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26 November 2008

Online at <https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/25287/>

MPRA Paper No. 25287, posted 23 Sep 2010 13:36 UTC

EXAMINING THE LINK BETWEEN VISITORS' MOTIVATIONS AND CONVENTION DESTