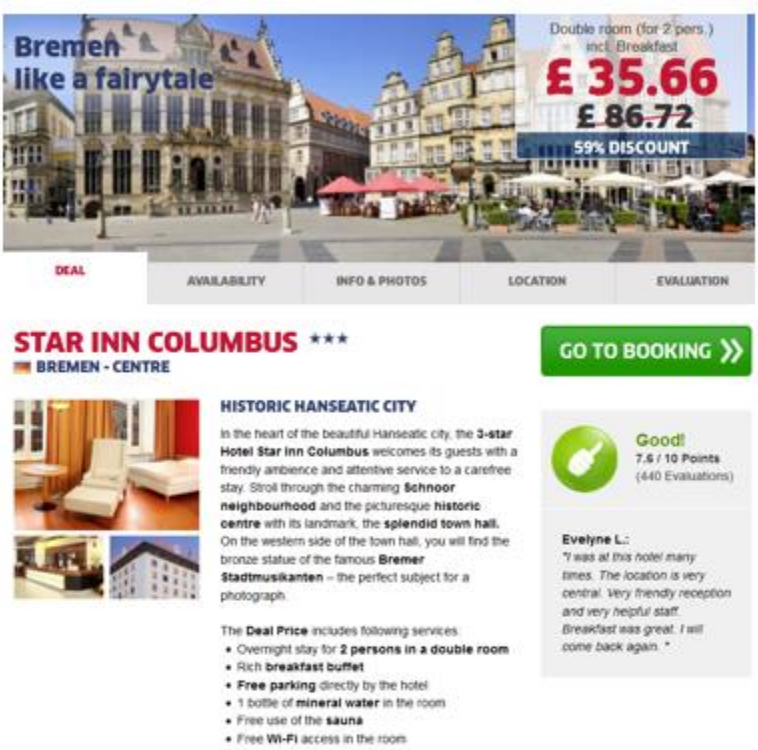

Figure 1: Example of a HRS Deal

2 Characterization of the phenomenon in practice

HRS guarantees three specific criteria (HRS, 2014c). First, every offer involves a top-hotel with at least 50% discount. Second, it compromises hotels with three to five stars. Third, chosen hotels are characterized by a high guest valuation. Moreover, each offer runs for five days, whereby customers have the possibility to be informed via a daily e-mail newsletter. Contrary to other special offers based on a voucher system, customers directly book a certain date as current room availabilities are visible on the Internet site of HRS Deals.

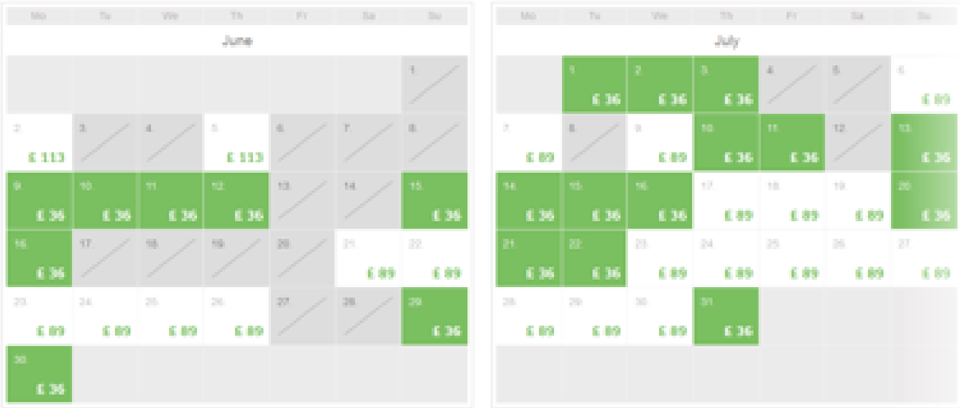

Figure 2: Example of a HRS Deal

Figure 2 shows an overview of room availabilities in relation to the introducing example above (HRS, 2014b). As each special offer faces a limited contingent of rooms, this illustration shows that – depending on the targeted arrival and departure – room prices vary between the lowest price of £ 36 and the regular price. Moreover, under some circumstance the available rate exceeds this value resulting in a room price of £ 113. However, during some periods of time all capacities are occupied. Finally, it is to highlight that customers pay when departing from the hotel. Therefore, the required credit card is only necessary for guaranteeing the room (HRS, 2014c).

3 Procedure of Analyzing the Special Offers

We carefully collected data on 107 hotels that participated in a HRS Deal between August 2013 and January 2014. Our efforts in collecting this data were threefold. First, we operationalized variables that were directly available from the respective special offer. Second, we complemented this data with information gathered via an intense Internet inquiry. Third, we called the hotels for collecting some more information on their pricing strategy and offer satisfaction.

3.1 Data Taken from the Special Offer

First of all, we were interested in the most important and obvious data point: the discount offered by the respective HRS Deal. As such, we collected the resulting discount score in two ways: First, as an absolute number indicating the percentage of that discount. Second, as a dummy variable indicating if the discount is higher than the minimum of 50% required from HRS (1 if the discount was higher than 50%; 0 otherwise).

Moreover, we also recorded the absolute room price to control for effects of premium hotels. In a similar vein, we captured the number of stars from three to five, whereby superior hotels got .5 stars. As an example, a four star superior hotel was included with 4.5 points in that category.

In addition, as every special offer clearly indicates the hotel's name, it was possible to generate another dummy variable accounting for the character of chain hotels. This variable is 1 if the hotel belongs to a hotel chain and 0 otherwise.

Finally, we counted the number of additional benefits provided by the respective special offer such as free parking, free usage of Internet access or spa, a bottle of water, or free fruits at arrival. As breakfast was included in every special offer, we only counted additional benefits here. Therefore, our introducing example would have earned four points.

Another two dummy variables were introduced to account for the location of the hotels. One represents the location within a major city with more than 100 000 inhabitants, the other one for a location within a metropolitan area with more than 500 000 inhabitants.

3.2 Data based on Internet Inquiry

In addition to the data directly observable in the special deals, we employed an intensive Internet inquiry to find some more detailed information about the hotel. First of all, we looked for the average room size as an indicator of quality. Hereby, we careful looked at accordance of categories. Hence, if the special offer included a junior suite, we also looked for the average size of this junior suite at the website. We were able to gather this information from 64 hotels.

Similarly, we looked for the total number of rooms in the hotels accounting for their capacities. 88 hotels out of our data set offer this information on their Internet site.

To account for the geographic distribution along Germany, we took into consideration the postal code of each hotel. As these codes follow a specific logic from north to south and from east to west, this is a good indicator of geography.

Finally, we were interested in some more detailed information concerning the specific geographic situation. Taken the example above, there is a huge difference if the hotel is located in the centre of Bremen or in the suburbs. Neither the postal code nor our dummy variables concerning being part of a major city or a metropolis nor any other information from the special offer is able to account for this circumstance. Hence, we needed to construct a respective measurement. Therefore, we calculated the distance by car from the hotel to the main station of the respective city. To ensure highest quality data, we always followed the same request: We typed in the hotel's address and calculated the route to the main train station of the respective city. The first result from Google's Maps in kilometres were taken to deny any errors due to the usage of different motorways.

Similarly, some hotel's unique selling proposition is not city-centred. Instead, these hotels focus on other points of interest (POI) such as airports or recreation areas. Therefore, we calculated the distance towards these specific POIs in a similar way. We were able to identify 82 POIs.

3.3 Data Taken from Mystery Calls

To really understand a hotel manager's intention behind participating in such a special offer, we called the hotels. However, as German managers are typically very conservative in communicating business-related details to universities for research reasons, we followed another concept: Mystery calls. For collecting unbiased and true information we designed a unique way to gather this information.

We called each hotel by telling them that we, unfortunately, missed the five day deadline of the deal and kindly asked for the same or another discount. As an additional option, we asked if the hotel is planning a similar special offer for the future months as we indicated to be very flexible concerning the date of our stay. During the resulting conversation about the hotel and such special offers in general, we tried to find out about the general satisfaction of the respective employee with these deals. Therefore, we recorded the perceived satisfaction score on a scale from 1 [low] to 10 [high], evaluated from the interviewer.

3.4 Descriptive Analysis and Correlations

Table 1 summarizes our variables concerning their minimum and maximum value, their mean and standard error, their standard deviation, and their skewness and kurtosis including the respective standard errors.

Table 1: Descriptive Analysis of Data

	Min	Max	M	SE	SD	SK	SE	K	SE
Dependent Variables									
(1) Discount	50	62	51,8	0,3	2,8	2,0	0,2	3,7	0,5
(2) Discount above 50%	0	1	0,5	0,0	0,5	-0,2	0,2	-2,0	0,5
Independent Variables									
(3) Offering Price	29	129	51,2	1,5	15,5	1,8	0,2	6,4	0,5
(4) Stars	3	5	3,7	0,1	0,5	-0,3	0,2	-0,8	0,5
(5) Room Size	10	65	24,6	1,0	8,2	2,3	0,3	8,9	0,6
(6) Hotel Chain Industry	0	1	0,7	0,1	0,5	-0,9	0,3	-1,2	0,6
(7) Additional Benefits	1	9	4,0	0,2	1,8	0,6	0,2	0,0	0,5
(8) Capacity	25	360	120,7	7,6	71,7	1,2	0,3	1,0	0,5
(9) Major City	0	1	0,7	0,0	0,4	-1,0	0,3	-0,9	0,5
(10) Metropolis	0	1	0,6	0,1	0,5	-0,4	0,3	-1,9	0,5
(11) Postcode	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0,0	0,2	-1,3	0,5
(12) Distance Main Station	0	78	14,0	1,7	16,6	1,7	0,2	2,7	0,5
(13) Distance POI	0	418	23,3	5,4	49,2	6,6	0,3	52,2	0,5

Notes:
Min = Minimum; Max = Maximum; M = Mean; SE = Standard Error
SD = Standard Deviation; SK = Skewness; K = Kurtosis.

First results for the interrelation of these variables can be found when looking at their correlation coefficients as illustrated in Table 2. For reasons of convenience, significant correlation coefficients are marked in bold. Interestingly, the respective discount correlates with the number of stars (positive), the belonging to a hotel chain (negative), the number of additional benefits (positive) and the dummy variables for major cities and metropolises (both negative) on a significant level. Obviously, some variables account for the same phenomenon inducing the problem of multi-collinearity in regression models.

Table 2: Correlation Coefficients

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Dependent Variables													
(1) Discount	1	**0,91****	-0,02	**0,21***	0,03	**-0,27***	**0,28****	0,01	**-0,38****	**-0,39****	0,01	0,13	0,21
(2) Discount above 50%	**0,82****	1	0,00	**0,25***	0,01	**-0,23***	**0,28****	0,01	**-0,29****	**-0,35****	0,11	0,13	0,18
Independent Variables													
(3) Offering Price	-0,02	0,00	1	**0,32****	0,23	**-0,38****	**0,24***	**-0,22***	-0,16	**-0,33****	0,04	**0,21***	0,06
(4) Stars	**0,18***	**0,24***	**0,27****	1	**0,32***	-0,05	0,18	**0,44****	**-0,21***	-0,18	-0,08	0,15	0,12
(5) Room Size	0,02	0,01	0,17	**0,26***	1	0,23	**0,27***	0,20	-0,22	-0,14	-0,21	0,08	-0,06
(6) Hotel Chain Industry	**-0,24***	-0,23	**-0,32****	-0,05	0,20	1	**-0,31****	**0,48****	**0,26***	**0,32***	0,02	-0,07	-0,20
(7) Additional Benefits	**0,22****	**0,25****	**0,18***	0,15	**0,19***	**-0,27****	1	-0,15	**-0,48****	**-0,51****	0,04	**0,22***	0,10
(8) Capacity	0,01	0,00	-0,15	**0,34****	0,14	**0,40****	-0,11	1	0,07	0,18	0,06	-0,01	-0,08
(9) Major City	**-0,34****	**-0,29****	-0,14	**-0,21***	-0,19	**0,26***	**-0,43****	0,06	1	**0,82****	-0,02	-0,07	-0,16
(10) Metropolis	**-0,35****	**-0,35****	**-0,28****	-0,17	-0,12	**0,32***	**-0,45****	0,15	**0,82****	1	-0,05	-0,13	**-0,28***
(11) Postcode	0,00	0,09	0,03	-0,06	-0,14	0,01	0,03	0,04	-0,02	-0,04	1	-0,12	0,06
(12) Distance Main Station	0,09	0,11	0,14	0,11	0,06	-0,06	**0,17***	-0,01	-0,06	-0,11	-0,08	1	**0,39****
(13) Distance POI	0,15	0,15	0,04	0,10	-0,04	-0,16	0,07	-0,06	-0,13	**-0,23***	0,03	**0,27****	1

Notes:
Below diagonal Kendall-Tau-b; above diagonal Spearman-Rho.
** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$; two-tailed.

4 Statistical Results

To illuminate the effects of each variable on the absolute discount, eleven regression models were run. Table 3 presents the results of these analyses, whereby significant coefficients are marked in bold. Again, the belonging to a hotel chain (negative), the number of additional benefits (positive) and the dummy variables for major cities and metropolises (both negative) show significant results.

Table 3: Results of Linear Regressions

	Dependent Variable: Discount (Linear Regression)										
Independent Variables											
Offering Price	-0,03 0,73										
Stars		0,08 0,43									
Room Size			-0,06 0,64								
Hotel Chain Industry				**-0,21** 0,08							
Additional Benefits					**0,24** 0,01						
Capacity						-0,06 0,58					
Major City							**-0,30** 0,00				
Metropolis								**-0,24** 0,04			
Postcode									-0,03 0,79		
Distance Main Station										0,10 0,30	
Distance POI											0,06 0,58
Statistics											
Adjusted R Square	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,03	0,05	0,00	0,08	0,04	0,00	0,00	0,00
Sig. Change in F	0,73	0,43	0,64	**0,08**	**0,01**	0,58	**0,00**	**0,04**	0,79	0,30	0,58

Notes:
The first black scores indicate the respective values for Beta; the second grey scores indicate the respective values for significance.

Following a similar procedure, Table 4 shows the results of logistic regressions on the dummy variable indicating a discount higher as 50%. Additionally to the results presented above, the number of stars (positive) and our two distance measurements (both positive) become significant.

Table 4: Results of Logistic Regressions

	Dependent Variable: Discount above 50% (Logistic Regression)										
Independent Variables											
Offering Price	0,00 0,99										
Stars		**0,97** 0,02									
Room Size			-0,03 0,34								
Hotel Chain Industry				**-1,12** 0,05							
Additional Benefits					**0,38** 0,00						
Capacity						0,00 0,76					
Major City							**-1,46** 0,01				
Metropolis								**-1,60** 0,00			
Postcode									0,00 0,20		
Distance Main Station										**0,03** 0,07	
Distance POI											**0,02** 0,10
Statistics											
Cox & Snell R-Quadrat	0,00	0,06	0,02	0,05	0,10	0,00	0,09	0,12	0,02	0,04	0,05
Nagelkerkes R-Quadrat	0,00	0,08	0,02	0,07	0,13	0,00	0,11	0,16	0,02	0,05	0,07

Notes:
The first black scores indicate the respective values for B; the second grey scores indicate the respective values for significance.
Detailed results are available upon request.

To better interpret the results of these two different regression analyses, Table 5 presents a synopsis illustrating these results in a condensed way. Therefore, the results are categorized in three parts. First, variables without significant results neither within linear nor within logistic regressions are presented. Second, robust significant variables in both analyses are shown. Third, mixed significant variables are illustrated.

Table 5: Overview of both Regression Analyses

	Synopsis of Linear and Logistic Regressions											
Non-Significant Variables												
Offering Price	-0,03	0,73	0,00	0,99								
Room Size	-0,06	0,64	-0,03	0,34								
Capacity	-0,06	0,58	0,00	0,76								
Postcode	-0,03	0,79	0,00	0,20								
Robust Significant Variables												
Hotel Chain Industry					**-0,21**	0,08	**-1,12**	0,05				
Additional Benefits					**0,24**	0,01	**0,38**	0,00				
Major City					**-0,30**	0,00	**-1,46**	0,01				
Metropolis					**-0,24**	0,04	**-1,60**	0,00				
Mixed Significant Variables												
Stars									0,08	0,43	**0,97**	0,02
Distance Main Station									0,10	0,30	**0,03**	0,07
Distance POI									0,06	0,58	**0,02**	0,10

Notes:
The first two scores represents the results of linear regressions.
The second two scores represents the results of logistic regressions.
Detailed results are available upon request.

5 Conclusions

This study was set out to broadening our understanding of special offers in two dimensions. First, we looked at antecedents, i.e., at variables that are able to explain the nature of offered discounts. Second, we regarded consequences of participating in such special offers from the perspective of hotel managers. As such, our results contribute to our understanding of the phenomenon of special offers in the German hotel market.

On the one hand, our statistical results show some solid insignificant determinants. First, the price of each offering does not affect the discount. This is somewhat surprising as one could have argued that higher prices will lead to higher discounts to attract guests.

Second, the average room size does not affect the discount. Therefore, a suspicion that smaller rooms will lead to higher discounts does not find support. The same holds true for the overall capacities as larger hotels could be seen as potential suppliers of higher discounts. Finally, we did not find any effect on geographic distribution along Germany.

More interesting, the analyses found some important significant results. First, belonging to a hotel chain is an important determinant on special offers' discounts in two dimensions. Although hotel chains participate in these offers (51 offers), they typically do not offer more than 50% discount, i.e., the minimum required discount to benefit from HRS deals. Especially the result of the logistic regression shows that hotel chains prevent higher discounts. Second, the number of additional benefits positively influences the discount. One explanation here could be that hotels with lower attractiveness need to offer more benefits and a high discount together in order to attract more guests. Third, both belonging to a city or a metropolitan area decreases the respective discount. As hotels in such an area typically show a higher average bed occupancy rate, this result is in accordance with what we have expected.

Finally, our analyses also offer some mixed significant results. While the number of stars and our distance measurements do not affect the absolute discount, there is an effect concerning our dummy variable. As such, the higher the number of stars, the higher the probability of a discount higher than 50%. The same holds true for our two distance measurements: The higher the distance to the main station or another point of interest, the higher the probability of a discount higher than 50%.

On the other hand, our mystery calls indicated that 35 hotels also propose a special offer after the official booking deadline when mentioning the expired HRS Deal (M=13%; SD=15%; max=51%). While the perceived satisfaction of participating hotels was 5.8 (SD=2.3), 30 hotels indicated to proceed in offering such special offers, whereby only five hotels clearly denied. This indicates a high general satisfaction with such special offers.

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HRS (2014b), This is how HRS Deals works, taken from http://www.hrs.com/deals/how-to/?l=en on 29th of May 2014.

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LOCAL GASTRONOMY AND TOURIST BEHAVIOR: RESEARCH ON DOMESTIC TOURISM IN GREECE

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ABSTRACT

The Greek culinary history spans over 4,000 years and is based on quality and fresh products produced in the country and largely characterize the components of the Mediterranean Diet. Greek food beyond taste has a distinct philosophy. The gathering around the table in any dining area is a social aggregation. The gastronomy is part of the tourism product of a region and can enrich and enhance the travel experience of tourists and create a memory that endures.

This paper explores specific issues to relating the behavior of Greek tourists towards gastronomy during their stay in tourist destinations in Greece. The results of primary research showed that Greek tourists during their trips often purchase local products, taste local flavors and are interested in learning recipes of the local cuisine when they visit a destination. Tourists totally agree that tasting food and drinks in a destination helps to create a memory that endures and that they deliberately dine in restaurants offering local cuisine, but do not usually look for information about gastronomy in the travel destination before travelling.

Tourists agree that local cuisine is an important part of the culture of the region and that the taste experience is important to the overall experience of the journey. According to the gastronomic services in tourism destinations, tourists are interested mainly in traditional restaurants, the local products, the local cuisine, but at the same time a significant percentage of tourists order in restaurants flavors and dishes that are familiar to them. The fact that female travelers were more positive towards local gastronomy than males constitutes an interesting approach.

Differentiation of Greek tourism products through traditional and creative cuisine can create a quality gourmet product portfolio. Appropriate promotion and networks development can lead to overall satisfaction of tourists to travel and can become an incentive of tourist attraction. Therefore an appropriate network and promotion program must be developed.

Key words: Local Gastronomy, Food, Tourism, Behavior, Greece

1. INTRODUCTION

Greek culinary history spans over 4,000 years and is based on quality and fresh products produced in the country and largely characterize the components of the Mediterranean Diet. Greek food beyond taste has a distinct philosophy. The gathering around the table in any dining area is a social aggregation. In ancient Greece, the Athenians believed that the time of dining is an occasion to take food for the spirit as well as the body. Dinning is an opportunity for a social event, for communication between members at the table and meals usually last some time.

In recent years, food Tourism has grown considerably and has become one of the most dynamic and creative segments of tourism. Both destinations and tourism companies are aware of the importance of gastronomy in order to diversify tourism and stimulate local, regional and national economic development (UNWTO, 2012).

The study of food, eating, and culinary institutions became a burgeoning subfield of sociological and anthropological research in recent years (Erik Cohen & Nir Avieli, 2004). In the tourism world there are influential destinations whose brand image is connected, with varying levels of intensity, to gastronomic values. By way of example, it is possible to give a non-exhaustive list that includes, among others, Spain, France, Italy, Greece, Belgium, Portugal, USA, Brazil, Peru, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa, Australia, Chile, Malaysia, Japan, Indonesia, Bali, China or Singapure. It is significant, for example, that the Mediterranean diet of Spain, Greece, Italy and Morocco was included in UNESCO's list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in November 2010. Javier Blanco Herranz 2012.

Local food can have an important role to play in sustainable tourism as a result of its ability to satisfy a complex range of demands and especially for tourists' demands for iconic products that appear to say something about a region's place and culture (Sims, 2010). Based on these perspectives it can be argued that local and regional food is a feature that can add value to a destination (Telfer & Wall, 1996; Handszuh, 2000), and furthermore may contribute to the sustainable competitiveness of a destination (Crouch&Ritchie, 1999). From the preceding perspectives it is apparent that food tourism has considerable potential to enhance visitor experiences and to contribute to the branding and competitive marketing of destinations. It is, however, important to insure that the authentic cuisine of a region and marketable local and regional foods are approached with a delicate balance. Gerrie E. Du Rand, Ernie Heath & Nic Alberts (2003).

The present paper will help to identify the characteristics and behavior of domestic tourists in Greece towards local gastronomy, in the tourist destination during their trip.

2. GASTRONOMY AND TOURISM

Gastronomy is the art of selecting, preparing, serving and enjoying tasty food. Through the centuries gastronomy proved to have a greater cultural influence compared to Linguistics or other effects. Today the world can be divided into specific culinary regions, dominated by separate Cuisines using common cooking practices. In Europe there are two different food cultures, the "south" rich in local dishes and the "north" which is more functional and seeks to meet the basic need for food using recognized brands. However, the "northern" consumers are becoming increasingly receptive to quality local products. (Parrott et al. 2002).

Regarding the demand for gastronomy, figures and indications show an upward trend. According to related research (Mintel, 2009), in recent years an increasing number of tourists are becoming increasingly involved with gastronomy on their trips. Gastronomy attracts tourists with a special interest in food. These are known as Gastro-tourist (Robinson et al. 2011). Gastronomy as a tourist product includes a mixture of products, services and activities that highlight the typical products and dishes of a place, the talent and creativity of those who prepare and the uniqueness and tradition of the place, so they offer visitors a comprehensive and memorable travel -culinary experience. Offering tasty cuisine composes enjoyable experience, part of the cultural identity of a place and thus an important source of satisfaction for any tourist, whether or not he has any special interest in gastronomy.

The relationship between gastronomy and tourism is quite complex, since food is included in the travel experience in different ways. Gastronomy helps in upgrading the tourist product and travel experience. Gastronomy enhances tourist satisfaction in their chosen destination even though it was not exclusive to their travel motivation (SETE, 2009). The production of well-known local products can be an incentive in attracting tourists, creating pleasant associations between the product and the place (Parrott et al. 2002). The consumption of local products which are considered as 'authentic' and qualitative is a means of developing rural areas. The advantages of such initiatives can be the improvement of the economic and technical infrastructure, and the improvement of the characteristics of the human and social capital. The development of local products means even development of associated enterprises and thus improvement of many sectors of the local economy and while enhancing development (Lamprianidis, 2003). Consumers are interested in knowing the origin of products and the method of production, because in this way they ensure their health and safety, and the safety of their children. The shift to 'pure' products arises from nostalgia for the past which was dominated by traditional production methods (Ilbery et al. 1998).

As for the gastronomic tourism experience, it can be defined as the evaluation carried out by the tourist on a number of attributes (attractiveness of the food and environment, quality of service), after a stay in a tourist destination where the tourist engaged in an activity related to gastronomy. The tourist’s perceived value of a particular destination or establishment is therefore multidimensional (Javier Blanco Herranz, 2012). Consumer demands for foods perceived to be “traditional” and “local” can also be viewed as linked to a quest for authenticity. Debates about the meaning and validity of authenticity have played a central role in the tourism literature with Taylor claiming that “there are at least as many definitions of authenticity as there are those who write about it” (Taylor, 2001, p. 8). Taylor (2001) sees the tourist’s desire for authenticity as a result of a world where people feel they have become alienated from nature, and where everyday life is viewed as increasingly inauthentic. Thus, local food can be an asset to integrated tourism development as a result of its ability to symbolize place and culture, provide amoral “feel-good” factor associated with its consumption and enable visitors to experience a sense of connection to their destination – both during and after their visit. (Rebecca Sims, 2009) However, local food can also contribute to the experience of existential authenticity. As described by Wang (1999), existential authenticity is about identity formation and the chance to experience a more intense feeling of connection with ourselves and the world around us.

3. **Greek gastronomy portfolio**

Greek cuisine has four secrets: good quality fresh ingredients, correct use of flavorings (herbs) and spices, the famous Greek olive oil and simplicity. The climate conditions of the country favors the natural development of the cultivation of local products, keeping the aroma, the flavor, and the nutrients of the products. The most familiar elements of Greek gastronomy are the Mediterranean Diet, the Greek breakfast, the Greek Salad, but also many local traditional products.

3.1 The Greek Breakfast

The “Greek Breakfast” program is designed by the Hellenic Chamber of Hotels which has been in operation since 2010 and whose aim is to enrich the breakfast offered in Greek hotels with pure and unique Greek products as well as with traditional local dishes from every region of Greece. The aim of the “Greek Breakfast” program is to give Greek hotel guests the chance to know the gastronomic wealth of our country and taste at breakfast the innumerable Greek products and dishes which are at the heart of the Mediterranean Diet. The Mediterranean Diet is not just a modern dietary trend but is according to UNESCO the “intangible cultural heritage of mankind” (Hellenic Chamber of Hotels, 2010)

The Greek breakfast is based in simple combinations of foods, the use of more natural raw materials as much as possible and cooked lightly wholesome dishes. The common dishes served in the Greek breakfast are pancakes, Trahanas[1], Greek brioche, sheep yoghurt, local cheeses, different types of bread and other dishes depending on the geographical region. Bread and olive oil are two of the basic ingredients in the cycle of time which come from the past of our Greek land and are still to this day a part of our dietary foundation. This is the reason why wheat and olive where chosen literally and symbolically, to capture in the form of a seal, the communicative image of the program “Greek Breakfast” (h2concept, 2013).

3.2 **Mediterranean Diet**

The Mediterranean diet is a way of eating which is followed by the people of the Mediterranean countries. This diet came from the inhabitants of Crete and southern Italy in the 60s. Specifically, the Mediterranean diet includes fiber (vegetables, fruits, potatoes, legumes, bread, cereals, nuts), dairy products (cheese, yogurt) in small quantities, minimally processed foods, rare red meat, small amounts of fish and poultry, and olive oil. The objective of the Mediterranean diet is the consumption of a small quantity of saturated fats, as opposed to higher consumption of fiber, carbohydrate, and monounsaturated fatty acids in general.

The benefits of the Mediterranean diet may be the prevention of cardiovascular diseases, certain cancers and diabetes. Moreover the Mediterranean diet contributes to human longevity. Other benefits are that it contribute to eating a small amount of daily calories, stimulates the body and helps good bowel function. The Mediterranean diet combined with exercise can be a source of health and beauty (Marazioti Iina, 2008).

3.3. **The Greek country salad**

The Greek country salad is known abroad as Greek salad. The salad is a symbol of Mediterranean cuisine and products of high nutritional value. One of the key ingredients of this salad is the feta-cheese. The consumption of Greek salad can be a complete meal especially in the summer, because it contains a lot of raw vegetables, the feta cheese and the oil witch has essential fatty acids.

3.4**. Greek traditional products**

In modern international cuisine there are several traditional Greek products, which are characteristic of Greek cuisine. In 1992 according to the regulation 2081/92, the European Union first adopted the system for the protection of geographical indications and the designations of origin of agricultural products and foodstuffs and according to the regulation 2082/92 the rules on the certificates of specific character for agricultural products and foodstuffs. Many Greek product are geographical indicated, or with a designations of origin. Especially Greece has 88 products with Protected Designation of Origin which are 27 olive oils, 20 different cheeses, 23 vegetables and pulses, 10 different olive varieties, varieties of honey, the traditional avgotaraho of Mesolonghi (salted flat-head mullet fish roe), the Cretan rusks, sweet beverages such as the Naxos citron drink and the kumquat liqueur from Corfu, the "Tomataki Santorinis" (cherry-tomato of Santorini), the Kozani crocus, the tangerines and mastic from Chios (Ministry of RD&F, 2014).

4. Research field and characteristics of the participants

The purpose of the research was to study the behavior of domestic tourists in relation to gastronomy and to provide suggestions for the development of culinary tourism and tourist satisfaction. Specifically, the main research objective was to identify specific information concerning the behavior of Greek tourists interested in the local gastronomy. Another research target was the identification of the activities that involved tourists interested in local gastronomy. Additionally the possible relationship between gastronomy and travel experience was investigated.

The survey was conducted in the spring of 2013 mainly in the Athens area and gathered a total of 141 exploitable questionnaires. Requirements for the completion of the questionnaire were to be a resident of Greece, to be over 18 years old and take at least one trip per year (be active in tourism). More females (61.7%) replied to the questionnaire compared to males (38.3%). The largest age group of the sample was the age group 27-36 year olds at a rate of 46.1%. The age group 37-46 year olds represents a rate of 27.66%, while the age group of 47-56 year olds accounted for 16.31%. The age groups 18 to 26 (4.96%), 57 to 66 (4.26%) and finally the age group of over 67 (0.71%) gathered smaller percentages.

Table 1: Age groups of the participants in the survey

Age Group	Percentage
18-26	9.96
27-36	46.10
37-46	27.66
47-56	16.31
57-66	4.26
Over 67	0.71

Regarding the marital status of the respondents, the majority were married with children (43.26%), while the unmarried accounted for 41.13%. The professional profile of respondents involved mainly "Employees in the private sector" (52.48%). Second most frequent profession was "public servants" at a rate of 30.5%, while the unemployed accounted for 6.38%, professionals and entrepreneurs for 5.68%, students for 1.42% and the “other” profession for 3.55%.

The majority of the sample was with a high school degree at a rate of 31.21%. A large percentage of respondents were technical school graduates (23.4%). The secondary school graduates represented 21.28%, and a significant percentage of 18.44% were postgraduates. Finally the respondents with basic education represented 5.67% of the sample.

Referring to companionship, the majority of respondents stated that they travel with a partner / spouse or friend at a rate of 48.23%. About 38.3% travels “with the family”. A small percentage responded that they usually travel “with a group of friends” (11.35%), while a very small percentage of 2.13% expressed they travel usually alone. The fact that no one replied that they usually travel with organized groups (package tour) within Greece, was very interesting.

These results are similar to two relevant studies (TIA, 2007 & Mintel, 2009), according to which the Gastro-tourist is mostly in the group of 30 to 50 year olds and to a lesser extent in the age group of 51 to 64 year olds. This kind of tourist has mostly higher professional status, a higher income and education and loves adventure and culture. The Gastro-tourists are experienced tourists and spend an adequate amount of money on culinary activities.

5. Results presentation

The main results of the investigation in relation to the search fields are presented in this chapter. To the question about the “Participation on the local lifestyle in the tourist destination” (Integration with the locals, the local music or dance) the majority of respondents replied “very likely” at a rate of 52.48%, 18.44% of the sample chose “Almost likely”. “Neutral” appears 4.89%. The fact that the females responded positively at a rate of 62.1% compared to 37.0% of the males (table 1), was remarkable.

Table 2: Participation on the local lifestyle in the tourist destination

Answer	Percentage of responses	Males' responses	Responses of females
Very likely	52.48	37.0	62.1
Likely	18.44	22.2	16.1
Neutral	14.89	22.2	10.3
Almost unlikely	7.80	9.3	6.9
Unlikely	6.38	9.3	4.6
Total	99.99	100	100

During the stay at the tourist destination, the possibility to visit historical and cultural sites at a rate of 66.7%, to go Tracking or Hiking at a rate of 50.3% and to attend shows, concerts etc. at a rate of 48.2% is “very likely” (table 3).

Table 3: Activities during the stay in the destination place

Answer	Visiting of historical and cultural sites	Tracking or Hiking	Attendance of Shows, Concerts etc.
Very likely	66.67	50.35	48.23
Likely	19.15	10.64	20.57
Neutral	6.38	17.73	9.22
Almost unlikely	2.84	8.51	11.36
Unlikely	4.96	12.77	10.64

Total	100	100	100.02

However engaging in activities connected with gastronomy garnered low rates. To the question "if they consider it possible to participate in culinary activities such as cooking classes, exhibitions, visits to production sites and other culinary events, 41.8% considers it "unlikely". And to this question the involvement of females in culinary activities was far greater than that of males (table 4).

Table 4: Participation in culinary activities

Answer	Percentage of responses	Males' answers	Females' answers
Very likely	19.86	11.1	25.3
Likely	9.93	13.0	8.0
Neutral	10.64	11.1	10.3
Almost unlikely	17.73	25.9	12.6
Unlikely	41.84	38.9	43.7
Total	99,99	100	100

To special question concerning the preference for breakfast, the respondents were given three different options (a) the European - Continental breakfast, (b) the American breakfast and (c) the Greek breakfast with local dishes (table 5).

68.79% of the sample expresses a preference for the Greek breakfast with local dishes. About 19.15% shows a preference for the Continental breakfast, despite the fact that the American breakfast contains additional dishes compared to the European breakfast. The American breakfast seems to be preferred by only 12.06% of the sample.

Table 5: Breakfast preferences

Answer	Percentage of responses	Males' answers	Females' answers
Greek Breakfast	68.79	70.4	67.8
Continental Breakfast	19.15	13.0	23.0
American Breakfast	12.06	16.7	9.2

When asked if during their stay respondent experienced local food and wine, the answer "very likely" reached the impressive figure of 71.63%. The answer "almost likely" to try some local flavours in the visited place was 17.73%. The smallest percentage frequency displays the option "not likely" with just 1.42% (table 6).

Table 6: Tasting local wine and food flavours

Answer	Percentage of responses	Males' answers	Females' answers
Very likely	71.63	68.5	73.6
Almost Likely	17.73	18.5	17.2
Neutral	6.38	7.4	5.7
Almost unlikely	2.84	1.9	3.4

Unlikely	1.42	3.7	0.0
Total	100	100	100

The answer for the chance to visit the local market at the place of destination (table 7), garnered exactly the same percentage as the previous question (71.63%). Of interest is also that the male response to this question was very high (70.4%).

Table 7: Possibility to visit the local market

Answer	Percentage of responses	Males' answers	Females' answers
Very likely	71.63	70.4	72.4
Likely	16.31	11.1	19.5
Neutral	6.38	11.1	3.4
Almost unlikely	2.13	5.6	0.0
Unlikely	3.55	1.9	4.6
Total	100	100.1	99.9

To the statement "When I travel I often buy food for the home", 39% responded that they "Totally agree". The female response at a rate of 47.1%, was much greater compared to the male response (25.9%).

Table 8: When I travel often buy food for home

Answer	Percentage of responses	Males' answers	Females' answers
Totally agree	39.01	25.9	47.1
Agree	22.7	24.1	21.8
Neither agree nor disagree	14.18	20.4	10.3
Disagree	7.09	9.3	5.7
Totally disagree	17.02	20.4	14.9
Total	100	100.1	99.9

To collect information about the gastronomy of the tourist destination before the trip is very likely only for the 25.2% of the participants. On the contrary for 33.3% it is unlikely. The females are more prepared compared to the males regarding the gastronomy at the destination (Table 9).

Table 9: Collecting information about the gastronomy in the tourist destination

Answer	Percentage of responses	Males' answers	Females' answers
Very likely	25.23	18.5	29.9
Likely	13.48	14.8	12.6
Neutral	14.89	18.5	12.6

Almost unlikely	12.77	13.0	12.6
Unlikely	33.3	35.2	32.2
Total	100	100	100

Information about the recipes of the local cuisine shows to stimulates the interest of 42.55% of the sample who totally agree and another 26.95% “agree” to learn recipes of the local cuisine.

Table 10: I like to learn recipes of the local cuisine when I visit a destination

Answer	**Percentage of responses**	**Males’ answers**	**Females’ answers**
Totally agree	42.55	31.5	49.4
Agree	26.95	35.2	21.8
Neither agree nor disagree	11.35	11.1	11.5
Disagree	7.8	11.1	5.7
Totally disagree	11.35	11.1	11.5
Total	100	100	100

The answers to the question of whether the testing of food and beverages helps to create memories of the place of destination were impressive. The majority of respondents (54.61%) totally agree and another 20.57% agree. The responses of the females were higher compared to the responses of the male population of the research (table 11).

Table 11: Tasting foods and beverages in a destination helps to create a memory that endures in time

Answer	Percentage of responses	Males' answers	Females' answers
Totally agree	54.61	50.0	57.5
Agree	20.57	18.5	21.8
Neither agree nor disagree	9.22	13.0	6.9
Disagree	9.93	9.3	10.3
Totally disagree	5.67	9.3	3.4
Total	100	100	100

The response to the next question about "whether they would visit a restaurant with local flavours on purpose" was also positive. About 49.6% totally agree and another 22% agree. The two figures combined give approximately 72% while the responses of females accumulate to 86% (table 12).

Table 12: Visit on purpose restaurants offering local flavours

Answer	Percentage of responses	Males' answers	Females' answers
Totally agree	49.65	37.0	57.5
Agree	21.99	27.8	18.4

Neither agree nor disagree	14.89	18.5	12.6
Disagree	6.38	5.6	6.9
Totally disagree	7.09	11.1	4.6
Total	100	100	100

The responses to the question "Do you believe that it is better to order flavours that are familiar in the travel destination" was particularly interesting. About 28.4% totally agree and another 14.2% agree. The fact that the males agree at a rate of 35.2% and the females at a much greater rate i.e.47.1% was also interesting (table 13).

Table 13: 'I think it's better to order something that is familiar to me in a restaurant'

Answer	**Percentage of responses**	**Males' answers**	**Females' answers**
Totally agree	28.37	20.4	33.3
Agree	14.18	14.8	13.8
Neither agree nor disagree	18.44	27.8	12.6
Disagree	12.77	9.3	14.9
Totally disagree	26.24	27.8	25.3
Total	100	100	100

The question that brought the largest percentage agreement at a rate of 75.2% was if tourists believe that local flavours are an important part of the culture of the region. In female responses the rate of “totally agree” and "agree" accumulated to 93%.

Table 14: ‘I believe that local flavours are an important part of the culture of the region'

Answer	**Percentage of responses**	**Males’ answers**	**Females’ answers**
Totally agree	75.16	66.7	80.5
Agree	15.6	20.4	12.6
Neither agree nor disagree	7.09	9.3	5.7
Disagree	0.71	1.9	0
Totally disagree	1.42	1.9	1.1
Total	100	100	100

The question whether the respondent believe that the dining experience is important for the satisfaction of the journey, 50.3% replied that they “Totally agree”. In addition, it is worth noting that 21.3% agree that taste satisfaction relates substantially to the overall impression of the trip.

Table 15: “The dining experience is important for the satisfaction of the journey”

Answer	**Percentage of responses**	**Males’ answers**	**Females’ answers**
Totally agree	50.35	44.4	54.0
Agree	21.28	20.4	21.8

Neither agree nor disagree	13.48	20.4	9.2
Disagree	5.67	3.7	6.9
Totally disagree	9.22	11.1	8.0
Total	100	100	100

Regarding the question whether gastronomy upgrades the overall travel experience, 29.08% responded “Very much” and another 46.8% responded “much”.

Table 16: The gastronomy upgrades the overall travel experience

Answer	**Percentage of responses**
Very much	29.08
Much	46.81
Neither much nor little	17.02
A Little	4.26
Not at All	2.84
Total	100

Finally those who believe that gastronomy upgrades their travel experience, to an extent of “very” and “very much” replied to the next question of how this is achieved. The opinion that dominates at a rate of 51.4% is that through the local flavors they get to know the history, tradition and culture of the destination. High percentage holds the view that by simply enjoying new flavors (35.51%) and 12.15% consider that the travel experience is upgraded, because they have the opportunity to taste fresh ingredients.

Table 17: How gastronomy upgrade the travel experience

By:	Percentage of responses
Knowing the history, tradition and culture of the destination.	51,4
Enjoying new flavors	35,51
Tasting fresh ingredients	12,15
Other	0,93

6. Conclusions

The results of the survey showed a considerable interest of domestic tourists for gastronomy, which confirms the figures from the Global report on Food Tourism from UNWTO (2012). During their stay the Greek tourists at a rate of 89.4% are likely or very likely to taste local food and wine, to visit the local market and to buy foods for the home. On the contrary, only 25.2% of the travelers are very likely to collect information about the gastronomy in the tourist destination before the trip.

Tourists are interested in culture and history of the destination and are very likely to visit historical and cultural attractions (66.7%), to attend performances (theatre, concert) to go hiking or trekking, but also to experience the local character of a destination and the local way of life by contacting the local population and experiencing the local music and dance. On the contrary, engaging in activities connected with gastronomy, such as participation in exhibitions, cooking classes, visits to production sites and other culinary events, is considered as unlikely at a rate of 41.8%.

During their stay tourists will intentionally visit a restaurant with local flavors at a rate of 71.6% and will be interested in the recipes of the local cuisine of the particular destination at a rate of 69.5%.

Tourists believe at a rate of 75.2%, that the local flavors are an important part of the culture of the region. It should be noted that this figure was the highest in the entire investigation. But at the same time a significant number of tourists (at a rate of 42.5%) agrees that it is better to order something that is familiar in a local restaurant. This statement is very interesting, because in the sociology of food, the dimension of familiarity and strangeness implicitly underlies Fischler's (1988) distinction between the ''neophobic'' and ''neophylic'' tendencies in taste. According to Fischler, both tendencies may be found among individuals. They dislike or suspect new and hence unfamiliar foodstuffs and dishes. Or they tend to search for novel and strange food. But even those who search for new culinary experiences may be repelled by the local culinary situation and reluctant or unable to partake of the food served in local culinary establishments. (Cohen & Avieli, 2004)

Regarding breakfast, respondents indicated to prefer to a very large percent (68.8%) the Greek breakfast with local dishes, compared to the Continental (European) breakfast and the American breakfast. Tasting local foods and beverages helps to create memories of the tourist destination, according to the majority of respondents at a rate of 75.18 (accumulating "totally agree" and "agree"), which is also confirmed by other studies (& Telfer Wall, 1996? Handszuh, 2000).

Finally it should be noted that the local gastronomy upgrades the overall travel experience, at a rate of 29.08% (Very much) and 46.8% (much), since through the local flavors the tourist get to know the history, the tradition and the culture of the destination, enjoy new tastes and have the opportunity to taste fresh ingredients.

The fact that the female population of the research was more positive to the local gastronomy, to the local events, to contacts with the local community, local products and markets, in obtaining food recipes, but also in the search for information concerning the local gastronomy was an interesting result of the study.

7. Suggestions for the gastronimic tourism development

The possible strategies that can contribute to establishing a gastronomic destination are in order of importance: the coverage of all local dishes from the mass media, the availability of sufficient funds for the development and promotion of tourism gastronomy, the promotion of high quality restaurants, the development of local dishes as a special attraction of the destination, the creation of an image and marketing strategy of local dishes, the production of flyers to highlight the role of local dishes, the organization of regional food festivals, food exports of local products, the organization of exhibitions, developing special food and wine routes and the organization of special gourmet events (Hall, 2003).

According to WTO (2012) as for gastronomic tourism products that exist in their Destination, the organizations consulted underlined in the first place the importance of food events (expressed by 79% of respondents).This is followed by gastronomic routes and cooking classes and workshops, with 62% answering affirmatively, food fairs featuring local products (59%) and visits to markets and producers (53%). Having less weight among gastronomic tourism product offerings are museums (cited by only 12% of respondents), and presentations with 6% of positive answers. About 68% of the organizations consulted carry out marketing activities or promotion based on Food Tourism. The marketing and promotional tools most used by these entities are: organizing events (91%), producing brochures and advertising (82%) and dedicated websites on food tourism (78%). At a lower level are promotional tools such as tourism guides (61%), blogs (43%), and familiarization trips for journalists and tour operators (13%). And lastly, only 4% of the organizations surveyed said they used social networks for the promotion of food tourism.

According to the literature review and the primary research, the suggestions for the development of gastronomic tourism especially in Greece are:

ü Upgrading the gourmet services offered in the various destinations in Greece.

ü Upgrading the gastronomic portfolio, which requires a wide range of activities such as the networking among the various stakeholders in tourism, the connection of local food with the culture, the society and the environment, the connection of the gastronomy with other tourist activities and also the connection with other forms of tourism.

ü The design and implementation of a communication plan which will promote the culinary tourism and the quality of food and beverages offered in Greece.

ü The introduction of Greek breakfast in hotels and accommodation.

ü Professionalism in the tourism process and a qualitative gastronomic portfolio.

ü The implication of quality assurance programs and price controlling for the Greek gastronomy.

ü Establishment of farmlands and production sites such as wineries and breweries, open for tourist excursions.

ü Further research about tourist needs and to define the way that these can be met.

In conclusion the diversification and enrichment of the tourist product of Greece can be achieved through gastronomy, which will provide quality and competitive advantage over other tourist destinations.

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[1]Trahana, is a hard, sun-dried grain product made by combining cracked wheat, bulgur, or flour with buttermilk or yogurt, which makes the “sour” kind, or with whole milk, to make the “sweet” kind (Kochilas Diana, 2013).

RECOMMUNICATION PROCESS OF APPROACH OF THE MUNICIPAL CULTURAL AND PUBLIC BENEFIT ENTERPRISE OF KARDITSA-GREECE (DI.K.E.K.) WITH THE CULTURAL COMMON

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Abstract

The effective understanding and the implementation of the cultural policy of every state offers a guarantee for creating a series of remarkable cultural products and upgraded cultural contributions thus affording them an added cultural and comparative value at national and international level. It is well known nowadays that the democratization of culture and art dominate, advocating increased participation of individuals and groups in production and consumption. In particularly, the key challenge is to attract the interest of the public, claiming his support and conveying the produced cultural ideas in extended social groups. However, in the Greek reality it is found that the existing structure of the structures of culture, institutions exercising cultural policy, the available resources and the need for action and survival in a demanding and competitive cultural environment, necessitate a generalized structural restructuring of existing cultural institutions assisted by a cooperative mood of all creative and management factors and actors, but also communicative approach as the cultural "CONSUMER" audience for the best promotion of expressions of culture.

Also particularly problematic was the latest situation on a local level with the direct effect of lowering the importance and quality of cultural goods produced. Although several Local Authorities, as they are important partners in the cultural scene, have created remarkable cultural centers, most of them are showing a communication gap management, resulting in the cultural product supplied to appear weak to attract public attention. Without an exception to the rule, a similar situation is currently one of the leading companies' once cultural and social characters, the Municipal Cultural and Public Benefit Enterprise of Karditsa (DI.K.E.K.).

Given the above problems the aim of this paper is, through a theoretical and research approach, to investigate and determine the extent of the communication gap between itself and the culture of the public in combination with the causes of appearance, and to propose strategies and procedures for improving this situation by developing an effective system for cultural communication with the people and stabilize it, i.e. connecting link between this cultural unit (THE TRANSMITTER) and the public (AS A RECEIVER) at local and regional level.

Keywords : Cultural Enterprises, Cultural Communication, Communication Strategy, Cultural Common, Local and Regional Cultural Development

1. Introduction

The effective understanding and implementation of cultural policy on the part of every nation, provides the necessary prerequisites and conditions for the creation of a series of considerable cultural centers with products and upgraded cultural action as well as contribution, which in turn offer an increasing cultural timeless and comparative value on a local, domestic and international level (Paschalidis, 2002a:225-229). However, in greek reality it is clearly observed, through time lapse, that the existing outline of the cultural structures, of the bodies exercising cultural strategy and policy, the available means and resources, as well as the need for action and survival in a demanding and competitive cultural environment, necessitate, on one the one hand a generalized and dynamic, organizing, functional and productive re-design of the existing cultural institutions and organizations, assisted by a cooperative perception of all the creative and managerial bodies, for the best promotion of the aspects of culture in all geographical levels, in every latitude and longitude possible (Chambouri-Ioannidou, 2002a:18-21; Chambouri-Ioannidou, 2003: 27-29) and on the other hand the ongoing choice and development of certain poles (ELEMENTS) of local and regional activation which will develop a net of cultural events of a permanent character, which will in turn constitute an attraction (Filias,1988:266).

Given that nowadays globalization and the democratization of culture and art, which reflect the increased individual and collective participation in its production and consumption, dominate, what is primarily aimed at is to attract the interest of the public, to claim the limited time, energy and support and to transmit the produced cultural notions to wider social groups, since it is essential that we detach from a limited, sophisticated elitist perception of offering and indulging in cultural goods, without social discriminations as far as approaching and consuming is concerned (Bryant, 1988; Klamer, 1996; Streeten, 2006; Kakkou, 2009).

Although several Local Government Organizations, as important factors on the cultural scene, have created significant cultural centers, their majority displays a managerial gap, resulting in qualitatively downgrading the produced and consequently offered cultural product weakening its ability to attract the interest of the “CONSUMER” audience (Klamer, 1996; Chambouri-Ioannidou, 2002a:22; Belias ET AL, 2014a:451-452; Belias ET AL, 2014b). The situation deteriorates undoubtedly due to the weakness of the local cultural action to provide alternative, innovative and competitive forms of cultural events, or by often attempting enterprises which lack a complete and long-term speculation and prospect. Without being an exception to the rule, in a similar situation has been over the last few years one of the once leading companies of cultural and social character, the Municipal Cultural and Public Benefit Enterprise of Karditsa (DI.K.E.K.).

DI.K.E.K was founded (initially under the name D.E.T.A.K.-Municipal Enterprise of Tourism and Recreation of Karditsa) in 1990 based on the town of Karditsa (G.G 298/4-5-90 : 4585-4586) after the decision – suggestion of the Municipal Council. It is a legal person governed by private law (N.P.I.D), the function of which is regulated by special provisions (articles) of the Municipal and Regional Code (Presidential Decree 323/1989). After a series of amending decisions towards the end of 2006 it conformed to its obligatory operation under the new Municipal and Regional Code, as specified in the paragraph about the set up and operation of local government organizations, where it is clearly stated that the allowed form of Municipal enterprises is that of either Municipal

Benefit Enterprise or of Local Government Organization S.A (GG114/8-6-2006, 1213-1216), and where the final profile both of its main and individual goals was outlined and specified.

It is still -to date- an important cultural and social body of the Municipality of Karditsa, aiming at the promotion of activities of cultural creativity and development as well as of social policy, as aspects of the town's cultural being. Nevertheless, the strongly competitive conditions of the cultural surroundings in which it operates, the lack of satisfying and regular financial support by the state and the local entities of jurisdiction, along with its close dependence upon the given municipal authority which makes various decisions by the preference of the occasional principal, compose an organizational and productive background with bureaucratic features, handicapped in setting achievable goals, suffering from the lack of dynamic strategic decisions and plans for action, activity failure and deviations from the consumer audience's expectations, resulting in DIK.E.K displaying a severe deficit in cultural communication and in offering cultural work, thus expressing this deficit through an extended level of communicational introversion, springing from the lack of information exchange with the public, concerning its cultural and social needs and preferences.

Given the references above, the aim of this paper is, through a theoretical and research approach, to develop a communicative model that will contribute to a more fruitful realization and gauging of the assessment of cultural communication of the particular cultural body with the consumer audience of Karditsa and the wider area. On the basis then of the afore–mentioned model, through an analysis of its main parts, the value of the produced and offered cultural product can be better estimated by the cultural "CONSUMERS" of the narrow and wider area of Karditsa themselves, so that through regular communicative feedback both a steady added value on the provided cultural product and the development of strong resistance skills against what makes it vulnerable can be ensured.

Through these efforts it is expected that the profile of D.I.K.E.K. will be fully promoted, creating a sense of unity and focused direction towards cultural action, which will allow it to overcome the current organizational and productive difficulties and be led to a continuous flow and production of high quality cultural works. Thus the assurance towards an effective and ongoing process of solving the arising social problems and towards satisfying the local cultural needs becomes plausible, the strong discrepancies which create an atmosphere of tension and disappointment decrease, dialogue and trust on the part of the public, followed by participation in the cultural events, are reinforced

(Klamer, 1996; Paschalidis, 2002a:47-52; Chambouri-Ioannidou, 2002b:80; Ekonomou, 2003:92-93).

2. Methodological Approach

2.1 Cultural Communication

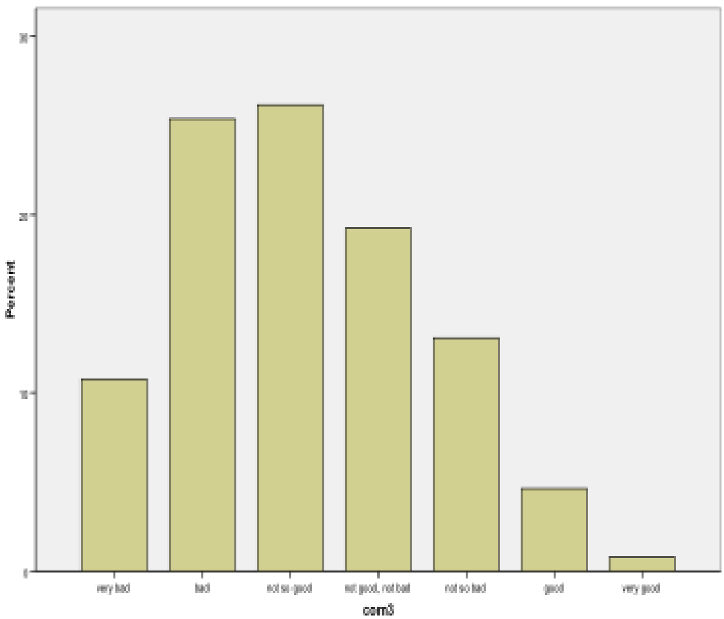
Communication is a complex and necessary process of information or message transmission and understanding. Its main goal is to build a common linking device between two or more persons for the exchange of information, ideas, views .emotions, etc (Koontz ET AL, 1983b:126; Varner, 2000). If the notion of human communication functions in many cases somehow restrictively, the notion of cultural communication acts as an organized activity which refers to a wider bipolar frame of a communicative relationship between the cultural unit on the one side and the cultural audience on the other, aiming not exclusively at promoting the cultural products to the audience, but mainly at creating a network of essential contact with it, including as many of its groups as possible (Athanasopoulou, 2003:116).

This kind of relationship is mutual and clearly interactive and refers to the human wish to confront the individual cultural unit so as to specify its readiness and efficiency in producing and providing cultural products and the frequency and the means of providing them, which acts as a way to satisfy its cultural needs (Hein, 2006), while the unit itself seen as a "CULTURAL AGENT" is expected to build a network of communication and message and information exchange with the audience, to search for the audience's cultural needs, for its awareness and willingness for a creative intervention through its ideas and suggestions on the designing, managerial and informative process of the cultural product (Kastoras, 2002; Athanasopoulou, 2002;Athanasopoulou, 2003).

2.2 The process of cultural communication

The process of cultural communication has to do with the fundamentally well known communicative model. The adaptation of such a model on the features of the communicative environment of DI.K.E.K and its detailed analysis was considered necessary for the specification of the relationship and the degree of its **cultural communication** with its consumer audience. The use of questionnaires and interviews[1] was considered to be the most supportive tool for getting the assessment of this communication evaluated by the consumer audience in Karditsa and the surrounding area. Based on the form which the afore mentioned model takes, one can –through an analysis of its main parts- conclude the following (Sdrolias, 1992; Kakkou, 2009; Wöhe, 2013) (Figure 1) :

- The cultural communication of DI.K.E.K takes place in a framework mainly characterized by the quality of the involved parties, by the size, the quality and the value of the provided cultural product. The cultural environment, under the given at times predominant conditions, sustains and affects significantly this process. For the on the whole assessment of the level of the provided cultural communication, the most valid judge is the “consumer” audience itself, which takes parts in the process as the second agent of the communicative relationship. In the**question** to the audience “HOW DO YOU EVALUATE, IN TOTAL, THE COMMUNICATION OF DI.K.E.KWITH THE CONSUMER AUDIENCE OF THE AREA IN WHICH IT ACTS?**”**, the audience (n=131) presented with its answers a “NOT SO GOOD COMMUNICATIVE RELATIONSHIP” (**mean**=3,15 και **Std Deviation**=1,389). Moreover, a significant percentage of the persons asked (**cumulative percent** : 62,3%) fluctuated in the span from “VERY BAD ” to “NOT SO GOOD COMMUNICATIVE RELATIONSHIP” .The audience’s total attitude is presented in the form of the following bar chart (BAR CHART 1) :



Bar chart 1: Visualized presentation of the assessment, on the part of the audience, of DI.K.E.K.'s cultural communication

In this communicative environment one of the basic agents, the **transmitter**, is DI.K.E.K itself as a cultural unit responsible for the specification not only of the current but also of the future ways of action on a cultural and social level, as well as of the communicative techniques for the transmission of its cultural products. What is researched however is from the one hand the extent to which during its effort, DI.K.E.K manages to measure the needs of the audience it addresses and from the other what is the final degree of satisfaction. Data collection is discouraging and concordant with our personal initial presuppositions about DI.K.E.K as a communicatively introvert enterprise, since for the first part of the **question** concerning the frequency of collection of the audience's opinion **about the kind of the cultural and social activities**, the answer is "SELDOM" (mean =1,69 and standard deviation=1,215). Besides, a percentage of 64% of the people asked, answered "NEVER". For the second part of the question concerning **the extent to which their cultural and social needs are met**, the participants answered "PARTLY" (mean=3,16 and standard deviation=1,429) with a significant Cumulative Frequencies of 63,4% spanning from "not at all" to "partly".

Within the dominant communicative environmental conditions of the existing communicative model, it is necessary to determine both the**communicative frequency** and the **communicative means**. Of special interest is the **degree of direct communication between** DI.K.E.K and the cultural audience, the frequency of which actually appears very rare (usually every two years) and has the form of debriefing reports. Hence, the phenomenon of partial or total citizen disinterest in the administration's debriefing invitation (similar to that in February 2009) is commonly observed, so that, as an employee in the Municipal Cinema where this initiative took place, stated, "......*only the first rows of the seats was full and those were taken by the prefect, the mayor and the municipal councilors…they were speaking and listening by themselves*".

Concerning the **kind of the most usual communicative means** used by DI.K.E.K for the **promotion of the provided cultural and social products,** the public, in a percentage of 83,2% answered, as expected, that the main communicative means are the local mass media and Internet (MOSTLY THE MASS MEDIA WITH 55,7%), and only a small part (16,8%) attributed its getting informed to friends or other random incidents. What needs special attention, is the assessment, on the part of the audience, of DI.K.E.K's basic communicative means, as it was depicted by the seven grade Likert scale. Its results were placed on low evaluation standards [the mean was 3,05 (in the case of internet), 3,62 [(in the case of advertising posts in the local mass media), and slightly more positive 3,67 (brochures and posters)], while it revealed serious weakness as far as the level of a direct and personal approach is concerned [2, 04 (phone call contact), 2,14 (open discussion) and 2,37 (questionnaire distribution)].

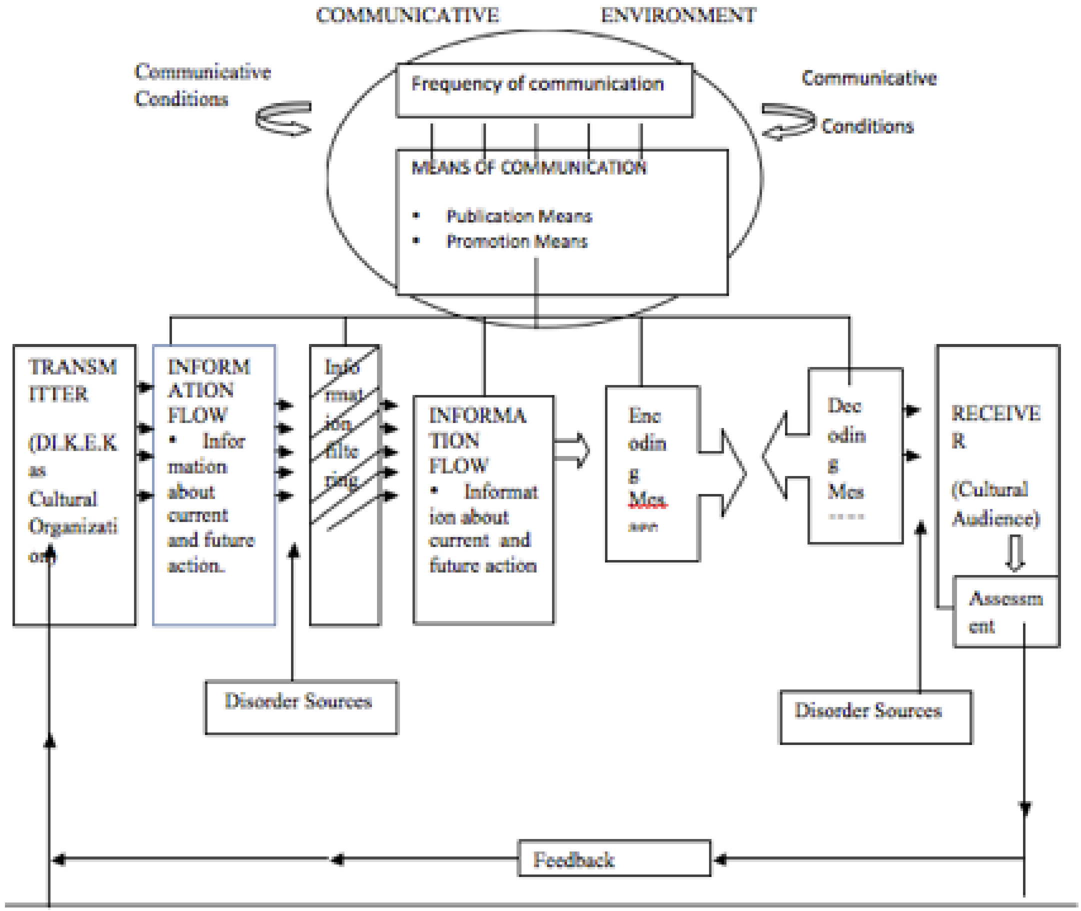


Figure 1: DI.K.E.K's Communicative Model

In the process of promoting its information and messages, DI.K.E.K appears to have a relative quantity of flow **concerning the current and future aims and actions**. On the **question** about whether **this cultural enterprise takes care of the promotion of its cultural and social activities**, the result of the questions answered gave mean=3,57, which presents an almost neutral estimation on the part of the audience. Even if we accept that the wide consumer audience doesn't always receive such messages, deliberately or not, this information becomes widely known and naturally causes reactions towards specific centers – receivers of those messages which act as **disorder sources** (e.g. minorities in the municipal council, local mass media, public placement of those directly involved with the citizens' cultural affairs etc). As a result, in the cases of negative or hesitant attitude, some interferences arise which make its administration carry out a process of **filtering** the flowing messages, so that their volume is eliminated and focused on the most achievable and viable actions.

The remaining - reduced by the filtering- information and message flows go through an **encoding** process**,** that is processing of their format and content so that DI.K.E.K's messages alter the **receiver's** (Cultural Audience's) behaviour, (Fiske,1992; Kastoras, 2002; Fiske, 2011). At this point, a problem which raises concerns the **processing of the messages** addressed to the cultural audience which gave the choice "OFTEN" a higher percentage (26%) compared to the other choices (Mean = 4,89 Namely) "not so rare" (Which Moves Towards The Same Direction), when asked to answer the **question** about **how often it lacks information about cultural and social actions, not on its own fault, but due to mistakes and omissions of DI.K.E.K.** itself**.**

The more or less successful message **encoding** affects through a chain reaction the **decoding** process, the level and quality of which is directly linked to a wide range of personal social and psychological factors (educational level, social status, favorable or not attitude towards the principal's political placement, financial status, professional activity, cultural refinement, culture, which as has already been stated, has deep roots, thus raising great expectations, etc) which either predispose the audience positively towards the incoming messages, or contribute to its distancing itself from them , constituting another form of **disorders source.**

In direct contrast to the communicative dipole is DI.K.E.K's cultural audience as a **receiver** of the former's cultural information and messages, which is also partly responsible for the communicative dimension concerning DI.K.E.K and mainly for the way it operates. The correct**decoding** of the received messages, the audience's positive or not response to them, along with the active participation in planning cultural actions , contributes both to information flow from the part of the **receiver** to the **transmitter** and the gentle function of the **communicative process**, which is disrupted and finally cancelled, when facing the cultural audience's (RECEIVER'S) unwillingness to participate and its distancing itself from the planning and the final creation of the cultural product. A relevant **question** to the public about **the frequency of making recommendations concerning the cultural and social action they suggest**, 57,3% was answered negatively ("NEVER") and only approximately 25% of the persons asked showed a somehow active participation ("sometimes" 19,8% and "often" 3,8%).

2.3 Results-Assessment of Cultural Communication

A further obligation for DI.K.EK's cultural audience is the reasoned **assessment** both of the various parts (e.g message content, means and frequency of communication etc) and the whole communicative process, so that it supplies the necessary informative material for the process of**feedback**, which will assist the adoption of remedial actions. This process is meaningful only if DI.K.E.K takes into consideration the **cultural and social suggestions** of its audience, and encourages the latter's participation, a factor contributing to the establishment of a participatory process.

Through the two relevant **questions**, it was revealed that as far as the utilization **of the suggestions** is concerned, the audience gave answers between "DISAGREE" and "RATHER DISAGREE" (with mean=2,50 and standard deviation=1,489), with high percentages (76,7%) extending in the span from "STRONGLY DISAGREE" to "RATHER DISAGREE", while with regard to **the encouragement of suggestion making**, the audience responded "RATHER DISAGREE" (with mean=2,92 and standard deviation=1,485) with an also high percentage (67,9%) extending in the same span.

When completing the process of providing **feedback,** it is essential that DI.K.E.K itself **inform the audience about the possibility and the degree to which the suggestions made are utilized**, so that a basis for an ongoing brainstorming process is built, which if used –even partially- will benefit both parts, establishing an effective communicative relationship. In the relevant **question** however, the cultural audience stresses with a high percentage (61,8%) the absence of **a process of providing information** concerning the outcome of the recommended on its part cultural and social action.

3. Review -Conclusions

Although DI.K.E.K. is still to date the main cultural social body of the Municipality of Karditsa, with a long cultural and social experience, aiming at the promotion of actions of cultural and social creativity and development, it displays a mediocre total communicative acceptance by its cultural audience because of its conscious inability to gauge the needs of the audience it addresses, thus showing an excessive introversion trend.

More specifically, this trend is proven through a series of incomplete communicative processes, such as the absence of means concerning the **frequency of direct collection of the audience's opinion about the kind of the cultural and social**

activities, and further the **degree to which its cultural and social needs are met.** Therefore the phenomenon of partial or total citizen disinterest is observed leading to its distancing itself from the planning and the final creation of the produced cultural product.

An additional obligation of the cultural audience, namely reasoned **assessment** not only of the various communicative parts (EG MESSAGE CONTENT, COMMUNICATIVE MEANS AND FREQUENCY ETC) but also of the total communicative process so as to supply DI.K.E.K with informative material essential for the process of **feedback**, which will help in the adoption of amending movements, doesn't seem to contribute positively to DI.K.E.K since it doesn't take into consideration and thus doesn't make use of the **cultural and social suggestions** of its audience while it doesn't also encourage the rendering of such recommendations.

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4.1 Institutional Texts

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G.G. 114/9-6-2006, L. 3463 “About validating the Code of Municipalities and Communities”.

[1]The amount and range of the problems under research concerning the productive outcome of DI.K.EK, create a situation for which in terms of research there is no empirical approach to the whole issue through hypotheses testing and in general characterized by the inflexible features of the Positivist Approach (Siomkos ET AL, 2005 : 22;Gantzias: 8-10). In the case of such characteristics, for the detailed inquisition and effective approach to the whole problematic situation, what is suggested is the direct specification of the various problems as they are observed through the resarcher's in situ observation and general reports accompanied by the support of data from the use of international biography, interviews and questionnaires from all parties involved in this cultural institution. Therefore, the methodological approach to the subject of this paper is carried out on the basis of an EXPLORATORY STUDY and aims at the development of knowledge in terms of an analytical and integrative process of the organizational and productive structuring of organizations like DI.K.E.K, which have some special features (Kosiol, 1962; Sdrolias, 1991).

The research was carried out with the use of a questionnaire. The questions were mainly scaled questions (THE SEVEN GRADE LIKERT SCALE WAS USED), while some of them were dichotomic and some others were multiple choice questions. The distribution, completion, and collection of the questionnaires took place from 14 to 22 March 2009. 180 questionnaires were distributed in different times and places in Karditsa city with the method of personal interview (intercept interview) and they were filled in by 142 persons , from which 9 questionnaires were incomplete .Therefore, the final sample of the fully completed questionnaires was 131.

The process of data processing was carried out with the help of the statistic package SPSS16 (Siomkos ETAL, 2005; Howitt ET AL, 2006), and particularly with the method of DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS, where its main tools were primarily used, namely Mean, Std Deviation, Frequencies-Percent, after it was first realized that the reliability coefficient Cronbach's of the scales that were used to measure the multifaceted notion of cultural product is 0,879, higher than 0,700, which is the normal questionnaire limit (Bishop ET AL, 2007; Hair ET AL., 2010). For a better presentation of the results of the process , the processing and the drawing of relevant conclusions a bar chart was also used

Finally, in the whole process of the Research Approach a series of interviews addressed to the staff of DI.K.E.K took place as a means of capturing the indoor atmosphere, given the clear unwillingness and hesitation of the temporary staff towards their participation in the process of questionnaire filling. The main reasons for this attitude are claimed to be the sense of insecurity concerning the future of their employment relationship, the recurring recent payment default along with the potential of a mandatory relocation to a lower employment position.

SEASONALITY ISSUES IN ESTABLISHED TOURISM DESTINATIONS: EXPANDING TOURISM SEASON IN SITHONIA PENINSULA, CENTRAL MACEDONIA, GREECE

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Introduction

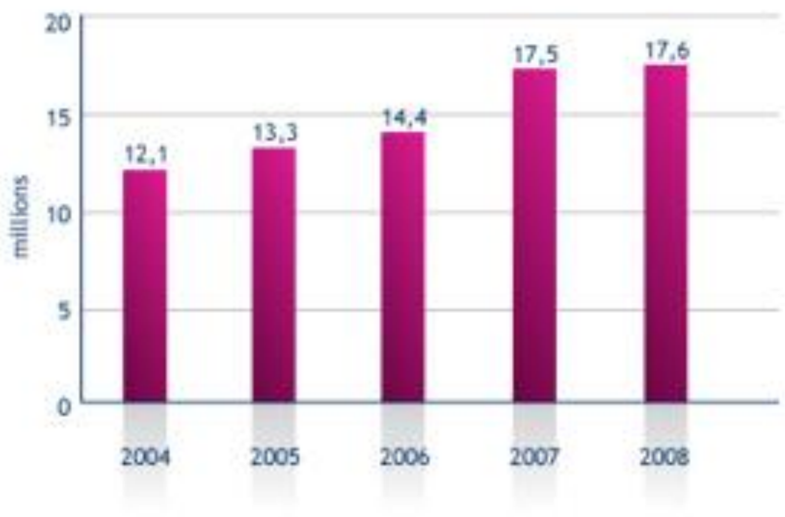
Sithonia peninsula is part of the greater Halkidiki area tourism destination in the region of Central Macedonia in northern Greece. Since the 70's and 80's Sithonia is realized an established tourism destination attracting visitors from both abroad and domestic especially from the nearby Thessaloniki urban center. Its basic tourism form is the one of resort holidays although a remarkable number of visitors use the area as a second home tourism destination. Most of the tourism activity is concentrated in the peak summer months of July and August that means a high degree dependency by seasonality, raising in such a way, to the local businesses as well as to local communities, certain sustainability issues, both economical and environmental. The awareness over the issue of developing a more balanced tourism activity that expands all year around expressed by local key tourism players, like tourism entrepreneurs and municipality authorities as well as tourism scholars, led to undertaking and implementation of this research*. Its main purpose is to investigate all the crucial factors that play important role to the implementation of the specified target, factors varying from a multiple tourism resource base to infrastructures and marketing strategies.

*the relevant research was financed by the research committee of the alexander technological educational institute (atei) of thessaloniki-department of tourism management.

Tourism in Greece

Greece is one of the top tourism destinations in the world. The number of tourism visits over the last decade has shown a steady increase. From 14.2 million international visitors in 2004, more than 17 million people visited Greece in 2008. In the midst of recession in 2013 almost 18 mil. visitors visited the country, and it is expected that that up to year 2020 this number will reach 20 million, almost twice the country's population and making Greece a global tourism destination. In fact Lonely Planet placed Greece among its top 10 destinations for 2010 and Greece ranked second in England's 2008 TELEGRAPH TRAVEL AWARDS in their Best European Country ranking. Greece has more than 15,000 km of coastline, 190,000 beaches, and 6,000 islands and islets. In addition, visitors are discovering the diverse selection of sailing and cruising options, incentive travel, and weekend breaks, opening up new opportunities in niche and attractive markets. Except beaches Greece has also mountains of excellent natural and manmade environment offering multiple tourism products and experiences to the alternative tourists. Greece's Mediterranean climate is ideal for year-round tourism and one of the core priorities of Greece today is to create a dynamic, sustainable, four-season tourism infrastructure that responds to the diverse and challenging needs of contemporary tourist. In numbers Greek tourism industry accounts for 18% of Greece's GNP, directly or indirectly employs more than 900.000 people, and is the leading source of the country's invisible receipts (36% in 2007).
Approximately 85% of arrivals originate in Western Europe: 21.2% from the United Kingdom, 17.5% from Germany, 8.8% from Italy, 5.3% from France, 5.2% from Holland, and 7.5% from the Scandinavian countries. Last few year's significant numbers of visitors from Eastern Europe and China are making Greece their preferred destination, creating a wider base of origin countries and new demands for services, facilities, and attractions.

Chart 1. Tourist Arrivals in millions by year 2004-2008

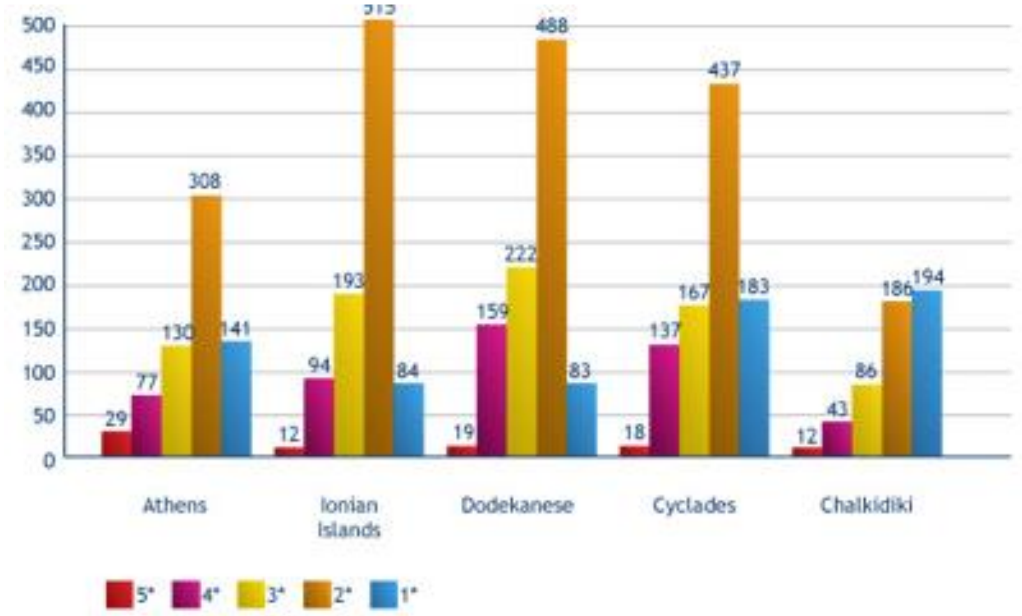


Source: Greek National Tourism Organization and National Statistical Services of Greece 2009.

The Greek hotel industry

Historically, hotels in Greece have been small in size, with the average number of beds per hotel standing at 76. Larger hotel units with more diverse offerings will be a welcome addition to the current accommodation infrastructure. Most of the hotels in Greece are categorized as 1- and 2-starhotels, meaning there is plenty of room for investors to establish 4-and 5-star properties. According to the Greek Hotel Branding Report, branded hotels in Greece account for only 4% of the total number of hotels and 19% of total availability of rooms, while in other European countries this figure lies between 25 and 40%. Chart no.2 shows the breakdown of hotels by star rating at key tourist destinations.

CHART 2. Hotels By Star rating at key Tourist Destinations including Halkidiki.



Source: National Statistical Service 2013.

The tourism period

Although the country's tourism infrastructure is well developed, Greece is committed to expanding its tourism offerings and establishing itself as a 12-month destination. Its Mediterranean climate is ideal for activities such as year round golf and trekking and it is estimated that one million Europeans would consider Greece as a second home destination. At present, 70% of arrivals are in the May-October period and visits are disproportionately concentrated in Crete (21% of total bed capacity) the Dodecanese islands, which includes Rhodes (17%), the Ionian Islands, which includes Corfu (12%), Attica, which includes Athens (9%), the Cyclades islands, which includes Santorini and Mykonos (6%). The entire Halkidiki peninsula attracts 6.5% of the total arrivals. Among the targeted sectors for expansion include the development of integrated resorts and residential real estate, golf courses and sports tourism, wellness and health tourism, upgraded and new marinas, conference centers, agro tourism products, religious tourism, thermal spas and thalassotherapy centers, gastronomy tourism, and a wide range of thematic offerings related to Greece's rich cultural and historical heritage. The completition of new basic road infrastructures connects north and south, east and west of the country and helps even the most farest areas to be achieved. . The newly completed Egnatia Highway, connecting Igoumenitsia with the Turkish border, is one of the most ambitious transport projects in the European Union of the last decade. The Ionian Highway, which connects Patras with Igoumenitsa, complements to the system's upgrading.

The area

Sithonia is the middle of the three Halkidiki peninsulas located in the Region of Central Macedonia in the northern Greece. The entire area is also a municipality, with the seat town of Nikiti.

A number of gulfs surrounds the peninsula with the Singitic Gulf to the west and the Toronean Gulf to the east. Also the mount Itamos lies in the center of the peninsula. Amongst the places of archeological interest in the area is the ancient city of Toroni, the castle and the church of Agios Athanasios, also in Toroni, and the nearby ancient cities of Olynthos, Potidea and Stageera hometown of philosopher's Aristoteles. Also the windmills in Sikia as well as the 16th century church in Nikiti are basic tourist's attractions in the area.

Literature review

Seasonality in general is defined as a "temporal imbalance in the phenomenon of tourism, which may be expressed in terms of dimensions of such elements as numbers of visitors, expenditure of visitors, traffic on highways and other forms of transportation, employment and admissions to attractions" (butler 2001).

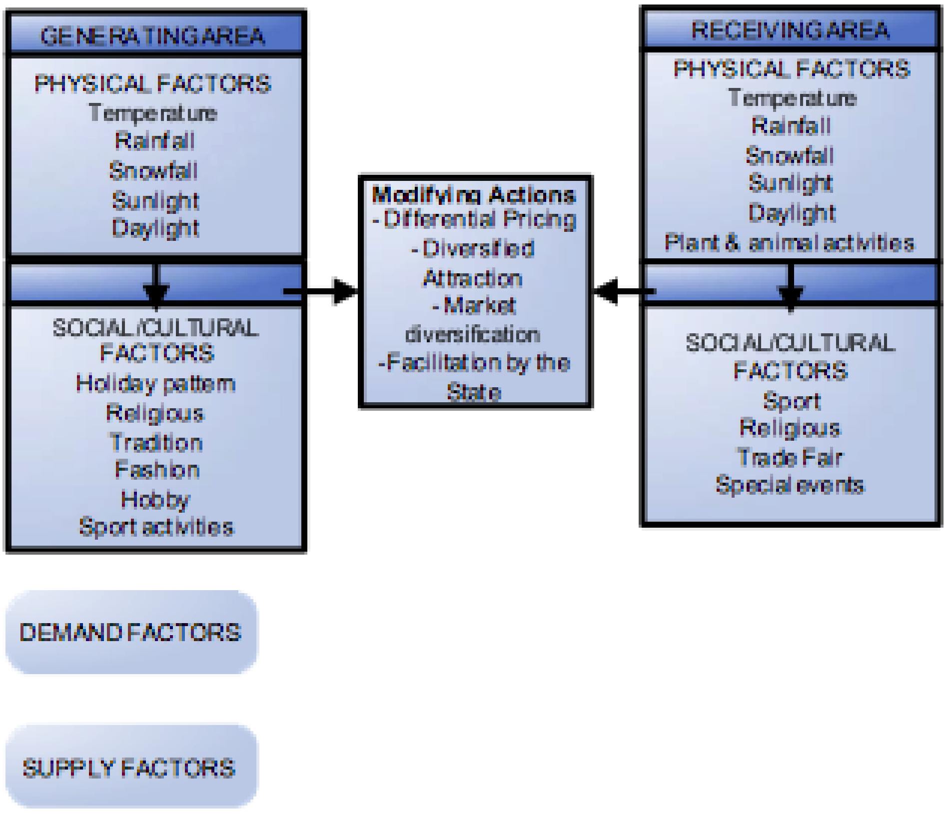
Seasonality is realized as a major problem in the tourism industry since is responsible for low returns on investment, overuse and underuse of facilities in high and low season respectively, as well as seasonal employment of staff and high unemployment subsidizes during the unemployment season. Also creates both natural and social implications since environment and local communities accept huge pressures in high/peak season that lead many times to the decrease of visitor's satisfaction and the tourism product as a whole.

To address the effects of seasonality there this number of strategies that are used. These include:

- pricing strategies
- diversifying the attraction
- market diversification

All the strategies must take into consideration all local stakeholders since expanding tourism season is a matter of many key players. This includes central government tourism policy, tourism industry, regional and local authorities. Seasonality has been studied in a number of ways raising the issue in both temporal and spatial dimension and expressed in both monetary terms (social and capital costs) as well visitor numbers (JANG 2004). A number of studies have so far taken place regarding seasonality in tourism and the negative impacts on the destination. For instance BUTLER'S AND MAO'S (1997) study identified the two dimensions of seasonality for both the origin and the destination areas. These are the natural (physical) and institutional (social and cultural) dimensions (Fig. 3). Regarding natural seasonality this relates to temporal variations in natural phenomena (e.g. rainfall, sunlight, snowfall etc). For certain tourism forms this is easily understood. In the case of Sithonia peninsula sea bathing or yachting for instance, require both warm temperatures and generally calm weather. On the other side institutionalized seasonality is more complex as it is based on human behavior and consumer decision like for instance the timing decision of going vacation or travel.

FIGURE 3: FACTORS OF SEASONALITY IN TOURISM, BUTLER AND MAO (1997)



Methodology

Literature review on tourism seasonality was the first step that was adopted regarding the specific research. Also national bodies' studies were taken into consideration. A field research with a semi structured questionnaire was adopted to identify opinions of local stakeholders over the issue of extending tourism period. The target groups were:

- local tourism entrepreneurs
- professional bodies that are directly and indirectly dependent from tourism like honey producers, fishermen, wine makers, olive oil producers etc
- local cultural associations
- local community.

Results

Expanding the tourism period in Sithonia peninsula by reducing seasonality is a matter of many factors that include tourism infrastructures, a variable tourism product as well as the use of certain marketing tools. Specifically:

a. Infrastructures

Includes investments in the tourism sector like the upgrade of the marina at Porto Carras, as well as upgrade of existing hospitality infrastructures. A new law in 2011 that subsidizes upgrading of hotel infrastructures will help although certain concerns were expressed over the issue of investor's subscription to the project since they must have their own contribution. An issue remains the lack of financing by the banking system. Another type of infrastructures includes the development of natural and cultural pathways as well interpretation, in order to divert the destination from a sea resort to alternative forms of tourism destination.

b. Sustainability

Inherent in the area's tourism development policy is the issue of sustainability. Some hotels and resort complexes are installing photovoltaic systems in an effort to become more carbon neutral from one side and lowering the operational cost on the other side so they can be operational in a larger time period. And here the issue of self financing such projects becomes a major issue due to the lack of means.

c. New tourism products

Alternative to mass tourism activities becomes a part of a strategy that leads to seasonality reduction. Environmentally (natural and manmade) tourism activities like cultural, rural (agro tourism), ecological tourism are some of the alternative tourism products that combined with distinctive lodging, can increases tourism experience and can work as a tool of minimizing dependency of tourism seasonality in the area. The introduction of a “local quality agreements” by all stakeholders can improve the destinations’ brand image.

d. Human resources development

Human capital must respond to the new challenges. From management to catering and recreation as well as local authority personnel must be trained to the new competitive environment and the target for expanding tourism period. Developing local tourism consciousness and identity by local communities becomes of paramount importance. Alternative forms of tourism put a special emphasis on human interaction between the visitors and the locals. So, local communities and businesses must respond on that.

e. Tourism policy

Reflecting the importance of expanding tourism season not only for Sithonia peninsula but also for the entire Greek economy, national authorities like Ministries of Tourism, Finance, Employment must be dedicated through certain measures to encourage tourism businesses to operate larger periods of time by giving certain incentives, like lowering V.A.T. and other taxation for certain low season or subsidizing employment in tourism. Also the same applies for local authority.

f. Marketing

Marketing can be a useful tool for creating a brand image of the destination. Basic infrastructures that help increase tourism period. The forming of the Halkidiki Destination Management Organization will help on this direction presuming that all the above will be met.

g. Holiday Homes

Finally, holiday homes a paradigm from international experience can create new perspectives for the area. Although in the area there are a significant number of second homes from the vicinity Thessaloniki area residents, the idea to develop holiday homes for foreigners, especially from northern Europe's cold climates will improve seasonality figures. A new, comprehensive legislation that is under consultation in government and refers to the construction of holiday homes for foreigners, according to expert estimations more than 1 million Europeans would consider a second/holiday home in Greece as a whole with a reasonable number going to the Sithonia area.

Conclusions

Expanding tourism period and reducing seasonality is of paramount importance for any tourism destination. To accomplish this target a number of actions has to be undertaken involving in this proccess all the local, and not only, stakeholders. This research revealed that extending tourism period is not a simple process. Involves commitment and strateging planning of all interested parts related with actions varying from infrustructures development to developing local tourism consiousness culture and brand image of new tourism products. It is a process that also must me embraced by central national tourism policy giving certain incentives to local tourism industry.

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TERRITORY AS BASIS FOR TOURISTIC PLANNING: PATHS FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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1 INTRODUCTION

Commonly, the terms space and territory are confused for each other by colloquial language, which contributes to the raise of the ambiguities that surround these concepts. In this sense, it is fundamental to comprehend clearly the distinctions between space and territory. As is put by Raffestin (1993, p. 144), "the space is anterior, preexistent to any action". Space is, in a certain way, 'given' as it was an input. Cruz (2000, p. 18) discusses the concept of territory and reads it in the spectrum of tourism.

Territory corresponds to functional fractions (SANTOS, 1997) of space. It corresponds to the functionalized space, being appropriated by specific social actors (which attribute to it specific functions), in a given historic moment. Hence, while referring to spaces appropriated by tourism, there is, to portions of space functionalized by tourism, we utilize the concept of touristic territory, adopted by Knafou (1996).Tourism is an activity dependent and consumer of territory, thus influencing its transformation, requiring an increasing rationality due to the competiveness of touristic products, today in a global scale. Rationality and competitiveness in the perspective of the creation of competitive advantage and not a perverse competitiveness, in this way highlighting the particularities present in each touristic territory. In this context, planning regarding territory appears as a condition for the success of sectorial plans and policies aiming for valuation of particularities (CRUZ, 2000).

However, the absence of the territorial dimension surrounds a great portion of the history of Brazilian public policies. Theis and Galvão (2012, p. 55) argue that “public policies can be more effective if its spatial dimension is brought to the first plan. And if notions of space, territory and region have their meaning properly explicited”.

Tourism has as a main characteristic the appropriation of territories and its development depends on the current organization and relations. Because of that, the performance of tourism in indirectly related to the country urban and regional public policies, since those regard the organization of the territory.

The history of the actions of public power in Brazil, regarding tourism, show, however, that it has ignored, systematically, the complex group of relations in which the activity is inserted. The absence of concatenation between tourism policies and urban and regional policies is a clear example of the strict vision that surrounds the construction of both (CRUZ, 2000, p. 35-6).

By the widening and integration of the action of public power, incorporating the territorial dimension, it is possible to aim for a development with justice and equality. For Etges (2005), development, in a territorial perspective, takes in perspective territory as a whole, comprehends its dynamics and diversity and, then, proposes strategies to promote a regional sustainable development. Similarly, Cruz (2000) alerts that the lack of territorial dimension in sectorial policies and in planning, in a general way, eliminates any possibility to the elaboration of well-succeeded plans and policies.

Regarding tourism, nowadays a strong tendency of development arises in a regional sphere. This emerges as a response to globalization and as a way to configure a touristic offer with high power of attractiveness. Situations in which municipalities don’t have potential to sustain the touristic activity by themselves but by doing it in a regional way makes it a viable alternative.

2 TERRITORY, REGION AND REGIONALIZATION

The constant presence of a simplifying vision in theoretical analysis and discussions transformed the notions of space, territory and region in synonyms. However, to explicit properly their meanings is essential, since the terms territory and region are key in order to formulate and develop public policies that have as goal any sort of intervention in the territory.

Santos (2002, p. 10) affirms that territory isn't just a group of natural systems and of systems constituted by juxtaposed things. Territory has to be understood as used territory, not the territory itself. Territory used is the ground added the identity. Hence, identity represents the feeling of belonging, of identification with the space where life occurs.

The production and territory valuation supposes the understanding of the relations that make their functioning dynamic, since territory is a product and is conditioned by social relations. To Raffestin (1993, p. 144) "evidently the territory supports itself in space, but isn't space. It is a production, through space".

Territory is characterized as space of living (SANTOS, 2002), therefore, is deducted the idea of something in constant transformation, without forgetting traces of the past, present values and the impact of future actions. The socio-spatial formation reveals the way territory is used by society (SILVEIRA, 2010, p. 76), territories are socially constructed and deconstructed. Thus, Etges (2001) says that territory must be seen as something in process, a content-form, a trace of the union between the past and the immediate future. It has to be seen as a force field, a place of exercise, of contradictions between the vertical and the horizontal, State and markets, economic use and social use of resources.

Raffestin (1993) shows that the territory is configured by the space and is the result of an action conducted by a syntagmatic actor (an actor that realizes a program) at any level. By appropriating space in a concrete or abstract way, the actor territorializes the space. Still according o the author, the sense of acting and the appropriation are expressed by the understanding that territory is a space in which work is projected, being it energy or information, and that, by consequence, reveals relations of power. Theis and Galvão (2012, p. 62) conclude that "the concept of territory comprehends the relations of power individuals contract upon themselves".

By knowing the processes of social formation of territory, knowing the material and immaterial fluxes, it is possible to comprehend the synergy and dynamic of a specific region. Only with the comprehension of territory, with the emergence of a territoriality/identity it is possible to think about region and regionalization; if there isn't an understanding of territory, there is no regionalization. The region, through the perspective of the territory must be socially constructed and have traces of identity. These traces are present in the culture, economy and politics. Boisier (1994, p. 8) completes that socially constructing a region is potenciar su capacidad de auto organización, transformando una comunidad inanimada, segmentada por intereses sectoriales, poco perceptiva de su identificación territorial y en definitiva, pasiva, en otra, organizada, cohesionada, consciente de la identidad sociedad-región, capaz de movilizarse tras proyectos colectivos, es decir, capaz de transformarse en sujeto de su propio desarrollo.

Lencioni (1999) affirms that the region is a space with physical and sociocultural characteristics, product of a history that created relations which made men take root in the territory and made this space particular. Region, according to Silveira (2010), today, more than ever, is a result of interdependencies and a dialectic opposition between a global and a local order, and the author highlights that it is in the region that the local and the global affirm and deny themselves dialectically. According to Limonad (2004, p. 57-8), the region is constructed “by the action of distinct actors/agents/subjects in multiple articulated scales, which in some way find a refusal in practices and processes socio-spatial, historical and geographically localized”.

More and more it is stressed that regions are constructed, consolidated, transformed and decomposed through processes of social, political and economic interaction, developed throughout history (BANDEIRA, 2007). That is, seeing the region as a dynamic concept and not as a category that crystalizes contents form the past (SILVEIRA, 2010).

Therefore, the region is not a place for homogeneity, since it is the result of a particular perspective of analysis. This perspective can be physical, social, cultural, economic or even a combination, because the region is composed by various groups of activities and social relations between its actors. In this sense, it becomes evident the dynamic characteristic of the region.

The simplistic act of grouping municipalities with superficial similarities and geographical proximity does not configure a regionalization. This, in its turn, consists in promoting the construction of a democratic, cohesive, participative environment, capable of involving public power, private initiative, the third sector and the resident population.

Regionalization is founded on the necessity or interest of intervention or study of a specific territory. The delimitation of this area depends on criteria and decisions that can be political, administrative, economic or scientific. It cannot be forgotten that besides physical elements, territory is formed by various immaterial, conflicting and dynamic elements. It is also important to emphasize that the results of regionalization must, firstly, answer to the regional society demands. Otherwise, the actor will not develop adherence to the proposal and actions, which generate insignificant results.

3 APPROACHES ON TOURSTIC PLANNING

The concept of planning is situated in the roll of concepts that comprise diverse meanings according to the interlocutor or field of knowledge. Touristic planning also brings this range and comprises one of the fundamental aspects of the touristic phenomenon.

Feger et al. (2010, p. 114) say that “regarding the future, planning contributes to answering to three types of necessities related to it: creating a future; facing known or predictable future situations; and/or coordinating between events and resources”. Even though planning has a resolute character, Lira (1990, p. 3) shows that no debe confundirse con la elaboración de un documento denominado Plan o Estrategia porque: a) la selección, priorización, análisis de factibilidad y compatibilidad de los objetivos es una tarea permanente que involucra a todos los representantes de las sociedades regionales de un determinado territorio

Public management, the main factor responsible for the performance of planning, must seek to act in a coordinated way, promoting partnerships and effectuating a constant flux of information in order to facilitate the process. Therefore, the plan can only be conceptualized by the grouping of a political project (LIRA, 1990).

The establishment of networks between actors of a region and between regions appears to be an important tool for the exchange of information and knowledge and it also configures itself as an action of integration and cooperation. The political actions cannot ignore the information the groups themselves elaborate based on their local universes of living, interacting and working (MARTELETO; SILVA, 2004, p. 48).

The lack of integration between the agents involved in the other spheres of management makes difficult the formulation and execution of planning actions. “In this sense, it is necessary to qualify the planning, follow-up and evaluation systems, network communication and information, in order to widen social participation and guarantee the success of the shared management” (MINISTÉRIO DO TURISMO, 2913, p. 25).

Hence, as affirms Lira (1990, p. 1-2), "planificar" no es solo un problema técnico, tampoco una mera tarea del Estado, sino más bien una actividad continua de respaldo a un arduo y lento proceso de dialogo y entendimiento social, protagonizado directamente por los actores reales, públicos y privados, como también por la difusa y creciente gama de las entidades no gubernamentales.

Planning is an activity that involves the intention to establish favorable conditions to reach the proposed goals. It has as objective the provisioning of facilities and services so that a community attends to its objectives and necessities (RUSCHMANN, 2001).

To reach the goals proposed by the plans, the specific diagnosis of the touristic area and its potentialities, as well as complementary areas, is providential to the construction of a strategic thought about what is intended for the region. According to Lira (1990, p. 13), “el ‘arte’ de elaborar diagnósticos implica la adecuada selección a priori de marcos interpretativos y de utilizar sabiamente la infraestructura y oferta de información existente si es que realmente se quiere avanzar”.

Tourism, as any other economic activity, sharpened by the capitalist means of production and the territorial division of labor, is installed where the most favorable conditions for its development are found. In this case, the favorable condition is the presence of touristic attractions, understood as a tourism input. After that, the territory of tourism is configured according to the necessities of the activity and imposes its own logic of order.

The main characteristic of tourism, what makes it so complex and brings out the necessity of planning, is its relation to territory. Tourism is seen as the only activity that elementary consumes territory, the product of tourism demands an organizational logic of territory use that is particular. According to Cruz (2000, p. 12), the new socio-spatial organization established by the touristic use of territory is settled in a preexistent socio-spatial organization and it would be a mistake to believe that there are no struggles from the encounter of these different temporalities. The old connections assimilate novelties, but force, in the limit, the coexistence. It is the power of the local/regional, the contiguous space, the co-presence (SILVEIRA, 1997) that is manifested, that is imposed.

In this context, the economic, social, environmental, political and cultural impacts generated by tourism turn into a necessity the process of planning and managing able to orient and constitute itself as a powerful tool for development (MINISTÉRIO DO TURISMO, 2003). Therefore, the way the appropriation of a determined part of territory by tourism occurs depends on the public policy of the sector. It is the public policy task to establish targets and directions to accompany the socio-spatial development of the activity. In the absence of public policy, tourism occurs by default, that is, according to particular initiatives and interests (CRUZ, 2000). As Fratucci explains (2011, p. 1483), El turismo no es el sujeto de los procesos de turistificación sino el resultado de las acciones e interacciones de los diversos agentes sociales que lo producen, se observa que la dimensión espacial de esos procesos es fundamental para el establecimiento de políticas públicas o privadas que realmente intenten instalar, o incrementar, procesos de desarrollo humano sustentables y duraderos para las comunidades residentes en los destinos turísticos.

It is in the process of globalization that tourism planning is necessary, since through tourism is possible to give value to the particularities and preserve the region identity. That way is created a resistance regarding the rising perverse competitiveness imposed by globalization and the tendency to homogenization of destines.

The perspective of tourism development must transcend the sectorial and corporate conception in order to widen and articulate the various dimensions of the sector, organizations, territory and social participation. In this sense, Ruschmann (2001, p. 100) alerts that the recognition of the amplitude of the phenomenon and the range of factors, besides the interdisciplinary and convergent character of the activity, made planning fundamental.

Therefore, a tourism public policy must articulate strategic questions related to the touristic trade and society, aiming for a non-exclusive strengthening, that opens participation space in new molds of management, that deepens democratic participation also in the field of tourism, advancing beyond a private character, so precious to the capitalist market (GASTAL; MOESCH, 2007).

The implantation of tourism management decentralization consists in a higher approximation to the region situation, not incurring in suppositions about a scenario. It is from management based on reality that decisions are made about the best alternative for development, which doesn't mean that management is desynchronized with national or state orientations. Paiva (2004) agrees that a diagnosis cannot be made without the full collaboration of local agents, because the potential of each region depends, deeply, on the image local agents have of its potentialities and of the future they idealize.

In order for tourism to be effective, it is not only necessary diagnosis and elaboration of goals. The establishment of relations within the public sector, and with that and society, academia and private initiative is a necessary condition for the regional development of tourism. Still, there must be established relations between municipalities, markets and other parts involved. However, the geographic proximity of the agents involved with tourism is not a sufficient condition for cooperation. It depends, firstly, on the capacity of constructing new regional territorialities and unity in search of common goals.

4 CONTEXT OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN TOURISM

While approaching the term development it is necessary, firstly, to clarify some related concepts. It is fundamental to distinguish the idea of economic growth, still used as a synonym of development. Economic growth is a concept used since the classics of Economics. For that, a barrier was created which makes it difficult to transcend to the idea of development. For some authors, growth was necessary for progress and translated as a raise in the production of goods of a country. That being, the notion of growth represents a quantitative perspective.

According to Veiga (2006), in reality, until the mid-1970s, practically all identified development solely as material progress. Still, “for some, progress would lead spontaneously to better social standards. […] But all saw development as a synonym of economic growth” (VEIGA, 2006, p. 161).

The logic of economic growth aims for the maximum expansion of production means, disseminating actions throughout the territory that are coherent with the global order. The capacity to produce each time more is increasing and founded on the hegemonic discourse, which refers to growth as progress created by globalization. Consuming is also aligned to the logic of growth, as well as mass consuming, in which the offer exceeds the demand and products and consuming patterns are massified.

Dupas (2007, p. 73) emphasizes the consequences inherent to economic growth “[…] but this **progress**, dominant discourse of global elites, brings with it exclusion, income concentration, underdevelopment and severe environmental damages, aggressing and restricting essential human rights” [author’s emphasis].

On the other hand, the idea of development is constituted as a qualitative change (VEIGA, 2006) of the Welfare State of society. Souza (1997) comprehends that development is a process of overcoming social problems, forming a more just society for its citizens. However, in order for that to happen, it is necessary to overcome the notion of numeric growth and process and verify to whom this progress “benefit” serves and under which risks and costs, being them social, cultural or environmental.

The adaptation of the capitalist means of production to the notion of development (sustainable or endogenous) is slow and difficult. Therefore, it is not only about a conceptual question, but the challenge do construct, besides a “concept” of the development, a true strategy to raise awareness in order to reach it.

It is presented an idea of development stimulated by bottom-up actions, aiming for an endogenous perspective to articulate decision-making. Through the stimulus to participate and the capability of social organization it is made possible to set in motion endogenous actions, since the agents themselves perform an autonomous relation, mobilized and articulated. Is this case, the population acknowledges its identity and becomes an active subject of regional development. In this context, the process of regional development is composed by the enhancement of the actors' actions **in** the territory, configuring a territorial identity.

This notion of development brings up horizontalities. Santos (2006) emphasizes that, based on territorial society it is possible to find a path that doesn't favor the perverse globalization and approximates development building. In this conception, effective participation of actors is a priority. And, in order for development to be viable, it must be founded in the principles of democracy and cooperation.

In the case of tourism development, public policy must take the tourism conception as an open and complex system, a multisectorial activity which execution must, necessarily, incorporate multidisciplinar, multicultural and multisocial visions (GASTAL; MOESCH, 2007, p. 45). Tourism, as public policy that involves planning and management as a way to advance in the search of a more humane and humanizing practice (GASTAL; MOESCH, 2007), breaching globalizing tourism, must emphasize a development based on territory.

Cruz (2000, p. 17) says that "tourism concurs, in the process of territory transformation for its use, along with other territory uses, as well as socio-spatial formations that precedes its emergence". In this sense, tourism can promote substantial change within a region.

The clarity of this conception is deeply important, since some tourist destinations, in the absence of organization and after the accentuated economic interest, are developed ignoring regional particularities. This practice results in copy and homogenization of destines. On the other hand, when taking an endogenous approach, territory demands and particularities are emphasized. The constructed, transformed and appropriated territory by the endogenous initiative of regional actors contributes to the regional development. Teles (2006, p. 51) adverts that "when tourism is not planned through the region perspective, it is created an area dislocated from its context".

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The tourism sector in Brazil has struggled lately with the challenge to give continuity to achievements from the last decades and to advance in the widening of actions regarding touristic planning. These actions aim to make viable a continuous and sustainable development and for that a shared management between many sectors and actors involved is necessary.

Taking into account the advantages and disadvantages of tourism, planning is key so that the activity can occur promoting positive results. It is in the practice of planning and managing that public power has an emphatic role. It is its responsibility to prioritize actions that aim to articulate with other economic and social sectors and, at the same time, actions in search of a regional development. Rushmann (2001, p 9) highlights that "[…] the planning of spaces, equipment and touristic activities presents itself as a necessity to avoid damages to the visited locals and maintain attractiveness of resources for future generations".

At last, besides notable benefits, tourism is an economic activity and its reflexes can translate to harm and risks. In a general way, the negative aspects of the activity originate in the lack of planning and knowledge about the complexity of the touristic phenomenon, as well as overexploiting it.

Therefore, comprehending territory as an expression of appropriation and usage by society is of fundamental importance in order to plan the touristic activity in a sustainable way, enriching regional particularities as well as potentialities for development.

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THE EVALUATION OF QUALITY OF THE CULTURAL PRODUCT SUPPLIED OF THE MUNICIPAL CULTURAL AND PUBLIC BENEFIT ENTERPRISE OF KARDITSA-GREECE (DI.K.E.K.): A SYSTEMIC APPROACH AND RESEARCH

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Abstract

The contemporary cultural environment makes urgent the strengthening and the adjustment of production structures and supply of art and culture. It is certainly depending on the individual involvement, the evolution of the economic and social conditions, the requirements and the expectations for which the effective exercise of the cultural policy of each Member presents an outstanding priority consideration. It seeks that the produced cultural products have high quality and competitive nature, able to attract the interest of the public. In this context we should unavoidably takes into consideration the activities of the cultural enterprises, they are required to preserve their viability, to renew the productive operational practices and to meet the high cultural requirements of the area in which they are active.

A typical case study of one of the most important cultural organization of Karditsa Municipality is the Municipal Cultural and Public Benefit Enterprise of Karditsa (DI.KE.K.). This organization attempts to outline the cultural environment, to identify the factors that are responsible for the organizations' production weaknesses and last but not least we are going to propose a formation of a dynamic production network that is expected to ensure a high level of value and produced cultural products which can meet the cultural needs of the public in the local and the regional level.

Keywords : Cultural Entreprises, Cultural Product, Product Quality, Cultural Audience, Local and Regional Cultural Development.

1. Introduction

The complete understanding and effective implementation of every country's cultural policy lays the foundations for the creation of a series of significant cultural centers with products and upgraded cultural contributions which consequently provide an added cultural and comparative value on a national and international level, and which are able to stimulate various productive actions with a positive social and financial effect on the narrower and wider area in which they act (Paschalidis, 2002a:225-229; Konsola, 2006:24).

In greek reality it is however observed that the existing layout of cultural structures, of the bodies exercising cultural policy, of the means available, as well as the need for action and survival within a demanding and competitive cultural environment, make necessary a generalized structural and functional restructuring of the existing cultural institutions, assisted by a cooperative perception of all the creative and managerial factors and bodies for the better promotion of all cultural aspects in all geographical dimensions (Chambouri-Ioannidou, 2002a:18-21; Chambouri-Ioannidou, 2003:27-29). Given that today the democratization of culture and art dominate, both of which represent the increased individual and group participation in the production and consumption process, what is mainly aimed at, is to attract public interest, to claim its limited time, its energy and support and to transmit the resulting cultural notions to wider social groups, since it is mandatory that we detach from a limited ,sophisticated elitist approach towards the provision and relish of cultural goods,without social distinctions concerning their accessibility and consumption (Bryant, 1988; Klamer, 1996; Streeten, 2006; Kakkou, 2009).

Besides, particularly problematic has recently appeared to be the situation on a local level, with the direct consequence of downgrading not only the importance but also the quality of the produced cultural goods. Although several Local Government Organizations, as significant partners on the cultural stage, have created important cultural centers, their majority displays a managerial gap, so that the produced and offered cultural product is qualitatively downgraded and appears unable to attract the audience's interest (Klamer, 1996; Chambouri-Ioannidou, 2002a:22). The situation undoubtedly becomes even worse due to the weakness of the local cultural action to suggest alternative competitive forms of cultural activity, or it's making a decision which in most cases lacks a complete and long term consideration. Without being an exception to the rule, in a similar condition has recently been one of the once leading enterprises of cultural and social profile, the Municipal Benefit Enterprise of Karditsa (DI .K.E.K).[1]

This enterprise constitutes the major cultural and social body of the Municipality of Karditsa, whose aim is to promote actions of cultural development and activities of social policies, as aspects of the cultural being. However the highly competitive conditions of the cultural environment in which it acts, the absence of satisfying and regular financial support by the state and local bodies of jurisdiction, as well as its close dependence upon the given municipal authority which makes various decisions by the preference of the occasional principal, compose an organizational and productive background with bureaucratic features, unable to set achievable goals, suffering from the lack of dynamic strategic decisions and plans for action, action failure and deviations from the consumer audience's expectations, resulting in DI.K.E.K displaying a deficit in quality cultural product and significant cultural contribution.

Given the problems above, the aim of this paper is –through a theoretical and research approach, to estimate the value of the resulting and provided cultural product of this cultural unit, an evaluation made by the cultural "CONSUMERS" themselves, living on the narrower and wider area of Karditsa, so that a stable added value for DI.K.EK's provided cultural product is secured.

Through these efforts it is expected that DI.K.EK's profile will be more completely promoted, creating a sense of unity and focused direction towards cultural action, which will allow it to overcome the current organizational and productive difficulties and be led to a continuous flow and production of high quality |cultural works. Thus the assurance towards an effective and ongoing process of solving the arising social problems and towards satisfying the local cultural needs becomes plausible, the strong discrepancies which create an atmosphere of tension and disappointment decrease, dialogue and trust on the part of the public-with the consequent participation in the cultural events are reinforced (Klamer,1996; Paschalidis, 2002a:47-52; Chambouri-Ioannidou, 2002b:80; Ekonomou, 2003:92-93).

2. Methodological Approach

2.1 Production Planning and Implementation

Like every cultural organization, when formulating its **production circuit** (see Figure 1) (Montana ET AL, 1993: 84-85; Kakkou, 2009), DI.K.E.K, has to carry out on regular time periods a **production planning**, which contributes effectively in drawing up plans concerning the finally produced cultural product. The main parts of this planning include **what will be produced** (KIND OF THE PRODUCED GOODS**,** WANTED RESULT OF THEIR PRODUCTION, AIMING –CATEGORIZATION OF THE AUDIENCE), and **how it will be produced**(PRODUCTION MEANS AND USED RESOURCES). Later, the transformation of this planning into reality takes place on the basis of the **production process,** which consists of 3 individual phases :

- **Input Phase**. During this first phase, a series of immaterial and material elements enter the production process. In the particular case as**immaterial elements** are regarded the cultural experience, the cultural background (CULTURE), the audience's response to DI.K.EK's cultural contribution up to now, and the degree of awareness of the consumer audience for its participation as the final evaluator (Makri, 2003:58-61), whereas the **material elements** refer to the primary and secondary raw material necessary for the creation of the cultural goods. Possible inadequate input of such elements caused serious problems in the development of production. Nevertheless, through the research done on[2]DI.K.E.K's consumer audience, a significant deficit was found out, concerning the utilization of some immaterial elements, the utilization of the significant cultural background (CULTURE) of the area and the awareness for the participation of the consumer audience in the final formulation of the cultural product

Concerning the first dimension, through the question "to what extend does di.κ.ε.κmake use of the local cultural heritage in its provided cultural goods , the consumer audience presented a degree of utilization which spans from 'A LITTLE' and 'RELATIVELY' (**MEAN**=3,60 AND ***Std Deviation***=1,379). A significant percentage of the people asked (**cumulative percent**: 77,1%) was located in the span from 'NOT AT ALL' to

'RELATIVELY'. As far as the second dimension is concerned, with regard to THE SUPPLY On The Part Of Di.K.E.K Of Opportunities To The Audience For Assessing The Former's Cultural And Social Product, And The 'Means For This Assessment', the great majority of the audience (76,3%) gave a negative response and only 23,7% responded positively (From This Percentage, 64,5% Was Through Leaflets, 25,8% Through The Internet And 9,7% Through Phone Calls), which verifies the organization's inability to use important input for the formulation of the final cultural product.

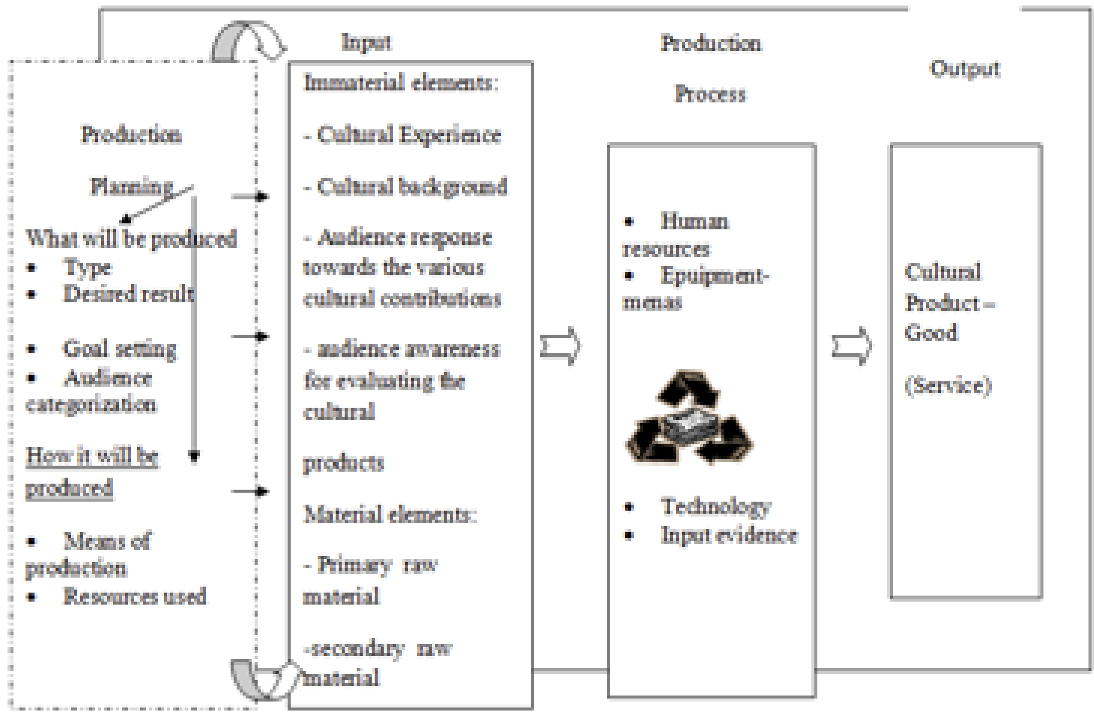


Figure 1: Production Circuit based on the Production Planning and Process Planning followed by DI.K.E.K

- **Production Processing phase.** During this phase, the input factors enter the place of production, where the available human resources, the equipment, the means and the technology interrelate in a **production process** aiming at producing the final product.
  - **Output Phase.** In this final stage, the ready cultural product is available for use by the consumer public.

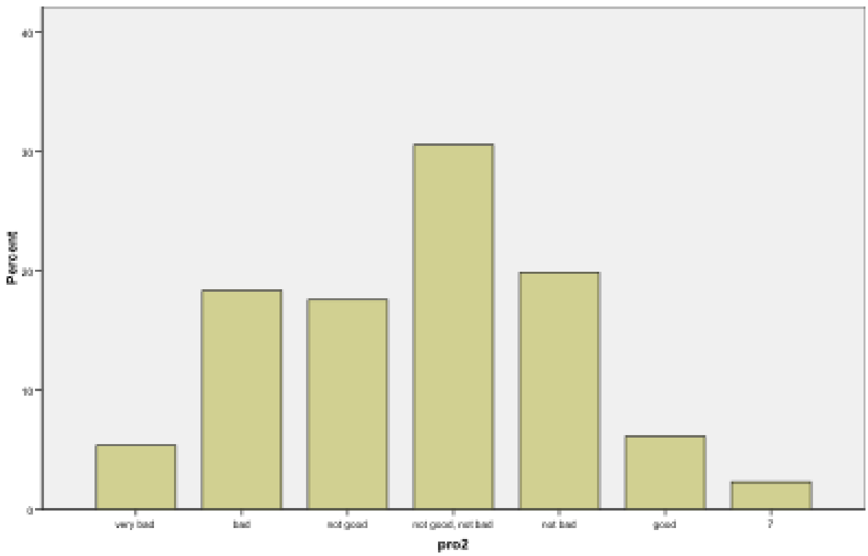
With regard to the finally produced cultural product what is aimed at is the specification of the main factors which shape its **quality** on the one hand and determine its cultural **value** on the other. Mostly responsible for shaping the quality of the cultural product are the factors of the organization's inner and outer environment. Beyond a particular personal opinion expressed repeatedly about the problems observed during the research both in the inner and outer environment of DI.K.E.K and which have serious repercussions on the quality of its produced cultural and social product, the findings coming from the analysis of the relevant question clearly present a similar public opinion. Thus, when the people asked were invited to spot ,through a wide factor listing 'the most important problems in providing products of high cultural and social value', they presented as main reasons the insufficient state and municipal funding (62,6%), the close politically oriented dependence on the state and local government (59,5%), the administration's weaknesses (56,5%), the absence of strategy and goals on the part of the administration(55%) and the administration's knowledge deficit (43,5%).

2.2 Production Outcome

The main factors which determine the cultural value of the produced product were defined as follows :

- Total assessment of the provided cultural and social work. With the aim of gauging the total sense that the audience gets from DI.K.E.K's provided work, a specific Question was asked, in which the consumer audience presented through its answer a level of assessment spanning from 'not good' and 'neither good nor bad' (WITH MEAN =3,69 AND STANDARD DEVIATION=1,398), with the greater percentage (30,5%) considering the provided work 'NEITHER GOOD NOR BAD'. The audience's total attitude is presented in the following bar chart (BAR CHART 1).
- Individual evaluative characterizations. It was considered essential that the level of the audience's approval or disapproval of the characterizations of DI.K.EK's provided cultural work be researched, so that it can be realized how the public's reduced interest for DI.K.E.K;s cultural actions is explained. So, in the relevant question the choices 'INTERESTING', 'CREATIVE' and "TRIVIAL" presented a "NEUTRAL" attitude, since the mean was about 4 (4,05 - 3,88 - 3,75 CORRESPONDINGLY), while the choices "SUBVERSIVE", "INNOVATIVE" and "POINTLESS" were about 3 (2,76 - 2,85 - 3,14 correspondingly), presenting an attitude of "RATHER DISAGREE", thus confirming and explaining the existing situation.

Assessment of the cultural and social contribution of di.k.e.k's individual units and actions. In order to be found out which of its action have had a deep impact on the public's conscience as the most and least important for the cultural and social development of the area, the audience was asked through a question to evaluate a series of actions and designated as "IMPORTANT" by order of merit the Municipal Library (MEAN = 4,92 AND STD DEVIATION=1,723), Municipal Cinemas (MEAN= 4,89 STD DEVIATION =1,471), and cultural events (mean= 4,82 and Std deviation=1,872). The lowest average of assessment was given to the Municipal Radio Stations (mean=3,23 and Std deviation=1,906), Parking Places (MEAN= 3,34 AND STD DEVIATION=2,006),and the Youth Information Centre (MEAN=3,63 AND STD DEVIATION =2,096), the contribution of which ranged from "INSIGNIFICANT" and "NEITHER INSIGNIFICANT" nor "SIGNIFICANT".



Bar chart 1: Visual Presentation of the audience's assessment of the work provided by DI.K.E.K.

2.3 Contribution to Production

- ITS CULTURAL CONTRIBUTION AS A WHOLE. Given the contribution of the cultural organizations to the reinforcement of social bonds, to urban revival, to upgrading the cultural level and to the formulation of a recognizable identity of their area, as well as to the area's touristic and financial development (Paschalidis, 2002a:232-235; Grodach and Loukaitou-Sideris, 2007; Lord, 2008: 6-7), it was considered necessary to research the extent to which the audience estimates that DI.K.E.K., during its long existence, offers similar services to an area in great need of such competitive advantages, so that it can confront the special emphasis given by the State on the financial and business development of important neighboring urban centers, like Larissa and Volos, at least as it is noted down by the local printed media. Therefore, when the participants were asked to pinpoint the degree of their approval or disapproval of the various categories of contribution to the town and its region, their estimations were designated by the response "NEUTRALLY" with a slightly bigger preference given to "STRESSING CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE"(mean = 3,95 and Std deviation=1,762), as well as to the touristic development of the town and the surrounding area (mean= 3,92 and Std=1,897).

- ASSESSMENT OF DI.K.E,K'S FUTURE CONTRIBUTION. This particular point was considered indispensable, since the possible estimation that DI.K.E.K., under its current organizational status, can offer in the future products of high cultural and social value, from the one hand contributes to management complacency, and from the other, encourages it to continue its work properly and to make plans for future action. The opposite estimation–which of course matches our personal, often stated opinion-, would lead DI.K.E.K, to skepticism, self-criticism, initiative taking ,aiming at the necessary corrective movements. On the basis of the question relevant to the issue of DI.K.E.K's future direction of its cultural and social work , the audience advocated in favor of the second estimation, displaying a reserved attitude (MEAM= 3,24 AND STD DEVIATION =1,533), oriented towards "RATHER DISAGREE". Moreover, the fact that a percentage near 80% spanned from "TOTALLY DISAGREE" to "NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE" is noteworthy.

1. **3. Review –Conclusions**

The high demands of the audience of Karditsa and the wider area concerning the provided products of important cultural value face the insufficient state and municipal funding and Cultural Units' close political dependence upon the State and the Local Government, as in the case of DI.K.E.K. Nevertheless, quite significant percentages of the people asked, additionally designated as major ineffective factors, DI.K.E.K's. weaknesses and knowledge gap, along with the lack of strategy and goal setting for the utilization of the area's significant cultural background, for awareness raising aiming at the consumer audience's participation in the final formulation of the cultural product.

The research also revealed the administration's systematic refusal to accept critical feedback and assessment messages towards the prospect of making use of the significant input for the formulation of the finally produced cultural product. Therefore the feeling of fatigue caused by the provision of unimaginative actions and the audience's distrust in the administration's announcements about any supposed improvement prospects, built a conscious unwillingness towards the participation of cultural audience in the cooperative formation of an innovative and desired cultural product produced by DI.K.E.K

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[1]The town of Karditsa, with a population of about 45.000 citizens, is the capital of the Prefecture of Karditsa, which is a sheer agricultural Prefecture with public sector employed people, located in the center of Greece, and belongs to the District of Thessaly.

[2]The size and range of the problems concerning the research of DI.K.E.K.'s production outcome create a situation for which –in terms of research- there is no empirical approach to the whole issue through hypothesis testing being generally characterized by the inflexible features of a positivist approach (Siomkos ET AL, 2005: 22). In cases of such features, for the detailed research and effective approach to the whole problematic situation the direct specification of the various problems is suggested, as they are observed through the researcher's in situ observation and general reports, accompanied by the support of the data with the use of international biography, interviews and questionnaires from all parties involved in this cultural institution

Therefore, the methodological approach to the subject of this paper is carried out on the basis of an EXPLORATORY STUDY and aims at the development of knowledge in terms of an analytical and integrative process of the organizational and productive structuring of organizations like DI.K.E.K, which have some special features (Kosiol, 1962; Sdrolias, 1991).

The research was carried out with the use of a questionnaire. The questions were mainly scaled questions (THE 7 GRADE LIKERT SCALE WAS USED), while some of them were dichotomic and some others were multiple choice questions. The distribution, completion, and collection of the questionnaires took place from 14 to 22 March 2009. 180 questionnaires were distributed in different times and places in the Karditsa city with the method of personal interview (INTERCEPT INTERVIEW) and they were filled in by 142 persons, from whom 9 questionnaires were incomplete. Therefore, the final sample of the fully completed questionnaires was 131.

The process of data processing was carried out with the help of the statistic package SPSS16 (Siomkos ET AL, 2005;Howitt ET AL, 2006), and particularly with the method of DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS, where its main tools were primarily used, namely Mean, Std. Deviation, Frequencies-Percent, after it was first realized that the reliability coefficient Cronbach's of the scales that were used to measure the multifaceted notion of cultural product is 0,879, higher than 0,700, which is the normal questionnaire limit (Bishop ET AL., 2007; Hair ET AL., 2010). For a better presentation of the results of the process, the processing and the drawing of relevant conclusions a bar chart was also used.

THE ROLE OF DMO FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF A TOURIST DESTINATION- BULGARIA CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the scientific report is to present in detail the role of Destination Management Organisation (DMO) for sustainable development of a tourist destination, as well as the opportunities for implementation of strategic policies and conditions for constituting different types of management structures. The competitiveness and attractiveness of destinations are supposed to use effective, sustainable strategies, based on the market conditions and preferences on one hand, and the other to balance the interests inside the destination.

The main problems discussed in the report are concerned to: the concept for sustainable tourism; product features and management aspects of the destination, institutionalization and examples for DMO model; strategies and activities for sustainable tourism in Europe and the critics of legislation norms for establishing DMOs in Bulgaria.

The paper's actuality is argued by the problems facing the management of tourist destination in context of the ideas and policies for sustainable development in Europe. The issues for DMO are poorly represented in Bulgarian practice, which further allows us to create this paper.

Keywords: DMO, sustainable development, Bulgaria, destination

INTRODUCTION

The development and management of destinations are largely determined by the direction in which the global tourism industry is developing. Many different sources indicate that the tourism industry has the potential to continue growing under the influence of socio-economic factors such as: demographic changes, economic well-being, business expansion, and the globalization of cultural and electronic connections. These factors pose a huge challenge for the subjects, who are relevant to making decisions about the path of tourist destinations' development. The principles of sustainability are particularly emphasized.

Destination management is a complicated and complex task that requires an integrated systemic approach. In terms of demand, tourists can choose from a vast variety of destinations. In terms of supply, the destination management organisations are trying to draw the attention of highly competitive markets.

Competitiveness and attractiveness of the destinations suggest the use of effective, sustainable strategies that are based on market conditions and preferences, as well as on the balancing of interests inside the tourist destination.

Sustainable tourism concept

The expansion of human activities at the end of the twentieth century had serious negative impacts on the environment. People began to look for new methods to overcome the negative impacts. Thus, the idea of sustainability was born.

Tourism, as a part of the global economy, makes no exception. Its massive development in recent years has had a number of negative consequences, such as the following (Marinov et al., 2009a):

- Excessive tourist activity in certain places. This exhausts tourist resources, destroys the cultural heritage of the indigenous people and disrupts the ecological balance.
- Reduced economic impact of tourism for some destinations. This is due to the development of standard, low-quality, seasonal and inexpensive forms of holiday tourist product.
- Negative socio-cultural effects on the values, lifestyle and culture of the population in areas receiving tourists.

- Negative attitude of the tourists towards holiday resorts that have turned into standardized tourist products for mass ‘consumption’.

Sustainable tourist development requires management of all tourist resources. This type of management should be able to satisfy the economic, social and aesthetic needs. At the same time it should maintain cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life supporting ecosystems.

Based on the principles of sustainability, we can conclude that the development of sustainable tourism within a certain territory requires large-scale, targeted and long-term actions in at least five areas (Marinov et al., 2009b).Tourism development should align with the potential of the respective territory.

1. Provision of equal rights and obligations for all participants in tourism development.
2. Active involvement of the local population in service processes.
3. Achieving consensus regarding the benefits, the losses and the taken decisions among the community.
4. Conducting an active policy of dissemination of the concept of sustainable development of tourism and
5. Formation of a positive attitude of the concerned groups towards this development.

A well-known and undisputed fact is that tourism, in all its diversity, is closely linked with the choice of a destination. When choosing a destination it is important to take into account not only the natural and anthropogenic resources of the destination but also many other features, as well as their management.

Destination management is a term used to describe all the ways in which tourism influences the destination. This includes planning and control of tourism development, provision of infrastructure, visitor management, marketing, provision of information, business support, determination and compliance with the standards, and monitoring. It should cover all aspects of the visitor’s good experience in the chain of tourist value added and in accordance with the principles of the integrated quality management.

An important component of destination management, if it is dedicated to sustainable development, is the determination of **indicators** related to the goals of **sustainable development**,as well as the determination of a process for monitoring these indicators.

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) set the 5 criteria for the selection of indicators for the purposes of tourist destination management (WTO, 2007a):

- Compliance of the indicator with the corresponding management question.
- Opportunities for obtaining and analyzing the necessary information.
- Authenticity and reliability of the information.
- To be clear and easily understandable for the consumer.
- Comparability over time and by region.

Nature of destination management organisation (DMO)

In order to be competitive, destinations should provide visitors with wonderful experiences and benefits. These effects depend on many organizations working together as one. Destination management requires merging of various interests in order to achieve a common goal, to ensure the vitality and integrity of the destination now and in the future.

Nowadays, in many destinations are constituted destinations management organisations (DMO) that guide their development. Traditionally responsible for the marketing of destinations, DMO are becoming strategic leaders in the destination development. This role requires leadership and coordination of management activities in the framework of a coherent strategy.

In reality, the DMO can best serve to facilitate the dialogue between the private sector, public sector, and other stakeholders who otherwise collaborate with difficulty or don't understand how their decisions affect tourist destinations in the long-term.

Thanks to this unique ability, DMO is invaluable in the support of tourism development, especially in developing destinations where tourism is an important engine of the economy and a mechanism for building equitable social capacity.

Destination management represents the coordinated management of all the elements forming the destination (attractions, facilities, access, marketing and pricing), (WTO, 2007b) figure. 1.

The role of DMO for the tourist destination of the 21st century becomes more and more important. The global development of tourism and the growing competition worldwide, determine the need to change the function of DMO - from a marketing organization to a key management unit of the destination.

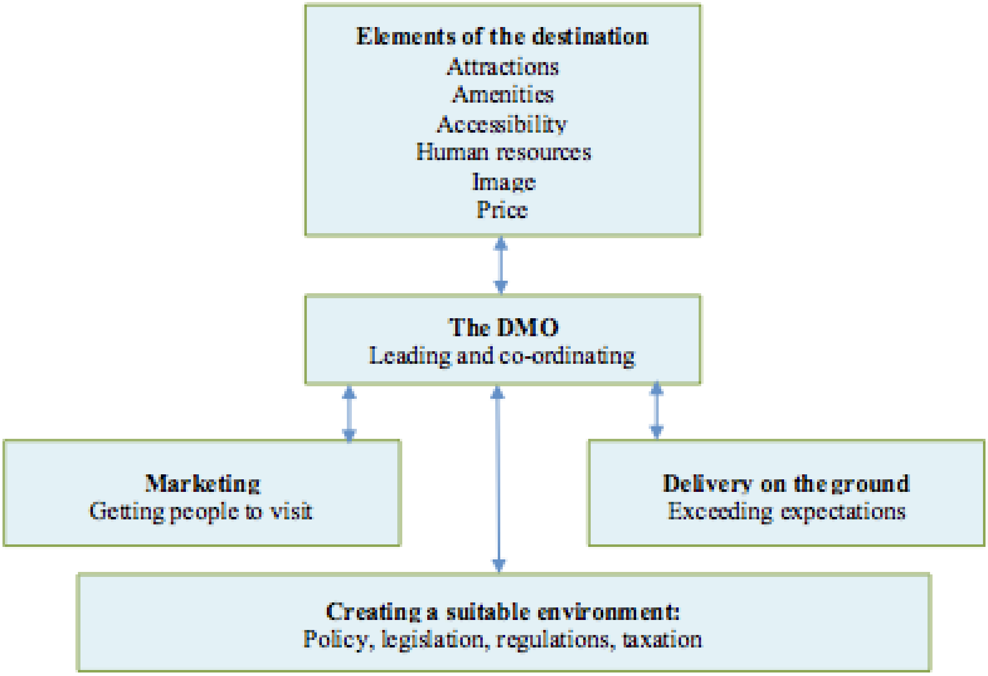

Figure 1: Destination management

Four common key strategic objectives should be considered by the DMO (Buhalis, 2000):

1. Improving the long-term prosperity of the local population

2. Making customers happy by maximizing their level of satisfaction

3. Maximum profitability of local businesses and maximizing multiplier effects providing sustainable balance between economic benefits and socio-cultural and environmental costs in order to optimize the adverse impacts of tourism

The main purpose of the DMO is to create a master management plan and a marketing strategy for the destination. Thus, DMOs' main function becomes being 'DESTINATION DEVELOPERS' and acting as catalysts and facilitators of the realization of tourism.

Institutionalizatin and structuring of DMO - Models

In the international practice, there are numerous models for DMO, which depend on the way the sector is structured and managed in a given country. DMO can be institutionalized as:

• A department of a local government institution

• A partnership between several state institutions (based on the need for coordination between institutions from different spheres, for instance, infrastructure, transport, agriculture, etc.)

• A specialized coordination unit composed of representatives of various governmental institutions

• A state institution, which assigns functions to private contractors

• A public-private partnership (PPP) with certain fixed functions (mostly non-profit)

• A company (again, with clearly defined functions), entirely funded by private sector partners and/or commercial activities.

The international practice shows that the best model for destination management in terms of the market economy is a form of public-private partnership. Tourism depends on the provision of private and public services, as well as on the use of private and public resources.

We can draw the conclusion that the institutions from the public and private sector, which are involved in tourism, are subjects of destination management and as such they should strive for consensus, coordination and directivity of their efforts.

Conceptual model of the DMO in Bulgaria

The territory of the destination (Forest park "Rhodope") falls into the central part of the Rhodope mountain in Bulgaria, in the administrative boundaries of Kuklen municipality, Plovdiv province. In the Southern parts of the municipal territories is located forest park “Rhodope”, spreading over 23 000 decares, at a hight ranging from 700 to 1700 m. It consists of four tourist zones: rest-house “Zdravetz” (1250m above sea level); “Koprivkite” (1350m above sea level);”Studenetz (1450m above sea level) and “Byala Cherkva” (1650-

1700m above sea level). With ordinance of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests from 1963, „Byala Cherkva" is acknowledged as a mountain health resort.

The sustainable management of forest park "Rhodope" through the development of environmentally friendly and sustainable forms of tourism requires the development of local DMO.

Having in mind the international practice, the characteristics of the forest park "Rhodope" as a tourist destination, as well as the views expressed by stakeholders, a set of features that the management organization of forest park "Rhodope" should possess can be formulated. They are grouped into three main categories: Management emphasizing on coordination; Marketing; Provision of services.

The activity of the DMO of forest park "Rhodope", will focus on the following areas:

- Advertising forest park "Rhodope" as a sustainable tourist destination (brand management and image).
- Organizing campaigns to support local businesses in Kuklen municipality.
- Provision of information services (stewardship and management of Tourist Information Center and Tourist Information and Education Center).
- Management of an Internet portal and a booking system for forest park "Rhodope".
- Coordination of the actions and behaviour of the participants in the destination.
- Training and seminars (involving all interested parties).
- Business advice for the local tourism industry and the local small and medium-sized businesses in the sphere of the production of tourism goods and services.
- Launch of new products, development of routes aimed at exhibiting the park's unique flora and fauna, combined with information and training in eco-friendly tourist behaviour.
- Planning and conducting events (organizing cultural events in the destination, eco-forums, folk festivals, etc.).
- Management and maintenance of attractions.
- Developing strategies, conducting studies and identifying steps for future development.

Dmo "Forest park rhodope"-Organisational structure

An important aspect of the Organization of forest park "Rhodope" as a tourist destination is the institutionalization and the design of the organisation chart of the DMO, figure 2.

An appropriate form of organization for the sustainable management of the destination forest park "Rhodope" is a public-private partnership in the form of non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

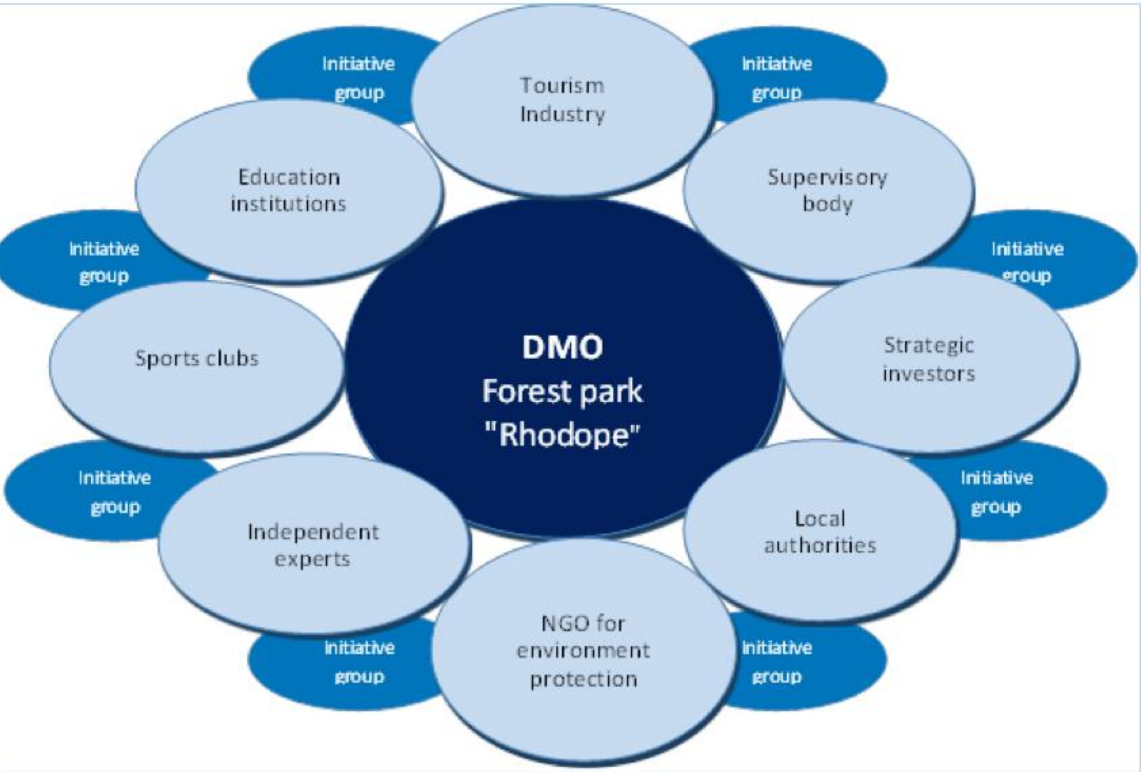

Figure 2: Organizational structure of DMO „FOREST PARK RHODOPE“

The purpose of this Association is to achieve sustainable development of the destination forest park "Rhodope" through consensual management and a programme approach. Besides the management body of the DMO, there will be created initiative groups in the various program activities.

Considering the circumstances listed above, it is of great importance that the participants in this association (regarding the management activities in the forest park) are in a peculiar institution, which has representatives in the management of the newly created organization. If we want the establishment of the proposed PPP to achieve maximum and lasting effect, the relations between entities included in its composition should be detailed and clearly spelled out in the Statute establishing the Unification.

This very important for the partners document must define in detail the the powers belonging to each of them, the manner and means of contributing to the development of the partnership, respectively to the effective, appropriate and beneficial for everyone management of the forest park.

Legislative context of the DMOs for development of sustainable tourism in BULGARIA as part of European union

The European Union (EU) pays more and more attention to the multilateral positive effects of tourism. First of all, tourism is acknowledged as an important economic activity, which contributes a great deal to economic growth, employment, and the advance of underdeveloped regions in the community. Second, tourism is seen as an important means for improving Europe's image and popularising the European model across the world (Marinov, 2013).

To achieve these goals, the actions favouring tourism can be grouped, based on four guidelines:

(1) Encouragement of the competitive power of Europe's tourist sector;

(2) Encouragement of the development of sustainable, responsible and quality tourism;

(3) Ratification of the reputation and image of Europe as a sum of sustainable and quality destinations;

(4) Optimal use of the potential of EU policies and financial means for the development of tourism.

During the period 2014-2020 EU intends to use a number of precautions and means to finance the adopted tourism development policy.

The main guidelines, regarding sustainable development of tourism in the Republic of Bulgaria, are incorporated in two documents "National strategy for sustainable development of tourism in the Republic of Bulgaria 2009-2013" adopted by the Council of

Ministers on 02.04.2009 and the project " Strategy for sustainable development of tourism in the Republic of Bulgaria – Horizon 2030".

„The strategy represents a platform for coordinated, joint actions by all parties involved in tourism so that the country's tourist potential is utilized"(mee, 2009).

The significance of this strategic document is that it set the foundation for a number of changes in tourist related legislation in Bulgaria. Despite this, it never closely examined how and by what means DMOs of different kinds can be created, following the example of advanced countries with developed tourism.

The strategy for sustainable tourism development in Bulgaria according to Horizon 2030 is based on article 6, section 1of the Law on Tourism. It is a preliminary masterplan /as formulated by the ministry/, which will be developed in separate modules, tourist products and regions over periods of time. The document includes the creation of mechanisms and means for management and execution troughout its entire validity (2014-2030).

The vision and mission of the destination Bulgaria are defined in this strategic document and are the basis for setting strategic goals and actions for their realization in all prioritized branches of tourism (seaside, mountains, eco-tourism, rural tourism, SPA, medical, hunting, cultural, golf etc.).

The strategy "Horizon 2030" adds to the previous document "National strategy for sustainable development of tourism in the Republic of Bulgaria 2009-2013", in regard to sustainable tourism development and the achievement of a higher quality product with a recognizable brand and the successful promotion on the tourist markets. In order to achieve this, the document deals with the question of tourist zoning. It is one of the most complex topics in the tourism management of any country. Tourist zoning has different aspects including regional management policies, strategy, tourism financing, the activities of local authorities, economic activities of the local population, etc.

The goal of Tourist zoning is the management of regions as separate destinations, encouraging partnerships on a regional level, supporting the founding and function of regional tourist organizations, management of tourist destinations considering common marketing, communications and information efforts.

The organizations created for the management of tourist regions will be responsible for management, as well as marketing, the necessary actions for creating a brand, public relations, and advertising of the tourist region, plus management of tourist information centres on the territory of the specific region.

After a careful examination of this Strategy, with the idea of sustainable development of the destination Bulgaria outlooking 2030, we can gain a new understanding of the diversification of Bulgaria's tourist product and increase its quality. Opportunities are created to define tourist products and destinations on Bulgarian territory on a regional level, as well as conditions for planning and management on that same level. This will pave the way for decentralization and creation of local management structures for tourism, in accordance with the modern concepts for "Destination Management Organizations".

CONCLUSION

If we take into account the strategic policies of the EU and those on Bulgarian territory, as well as the regulatory context for DMO, we can conclude that the future development of destinations depends mainly on their organizational management. This means that Bulgaria and its tourism are faced with a nuber of challenges like the introduction of tourist zoning in 2014, the creation of consolidated management structures on local level, and stimulation and popularisation of the incorporation of European standarts for sustainable tourism by the local tourism industry.

DMOs are often the only defenders of the tourism industry – in that role they guarantee a decreased negative impact on the environment and the local communities, while creating opportunities for people exchange. In reality, DMO can best be used as a means for mediating the dialog between the private and public sectors, as well as other interested parties, who otherwise would have difficulties cooperating, without a sense of how their decisions affect the destination in the long term.

The role of Destination Management Organizations in modern times becomes more and more important. Global tourism development tendencies, as well as new European strategies and policies "Europe 2020", provide a central place for the DMO as a standard management unit for the destination. In the modern age of the Internet and significant cultural diversity DMO should aim at guaranteeing the prosperity of the local population; maximizing visitor satisfaction; minimizing the negative impact of tourism by maintaining a sustainable balance between the economic benefits and the socio-cultural and ecological expences.

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THE STUDY OF APPLICABLE PATTERNS OF SALAKPHET LOCAL MARKET MANAGEMENT FOR TOURISM IN TRAT PROVINCE, THAILAND

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ABSTRACT

Establishing local markets for tourism purposes challenged the difficulties without the accurate directions. Therefore, Salakphet community in Trat, Thailand needed to investigate the appropriate patterns to follow the guidelines of local market management. The research aimed to identify the patterns of achieved local market management in Thailand and explore the factors that drove the successful local markets. The qualitative research was conducted by adopting in-depth interviews with market stakeholders, groups of local retailers who were influenced by establishing the local markets and official administrators in the total of 44 participants. Furthermore, non-participant observation of each local market was involved in this study.

Being successful in local market management, the results revealed five crucial factors: management, place, product, price and promotion. The initial factor was Management which the public sector set the central committees and self-operating group collaborating with private sectors, governmental sectors and educational institutions by assigning individual tasks and duties. In relation to places, locating near communities, accessing to transportations, providing sufficient and convenient parking spots, toilets and signs were regarded. Referring to prices by offering low prices, using local materials, operating direct sell to reduce the labour cost and budget and trading with hospitality and special discounts led to increase the values of the prices. Promotions were incorporated as the final related factor of local market management. To promote selling and products, giving information to tourists or customers such as brochures, broadcasts as well as giving information from the retailers directed to supporting pleasurable activities within communities.

However, relating to Thai context of being successful in local market management, the associated factors needed to be considered in views of 1) foregoing background of connection with communities 2) respectable committees and systematic and effective administration with various group cooperation 3) convenient locations and nearby local residential areas 4) remaining local lifestyles 5) offering varieties of products and local material usages 6) valuable prices to purchases the products 7) various local foods and available products to purchase as souvenirs 8) fresh and unique products 9) supplying goods to the markets by local retailers within communities 10) local resident participations 11) presenting the stability of the operating times 12) operating particular days a week 13) providing necessary facilities 14) networking and cooperating with supportive organizations to continually inform news and information. Hence, taking into account of all essential factors led to gain successful managing local markets.

Keywords: Tourism, Management, Local market, Community

INTRODUCTION

A market is not only a place for economic commodity exchange, but it also a part of a community that requires the systemic management to unite the community. Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (Public Organization) allocates the managing strategies to operate the Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration and local communities within the balanced principles in terms of economy, society and environment as well as supportive policies of taking the idea of Value Creation. These principles based on the sustainable tourism of Thainess, lifestyle, local wisdom, Arts and History.

Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (Public Organization) have brought the policies to adapt with the designated areas where they were studied the appropriate patterns of Salakphet market management with the supported project of eco-tourism and cultural tourism in the designated areas of Chang Island to study the successful patterns to adapt with the Salakphet community. The policies also support the activities that develop qualities of living, welfares, stability of nutrition, balanced living within the potential resources and cultural community, well management, self-reliance to serve the changes in a Thai society and globalization trends as well as leading to reduce poverty.

According to the policies mentioned above, the researchers intend to study the successful patterns of market management to adopt the models and identify the factors towards being successful local markets in Thailand. In addition, the researchers propose to seek the possibility of promote the Salakphet local market and allocate the appropriate patterns for local markets.

Thus, the objectives of this research were to study the successful patterns of local markets in Thailand, study factors of successful Thai local markets.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research aimed to study the appropriate patterns for Salakphet local market for Tourism in Trat province, Thailand. The qualitative research has been conducted between

16 September 2012 and 13 February 2014. The research used in-depth interviews with market stakeholders, groups of local retailers who were influenced by establishing the local markets and official administrators in the total of 44 participants from 11 places around Thailand; 2 local markets in Chaing Mai, 2 local markets in Mahongsorn, 3 local markets in NakornPhathom, 1 local market in Chacherngsao, 1 local market in Surat Thani, 1 local market in Sognkla and 1 local market in Nakhon Si Thummarat. Moreover, non-participant observation of each local market was involved in this study.

RESULTS

According to the objectives of this study, the researchers summarized the results into 2 sections;

Studying the successful local markets to analyse the appropriate patterns of local market management

With the investigations of 11 local markets, each places used different strategies, Marketing Mixed Method for the market management to suit the context and characteristics of the communities. These reasons initiated the emerging interesting local markets in Thailand to attract tourists to visit and purchase the local products.

Being successful in local market management, the results revealed five crucial factors: management, place, product, price and promotion.

1) Management

Management was a process which set to operate the local markets such as setting the central committees and self-operating group collaborating with private sectors, governmental sectors and educational institutions by assigning individual tasks and duties. The factors that continually drove the movement were 1) the characteristics of the leaders who drove the market management 2) ethics for administration management 3) Participations 4) Continuality in administration system 5) setting clear rules within the markets.

In general, most of the structures of the local markets set the central committees and self-operating groups. Each group of committee such as places, finance, collaborating was assigned to drive their individual tasks and duties to drive the local markets. The leaders of driving the market management found to be indicators of the progression or regression.

One outstanding example found in Kad Hor, Chaing Mai where the leader of the market was trustworthy and knowledgeable with using ethical management, focusing the qualities of Haral foods and keeping clean and tidy market areas.

2) Place

Place was one of importance factor to facilitate the customers for purchasing products. The

major local markets found to be located near the community areas that were considered as 1) convenient places 2) accessible to transportations 3) sufficient parking lots 4) toilet services 5) signs to point the directions within the markets.

3) Product

Local products in the market were produced from raw materials which were available in the local communities. Thus, the products represented the local communities and interested the tourists to purchases the merchandises. The products themselves were sourced from the natural resources of the communities. These processes presented the dissimilarities between other markets and the charms of the local markets that offered the products in relation to the seasons. This means that the local markets have been remained operating alongside with the trading competitions of the convenient shops in the villages.

4) Price

Price helped balancing the products and values of the products which attracted the customers

to select the products. One reason that differentiated the local market and other markets was the inexpensive prices of products because the raw materials were available within the communities. Moreover, the traders and customers directly traded without paying for the merchant middlemen. This led to offer the low prices of products and satisfied the tourist customers.

5) Promotion

According to the study, promotions of the local markets were comprised of four important reasons; 1) information for the tourist customers 2) welcoming atmosphere 3) additional activities that supported by communities or other organizations and 4) local lifestyles of the communities which interested the tourists.

Hence, it can be concluded the model of market management as following;

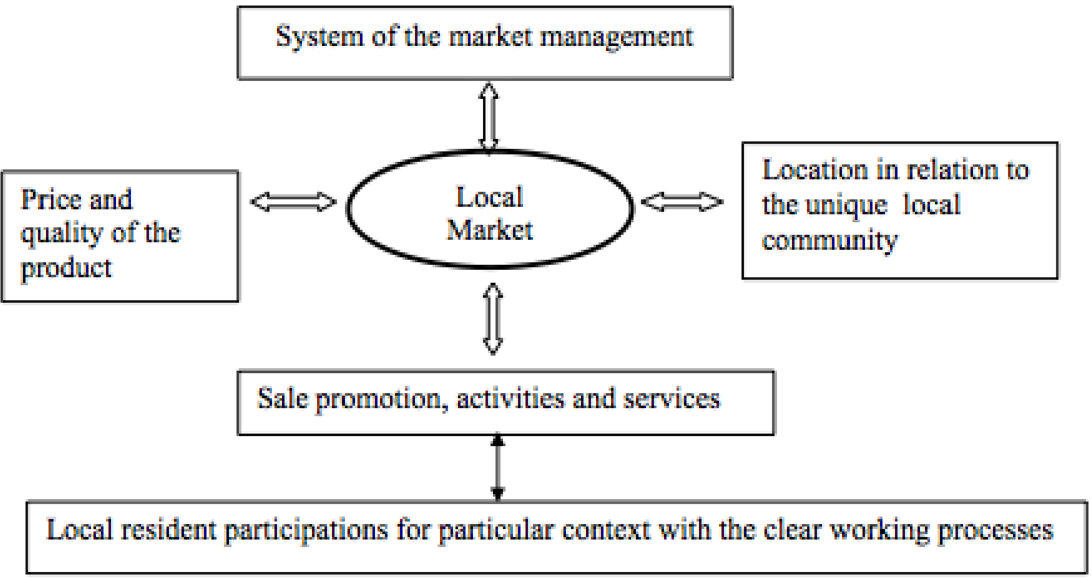

Figure 1: The concept of the successful local market management

Factors of being successful Thai local markets

By analysing data from the 11 markets, the researchers identified the strengths, weaknesses and the successful factors in the market management.

The study found the strengths from the successful local markets as following;

1) having long period of time of setting markets 2) offering local products by using local materials

3) offering varieties of products 4) using raw materials from natural resources 5) service minds of local traders 6) locating within the local resident areas 7) setting temporary stalls with plain and clean styles 8) inexpensive prices 9 presenting the atmosphere of local culture and lifestyles 10) assigning zoning area 11) co-operating groups of traders 12)

keeping clean during cooking 13) using media for advertising 14) providing toilets and facilities 15) cleaning after closing 16) easy to access to the local markets 17) attractive tourist attractions nearby 18) effective administrative systems by local communities 19) conducting researches and co-operating with educational institutions 20) management system of the cultural and environmental impacts 21) protecting architectures and cultural heritages 22) development plans 23) clubs for conserving traditional and local foods 24) using the market areas for cultural activities 25) setting the rules 26) administrative committees for the quality control.

The weaknesses that were found from the successful local market were 1) insufficient parking lots 2) similarities of the products 3) lack of increasing values of the products 4) conflict of interests 5) inadequate rubbish bins 6) lack of toilets 7) unstable offering products for vending 8) locating in tourist attractions which caused crowded areas particularly during holidays

As revealed by the research results, the factors that drove and maintain achievement in maintaining local markets were 1) having long history and connecting with the communities 2) reliable administrative committees and well managed with participations 3) appropriate locations 4) presenting local lifestyles 5) presenting local materials from local products 6) trading valued products 7) varieties products and local foods 8) fresh and unique products 9) continuous trading 10) lively venders 11) stability of opening and closing time 12) operating particular days a week 13) providing necessary facilities 14) networking and cooperating with supportive organizations to continually inform news and information.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study identified the strengths, weaknesses and the factor that drove successful local markets from 11 local markets around Thailand. To be achieved in setting the markets, the local communities needed to take into account of five crucial factors; 1) Management 2) Place 3) Product 4) Price and 5) Promotions. These factors associated with the factors of managing the new marketing Bachmann (2008) which comprise leaders, traders, locations, operating time, freshness of the products, arts and handcrafted products, suitable prices and rules set by the local management and the government.

To set the local market in Salakphet community, the patterns of 11 local markets facilitated Salakphet community to identify the unique pattern for the particular context.

The community has its potential to drive the local market; however, the community needs to cooperate with public and private organizations and local resident participations as well as using the local resources to sustainably drive Salakphet local market.

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TOURISM CLUSTERS AS A POTENTIALLY EFFECTIVE TOOL FOR LOCAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

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ABSTRACT

The spatial expansion of tourism and the growing diversification of this activity in the world create opportunities for countries, regions and communities to seek to bring about their development. A cluster is a progressive form of business network, which has strong business objectives focusing on improving sales and profits. It makes the exchange of information and technology possible, encouraging different ways of co-ordination and collaboration within them. Clustering is a process that enables the participants to exploit their synergies and the complementarities between their outputs, involving several benefits. (E.C., 2003). Clusters are vital for regional development increasing the competitiveness, the productivity and local businesses' critical mass.

Cluster strategy emphasizes the need to exploit a home-grown source of competitive advantage. In some cases, local clusters and multinational enterprises can be interdependent. The local cluster provides important competitive advantages, whereas the multinational enterprise can provide the spark influence their creation and evolution. To extend Michael Porter's notion of the role of government and local authorities in upgrading clusters (Porter, 1998), rules and regulations may actually influence the business case, enhance the local development and create a basic structure for implementing sustainability.

Hence, clusters are considered as being efficient management and marketing tools for tourist destinations and local economies. These tools must be used in appropriate manner in order to contribute at achieving competitive advantages through local development and setting sustainable development basis.

Key words: TOURISM CLUSTERS, COMPETIVENESS, LOCAL DEVELOPMENT, SUSTAINABILITY

1. INTRODUCTION

In the last fifty years, tourism has been one of the activities with the highest expansion potentials in the world. It plays an important role as a local development strategy due to its potential for growth and for being a product that can only be consumed in "loco". The spatial expansion of tourism and the growing diversification of this activity in the world create opportunities for countries, regions and communities to seek to bring about their development.

The tourism clusters analysis is adapted to the characteristics of tourism activity as it is based on the analysis of agglomerations, functional complementary, cooperative relationships and competition among actors. Otherwise, the traditional cluster analysis is not clear when the objective is to evaluate local impacts concerning competitiveness, sustainability and social justice. One of the challenges for governments and stakeholders in charge of elaborating and implementing development policies for tourism activities is to enhance business practises such as clustering or alternatively to build a model of sustained development with competitiveness, sustainability and socioeconomic prosperities for the local societies.

The advantages of cooperation clusters in tourism activities allow for the effective exploitation of the collective efficiencies and/or the development of external companies from the enterprises (entrepreneurial cooperation, work productive specialization, collective infrastructure, service specialization etc.) and also make it possible to benefit from the increased ability to negotiate collectively with suppliers of inputs and components. In addition to these advantages, cooperation nets facilitate the development of new models, production processes and organization, the exchange of technical and market information, consortiums for buying and selling goods and services, as well as joint marketing campaigns. Interaction and synergy arising from joint actions have competitive advantages over the isolated actions of companies (Nordin, 2003, p. 19).

In this paper, the concept that a tourism cluster is a group of companies and institutions bound up to a tourism product or group of products is been investigated. Such companies and institutions are spatially concentrated and have vertical (within the tourism productive chain) and horizontal relationships (involving factor, jurisdiction and information exchange between similar agents dealing with a tourism product offer). They show an intern configuration that generally includes: a) a set of tourist attractions that draw non-resident attention; b) the concentration of tourism service companies: restaurants, accommodation, transport services, crafts, travel agencies etc.; c) sectors providing support to tourism services; d) suitable and low-cost infrastructure (roads, energy, sanitation, health services, etc.); e) companies and institutions that provide specialized qualification, information and financial capital; f) intern agents organized into class associations; g) government agencies and other regulating bodies that impact tourism agglomerations.

Firstly an approach will be made notionally the meaning of clusters in tourism. The representation of the “revised” Michael Porter’s “Diamond” model considering competitiveness and local development will be analysed to prove the dynamics of creating clusters in the Tourism industry.

In the third part, the effectiveness of tourism clusters in the local development perspective will be examined. Conclusively by presenting the benefits of practising clusters in the tourist market we will prove that clusters are considered as efficient management and marketing tools for tourist destinations and local economies. The main aim of the tourism clusters is to build partnership between local business, educational and research units and representatives of local government. All members including those from private and public sector work together for the most effective use of the tourism potential of the local destination.

2. CONCEPTS FOR CLUSTERS

A definition of the cluster concept, which is generally agreed upon seems that does not exist. The definition used in this paper will be based on Porter's definition: "Clusters are geographic concentrations of interconnected companies and institutions in a particular field, linked by commonalities and complementarities".

Porter points out that industrial production has to be understood as a system of interrelated players and operations. He embraces the idea that agglomerations are not a new phenomenon, but he argues that the reasons behind the behavioral pattern have changed. What used to be done in an attempt to get easier access to raw material, to cut costs or get access to logistics has now turned into a deliberate.

The difference between clusters and other forms of cooperation within a network is sometimes difficult to see. A helpful description can be found in study by the OECD: The cluster concept focuses on the linkages and interdependencies among actors in the value chain in producing products and services. Clusters differ from other forms of cooperation and networks in that the actors involved in a cluster are linked in a value chain. The cluster concept goes beyond "simple" horizontal networks in which firms, operating on the same end-product market and belonging to the same industry group, co-operate on aspect such as R&D, demonstration programs, collective marketing or purchasing policy. Clusters are often cross-sectoral (vertical and/or lateral) networks, made up of is similar and complementary firms specializing around a specific link or knowledge base in the value chain."

A **cluster** is a collection of business or industries within a particular region that are interconnected by their products, their markets and other businesses or organisations, such as suppliers, with which they interact. Porter defines clusters as 'geographic concentrations of interconnected companies, specialised suppliers, service providers, firms in related industries, and associated institutions (for example, universities and trade associations) in particular fields that compete but also co-operate' (Porter, 1998: 197). Clustering is a process that enables the participants to exploit their synergies and the complementarities between their outputs, involving several benefits. A cluster is a progressive form of business network, which has strong business objectives focusing on improving sales and profits. It makes the exchange of information and technology possible, encouraging different ways of co-ordination and collaboration within them (European Commission, 2003). Clusters are vital for regional development increasing the performance, innovative capacity and local businesses' critical mass.

Clusters involve several benefits (Michael, 2003; Poon, 2002; Saxena, 2005): economies of scale; a focus on cooperation and innovation; increased synergies and productivity; knowledge transfer; joint marketing; increased competitiveness and sustainable competitive advantage; all these create opportunities for synergy and mutual reinforcement to achieve the main aim of a destination: a rewarding holiday experience for its visitors. Tourism industry face the challenges of renewing business models to maintain competitiveness in the global economy, and networking and product innovations are typical responses to these challenges (Kokkonen & Tuohino, 2007).

The four key features of the Cluster are identified as:

1. Cooperation;

2. Competition;

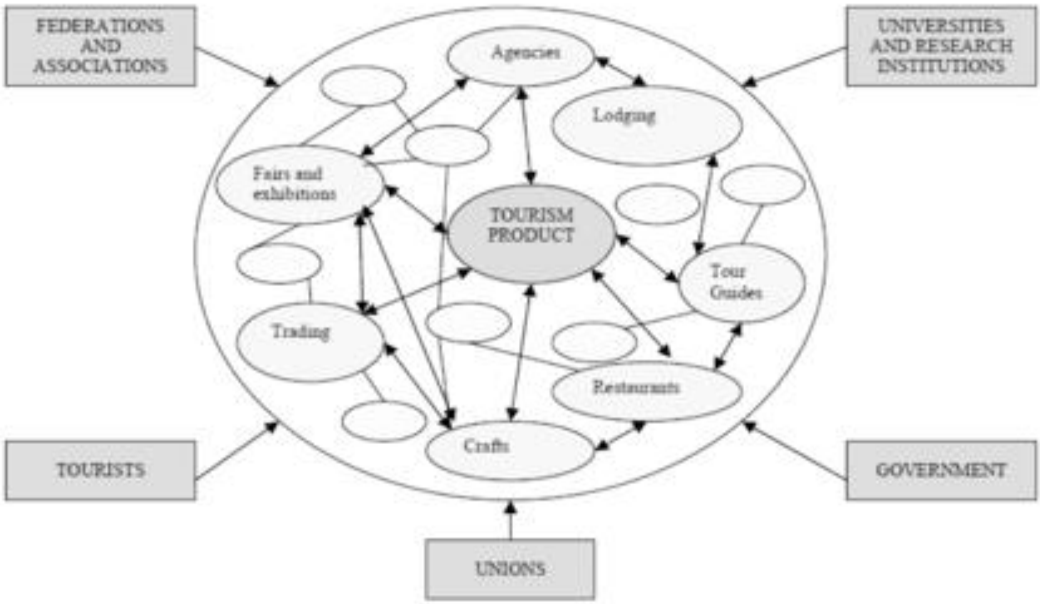
3. Trust;

4. Networking opportunities;

Michael (2003) highlights the importance of the ‘structure’ and the ‘scale’ of clusters, especially when applied to the tourism context. He also focuses on the ‘creation of economic and social opportunities in small communities through the development of clusters of complementary firms that can collectively deliver a bundle of attributes to make up a specialised regional product’ (Michael, 2003: 3). Hence, clusters are considered as being efficient management and marketing tools for tourist destinations. These tools must be used in appropriate manner in order to contribute at achieving sustainable tourism development and related business objectives (Tinsley & Lynch, 2007).

According to the characteristics of the tourism cluster, local development programs consider it as a local strategy for combating regional disparities and social inequality. Porter (1999, p. 230) emphasizes that tourism does not depend only on the appeal of the main attraction (beaches or historical sites), but also on the comfort and service of hotels, restaurants, souvenir shops, airports, other modes of transport and so on. As the representation above (fig. 1) shows, the parts of the agglomerate are generally effectively dependent on each other. A bad performance of one may compromise the success of the others.

Figure 1: Tourism Cluster Representation

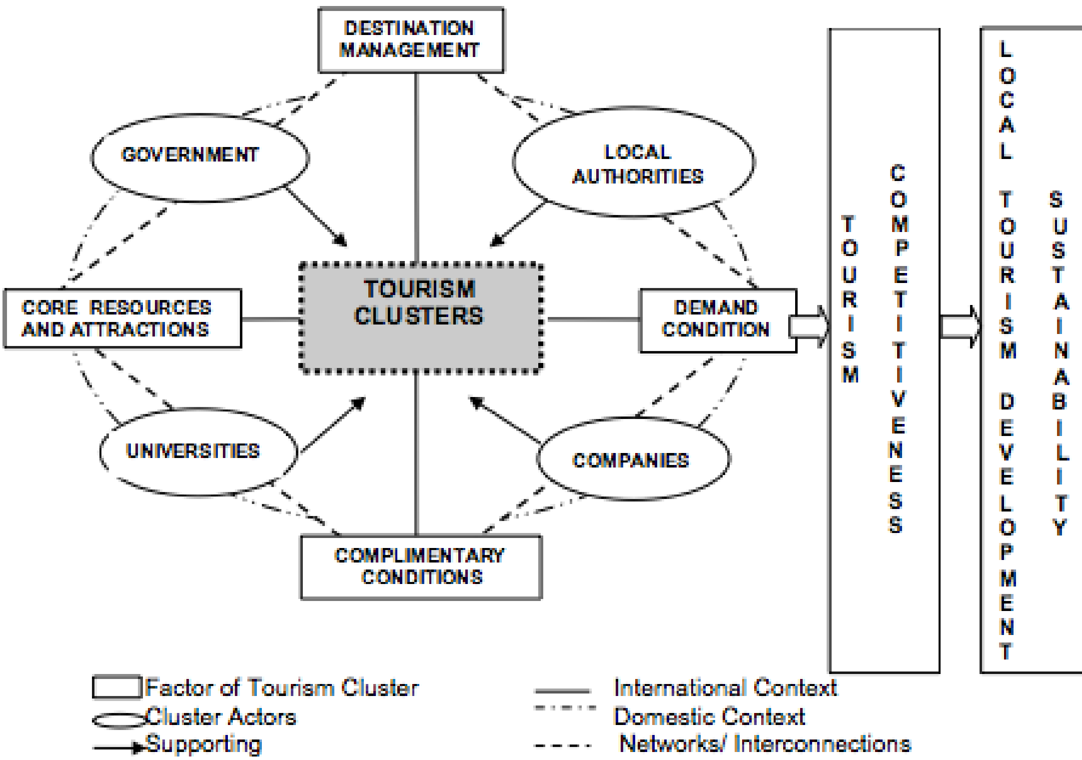


3. CLUSTERS AND COMPETITIVENESS IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

The concept of industry clusters and the notion that they create competitive advantage is not a new framework to explain regional economies and to assist policy-making in regions or nations. Cluster theory originates from the "industrial district" of Marshall's agglomeration economies (Marshall, 1920). This early framework argued that when firms are closely located in geographic proximity they generate positive externalities and economies of scale, and then these agglomeration effects can contribute to their overall productivity. A major breakthrough for the cluster concept was Porter's cluster theory and competitiveness in The Competitive Advantage of Nations (Porter, 1990). Porter has contributed significantly to the literature by providing a comprehensive understanding of national and regional competitiveness and by broadening the concept of industrial clusters. Porter defined the cluster as "a geographically proximate group of interconnected companies and associated institutions in a particular field, linked by commonalities and complementarities" (1998b: 199).

Porter (1990) states that clusters are inherently local yet must be globally competitive, so he emphasizes the co-locating of firms and complementarities and a supportive home-environment for business success.

Figure 2: Tourism Clusters theory based on Porter's "Diamond" Model and its contribution in competitiveness and local development



Source: By the authors

Based on these elements of Porter's cluster theory its application to tourism can be seen as a useful strategy in regional (local) development. Porter's diamond model proposes that there are four sources of national and local competitive advantage and their interactions: Factor (input) conditions, firm strategy, structure and rivalry, demand conditions, and related and supporting industries (Figure 2). Taken together, all components of clusters represent economic dynamism. Porter's theory of competitiveness and the concept of cluster have been considered one of the most successful and influential theories or models of local development (Isserman, 1998). The cluster concept has been brought forward to explain industrial dynamics and in turn Porter's theories help address which factors can achieve optimal competitiveness in national and regional development.

Finally, the main aim of the tourism clusters is to build partnership between local business, educational and research units, local authorities, and representatives of local governments. All members including those from private and public sector work together for the most effective use of the tourist potential of the local destination.

The Tourism Cluster is established to:

- Create common products or services;
- Make joined purchases of materials, services or technology;
- Use subsidized advisory services and encourage participation in the trainings.
- Create common brand and undertake promotion of the region;
- Enhance the tourist product and the local destination.

4. FEATURES AND BENEFITS OF CLUSTERING PROCESSES IN THE TOURISM MARKET

The main problems, the cluster faces is that the members lack the sense of belonging to it. A possible solution to the unwillingness to be affiliated or cooperate within the cluster lies in raising the level of knowledge regarding the benefits of the membership. Some of the benefits of clustering in the tourism industry are presented in the following table:

Table 1: Potential benefits of the clustering process in the tourism market

FEATURES	POTENTIAL BENEFITS
By creating a shared mass of technical competencies, market intelligence, as well as human and financial resources, organizations can be more prepared to address unexpected events.	Reduce risk and deal with uncertainly
The access of competitors to strategic resources is curtailed thanks to the greater operative strength or thanks to their	Block or co opt competition

joining the partnership.	
The greater dimensions covered (purchases, booking, sales, ect.) lead to a lesser incidence of unit costs. Operative effectiveness increases. Greater capacity to negotiate with intermediaries is achieved.	Create ecomomies of scale
The collaboration spirit allows greater distribution of specialization. There is more space for operating in market niches, thanks to less internal competition.	Opportunities to develop purpose economies
Companies joined together in partnerships can move in larger markets.	Effective market control
The circulation of knowledge enhances the diffusion of technologies and the development of new operative techniques. Brands are reinforced at company level and at destination level, both towards the customers and the suppliers. Operating in collaboration generates a healthy competition among companies that tends to raise both product quality and management skills.	Grow of technological and organizational know – how Reinforcement of image and notoriety Company growth both in terms of product quality and process efficiency
There cannot be an effective marketing action for the destination without the support o fan integrated and coordinated supply system.	Conditions for an effective area marketing

Partnerships and the distribution of functions allow creating innovative products, renewing production processes and giving life to new creative skills.	Creation of synergies
The strong inter - dependence between tourism and all economic activities enhances the diffusion of the acquired benefits to the entire territorial economic system.	Positive effects on local economies/ Local Development
The ability to have an important contribution on the protection of the environment and the sustainable development of local territories should be highlighted. The tourism Clusters practitioners should communicate, cooperate and agree on the fact that a high quality of the area's natural attractions is a strong competitive advantage, which constitutes the key strength of the area.	Potential Sustainable tourism development

Source : Nordin, S. 2003 p.27-28.

5. TOURISM CLUSTERS, LOCAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

The interaction of the consumption of the tourism product with its local base is one of the main characteristics of the activity, showing the fundamental role it plays in the strategies for local development. In most economic activities, it is the product that reaches the consumer, but when it comes to tourism, it is the opposite in that the consumer seeks for tourism services. Because of this characteristic, tourism has a heavy impact on local development. From this perspective, tourism and local development are interconnected because they take place if the regional socio-cultural and environmental characteristics are respected where the activity takes place.

The central idea of development includes a concept net made up of evolution, inclusion, participation, solidarity, production and competitiveness, which are mutually strengthened or directly opposed to movements of concentration, competition, exclusion, poverty and imbalance, amongst other things. Evolution and interaction are the focal points of the concept of development, a set of coordinated participation processes for continuously improved discussion and increased planning capability and the ability to gather economic, social and environmental resources in the short and long term, whenever possible, owing to joint strategies that otherwise depend on arbitration and conciliation (OCDE, 2001).

The local development concept also includes to complementary ideas related to territory. One of them refers to a concrete and delimited space, which is linked to the idea of constancy and inertia, and can be identified as a limited area such as a municipality, micro-region etc. The other is the abstract space of social relationships and indicates movement and interaction between social groups that either cooperate or organize opposition to accommodate their common interests (Fischer, 2002). The idea of movement and interaction can be witnessed for as long as the territory has to take the interdependence between nature and its use into consideration, including human actions, i.e. work and politics (Santos, 1999).

Three elements of local development that stem from tourism are: society, the environment and the economy, which are integrated and mutually strengthened in a context where social and cultural diversity, as well as productive differences, should be used as resources to generate changes and local development.

The cluster’s mission included in the Strategy is fostering socio-economic development in the local territories by improving activities occurring in the tourism sector. This is possible by applying principles of sustainable development into all levels of cluster functioning as it gathers main tourism businesses and other organisations working in close relation with tourism sector. Both, winning of the contests and actions taken on sustainable development, confirm the validity of efforts to make the destination friendly to residents, tourists and enterprisers. This idea will bind efforts to create a balance between environmental, social and economic aspects of regional development. Still a lot of effort is needed for gaining knowledge about sustainable development among entrepreneurs and the local community before actions in this direction is taken (Porter, 1998).

The most important benefits of clustering in tourism listed below:

- Acquisition of new clients due to the green trend in the industry by creation of green brands/labels to stand out;
- Easier founding if the Sustainable Development principles are being applied into companies strategy;
- Lowering the cost of the companies activities by improving their efficiency;
- Encouraging qualified employees to join the companies as there are becoming more attractive;
- Higher competitiveness and quality in the tourist product/ services;
- Long-term development of the region;
- More advanced technologies.

The tourism clusters may play an important role in this process. Since the Association brings together representatives of businesses, the cluster can become a platform for introducing sustainability to local entrepreneurs. It's easier to facilitate the promotion of sustainable development, because the local communities have already done a lot in the field of sustainability.

The benefits coming out of applying the sustainable development into functioning of a company are vast.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The cluster's mission included in the Strategy is fostering socio-economic development in the local territories by improving activities occurring in the tourism sector. This is possible by applying principles of sustainable development into all levels of cluster functioning as it gathers main tourism businesses and other organisations working in close relation with tourism sector. Both, winning of the contests and actions taken on sustainable development, confirm the validity of efforts to make the destination friendly to residents, tourists and enterprisers. This idea will bind efforts to create a balance between environmental, social and economic aspects of regional development. The main aim of the tourism clusters is to build partnership between local business, educational and research units, local authorities, and representatives of local governments. All members including those from private and public sector work together for the most effective use of the tourist potential of the local destination.

Tourism Clusters are considered as management and marketing tools and they are tremendously effective in local development systems. The key points of their contribution in the local development considered as:

- Local development seldom takes place in isolation but is systemic. The notion of a cluster as a 'reduced scale innovation system'
- Clusters are networks of production of strongly interdependent firms linked to each other in a value-adding production chain.
- Clusters mostly encompass strategic alliances with universities, research institutes, knowledge-intensive business services, bridging institutions (brokers, consultants) and customers. This bears innovation and use of new technologies.
- Successful Cluster practises are fostering the implementation of sustainable tourism development.

Conclusively the main task of creating tourism clusters should be assisting the implementation of proposed principles, and their promotion to enhance local development and create a potential sustainable development basis.

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SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND PRIMARY SECTOR: AN ALTERNATIVE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT MODEL FOR PELOPONNESE

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ABSTRACT

This analysis attempts to highlight the importance and role of synergies that can be developed between tourism and the agri-food sector in regional development and the economy. At a time when our country is being tested by a multi-year and widespread crisis, the development of business partnerships between different productive sectors is deemed necessary**.**

The study focuses on tourism and agriculture as two fundamental growth and commitment axes for sustainable development based on the preservation of the environment and the rich natural diversity of regions especially in geographical areas such as the case study of the Peloponnese in Greece, these two micro (agriculture and tourism) have the comparative advantage of coexisting and expanding through synergies that can be developed to contribute to social wealth and development.

Keywords: tourism, agri-food sector, synergies, regional development, Peloponnese - Greece

INTRODUCTION

The various scholars consider tourism and the primary-food sector in the light of co-production and co-operation in productive sectors in the context of growing environmental awareness and the prevailing concept of sustainable development and the role of green marketing that can and must play a essential role in the operation and development of regions and increase their competitiveness.

The findings are based on the analysis of the key indicators from secondary research, the data from the scientific literature and the data collected on the basis of the primary research carried out in the geographical unit of the Peloponnese in Greece.

In recent years an attempt has been made to link tourism to other sectors so that the benefits that it brings are not only confined to private profits but also spread to other factors of economic activity aimed at the overall economic and social development of a country.

Particularly, the need to link tourism to the agri-food sector is increasingly emphasized, as tourism is considered a powerful tool for promoting local products at national and global level (Ashley & Haysom, 2009).

Traditionally, the two sectors were considered to be competing with one another, which led to a failure to implement synergies between them in many cases (Bélisle 1983; Pattullo 1996; Momsen 1998).

Competition between agri-food and tourism has been attributed to many reasons, such as using own resources, for example. water, land, workforce, finance etc. Many times, especially in underdeveloped and developing economies, tourism has been particularly associated with environmental pollution, land deforestation, as well as rural depopulation, as it employs a rural labor force, thus enhancing immigration in the cities or next to the big holiday resorts. (Besisle, 1983)

At a regional level, a unique focus on tourism, at the expense of local agricultural production, may lead to interdependent forms of unevenness with spatial concentration, resulting in large differences in wealth between the tourist and rural areas (Torres, 2000, Torres and Momsen , 2004).

1 LITERATURE REVIEW

Returning to nature, eating healthy food and using natural materials is a global movement that is also reflected in tourism. The preservation of the environment is already a prerequisite for the development of tourism, as a significant number of tourists want and expect an ecological element in the tourism offer. These two aspects create a balance between the market and the environment. Ecology becomes both the trend and the need.

In this way, it is not only possible to preserve the existing, traditionally exploited natural attractions but also to intensify the tourist exploitation of the protected natural areas and the environmentally acceptable agricultural production as an additional enrichment of the tourism supply. (WTO, 2008)

With regard to global environmental, social and economic challenges, the international community in Rio de Janeiro (Agenda 21) has created the framework for achieving sustainable development in general, which the World Tourism Organization sets out to take into account the needs of modern tourists and tourist destinations while protecting and improving the potential for growth for the future. All resources can be used only to the extent that the economic, social and environmental requirements of all participants in the tourist market are met.

Following these changes in the global tourist market, many of the most relevant tourist destinations try to diversify and adjust their offer in order to attract environmentally friendly tourist departments that record development both in terms of size of the department and the share of consumption on the world tourist market (Berno, 2006).

It must be stressed that the Peloponnese undoubtedly holds a privileged position in relation to its competitors due to many factors but also environmental awareness of its tourism policy to preserve what can be considered the most valuable asset of the country: a preserved and picturesque natural environment, the pristine coast and the authenticity of its villages.

Thus, green marketing plays a key role with the following: methodological study and exploitation of the natural capital of the Peloponnese, adequate exploitation of the peculiarities and characteristics of the individual regions and complementarity of the emerging phenomenon of agrotourism with strong impetus in the market of ecologically produced food and the market for green products in general.

The implementation of various economic policy measures can not be overcome. This implies the urgent adoption of appropriate tax and other measures that should encourage forms of sustainable tourism development. In an ideal case, mass tourist offer should be abandoned wherever possible.

The basic idea of marketing food products, considering them as some tourist products, lies in the idea that the visitor, the consumer of the tourist product, not only receives food and drink as a partial tourist product, but also satisfies quantitatively, qualitatively, aesthetically, ethnological, gastronomic and every other meaning and should be pleased with additional individual tourist products in immaterial form ie services that will ultimately be manifested in an increase in housing and especially in non-residential consumption (Meler, 2002).

These could be achieved primarily by exploring the needs, needs and expectations of tourist consumers, analyzing current trends and carefully applying them to traditional and native gastropods of individual regions. This at the same time increases the attractiveness of specific tourist destinations or regions and contributes to the image of a country as a producer of quality food, which can lead to improved opportunities for direct exports of food products abroad.

Enhancing the synergies between agro-livestock production and tourism is of the utmost importance for the sustainability of both sectors. Relationships not only do not have to be competitive but must be based on interdependence and cooperation. Let's not forget that the development of one sector has benefited the other, for example, improving tourism infrastructure has also facilitated the farming sector, because it has reduced production and transport costs.

Greece is a country where local products of high nutritional value and culture are produced due to the Mediterranean climate of the region and our rich cultural tradition. The potential to promote these products through our developed tourism sector needs to be constantly exploited and strengthened. The interconnection of agri-food and tourism can be a lever for the Greek economy with multiple benefits for both sectors.

Consuming local food products by tourists for an increasing number of travelers is a valuable experience for understanding the culture of a place. In the age of mass production of food, globalization and product homogenization, an increasing number of tourists are looking for authentic experiences through culinary delights (Chhabra, 2010).

The exact reasons that led to this consumer behavior are not clear, but in some cases the food crisis of previous years, as well as the growing concerns about food quality and safety (Morris & Young, 2000), are incriminated. Tourists expressed their dissatisfaction with mass-produced products and tour operators began to look for something different and specialized to meet their needs, turning to the traditional lifestyle, in a healthy and friendly environment (Boissevain, 1996).

Taking advantage of this tendency of tourists to consume local food products and by enhancing the cooperation of the agri-food and tourism sectors, the benefits are multiplied for all participants, ie farmers, tourism businesses, tourists, but also for the regional development of an economy in general . Tourist destinations that do not provide high multiplier benefits and levels of synergies will not bring significant economic growth and may increase feelings of aversion to the tourist industry among locals (Cohen, 1982).

On the farmers' and livestock side, the continuing tourism demand for local agricultural products leads to the encouragement of production and the development of the sector. When producers know the needs of buyers, they are able to identify the type and volume of products they produce and diversify and improve production. Communication with the tourism industry helps producers understand the business environment, the tourism industry and the potential business risks to follow the most appropriate business plan for the sustainability of their businesses.

On the tourism side, cooperation with the agri-food sector is very important. First of all, hotels and restaurants, knowing farmers and local products, can offer their customers high quality and superior nutritional value, avoiding massive supply from abroad through large commercial chains. Thus, they are in a position to compete with similar businesses by providing a diversified tourist product.

The decline in food prices procured by tour operators leads to an increase in their profits, resulting in attracting investment and increasing employment across the tourism industry. Without the existence of cross-sectoral cooperation and sustainable synergies between tourism demand and other areas of the host country, tourism fails to activate local entrepreneurship (Lacher and Nepal, 2010a, 2010b; Kausar et al.2011).

Synergies help workers in the tourism industry as well, as they develop know-how and skills as well as students in tourism professions that acquire knowledge and job opportunities. But supplying the tourism sector with local production also favors tourists who are able to experience fresh, different products with the identity of a place.

Enhanced synergies between the two sectors help to stop the foreign exchange leak due to imports of foreign food supplied by tourist units to meet their needs.

2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In order to capture the existing synergies between the primary sector and tourism, but also to record the mood and possibilities for creating new partnerships, primary data was collected from companies directly related to tourism and who can develop collaborations with the agri-food sector , ie hotels and accommodations operating in the geographical unity of the Peloponnese.

Primary data came from completed questionnaires referring to a sample of hotel accommodations with a restaurant or breakfast in all categories. The survey was carried out in the period June-October 2013 and involved 155 hotels from all over the Peloponnese that have F & B departments in a total of about 1000 hotels in the wider region.

For the collection of data from the hotels a questionnaire was distributed via email and / or physical presence. The questionnaire was composed very carefully and included the following sections:

Table 1 Axes of questionnaire thematic fields used for primary research

General information about the hotel (Name, location, e-mail address, category, available number of beds and rooms, months of operation)
Sub-elements for controls of materiality affecting the local market
Data on percentages of local products by category (cereals-bakery, fruit, vegetables, fat-oils, seafood, dairy products)
Data on percentage consumption of domestic beverages (beverages, beers, soft drinks)
Questions about the reasons for choosing or refusing to use local products
Clarifications on whether they have developed any form of cooperation with local producers and in what form
Assessments-suggestions on strategies that would help strengthen their co-operation with local product producers
Reporting synergies development issues (optional question)

2.1 Results

All the hotels that participated in the survey stated that they are operating in the 12 months of the year.

The results show that the hotels of the study area consume a great deal of local products from the following categories of food: cereal bakery, fruit, vegetables and dairy products, while local products are used in the food categories: fat-oils and seafood.

In terms of home-made beverages and beverages, the local wines are said to be preferred by 72% of the sample hotels, followed by beers and refreshments.

In addition, the reasons why local products are not preferred to certain categories of foods and beverages are recorded and, based on the results, the reason for the overwhelming majority of hotels as the most important of 68% is the higher cost of local products, followed by the complete lack of products by 28%, the lower demand for domestic products by tourists with 16% and finally the incomplete or inefficient cooperation with the suppliers in a percentage 12%.

In contrast to the previous question, the support of the local economy was mentioned as the most important reason for choosing local products by 80%. The best quality of Greek products is 56% and the lowest cost in selected categories of local products is 16%.

It is noteworthy that no one has said that he chooses the use of local products because he has some cooperation with companies in the primary sector.

Also, in a question about whether and when there was some form of cooperation with agri-food producers, the overwhelming majority of companies replied that although they prefer to source local products, they have not developed any such cooperation with local producers to supply supplies food products.

Finally, with regard to the strategies that respondents expect to help strengthen the synergies of tourism operators with local producers, responses were varied as there was a choice of more than one predefined answer or blank answer. The protagonists of the strategies appeared, as expected, to increase the availability of products in certain categories and to reduce the cost of local products that were previously answered and as the most important reasons for synergies.

An important strategy is the promotion and promotion of domestic products through the development of gastronomic tourism, followed by the improvement of the distribution network of local products.

4. CONCLUSION

Strengthening synergies between the primary and the tourism sectors can be achieved through a series of strategies at both national and regional level. These policies, irrespective of the level at which they are implemented, need to be complementary and mutually reinforcing in order to achieve the desired results.

At national level, it is necessary to develop policy incentives to boost the consumption of domestic products by tourism companies through policies to lower local commodity prices, which are considered to be the main reasons for avoiding their use. The fall in the prices of agricultural products will be through a series of measures to reduce production costs. Investments aimed at reducing dependence on cost-intensive energy sources, for example, can contribute to this direction. geothermal energy.

The reduction of production costs can also contribute to the implementation of innovative services such as "intelligent agriculture" that approaches the production process holistically (eg irrigation, plant-based lubrication, recording of environmental parameters favoring pest infestation from specific insects or diseases, etc.)

At the same time, measures should be promoted to reduce the cost of production with tax relief (I.V.A, contributions to funds k.a), but also to combat tax evasion. In addition, state bodies should provide incentives for producers, such as easier access to finance or tax cuts in order to participate in cooperative societies and organized groups.

At regional level, we have seen that many regions have realized the need to link the primary to the tourism sector and have created agri-food partnerships to promote and promote local products. Regional policies are moving in the right direction, but further steps need to be taken to quickly get the desired results.

The aim of local government should be to encourage the networking of producers and businesses through the continuous cultivation of a climate of confidence and facilitating stakeholder communication. Initiatives are needed to make the benefits of synergies known and clear to all involved.

In order to achieve this, it is essential for economic operators involved in food production and processing as well as with gastronomic and hotel units to incorporate green marketing into their marketing policy as a set of knowledge and business philosophy. Through these efforts there will be more equal regional development as well as the significant multiplier effect that will reflect on all economic activities directly or indirectly related to the tourism product and consequently to the whole economic and social system through increased employment and prosperity.

In short, in managing regional development, we must bear in mind the achievement of the described synergy, which at the same time represents the key factor and one of the fundamental objectives to transform the comparative advantages into competitive advantages and finally contribute to achieving the long- sustainable development for the benefit of current and future generations.

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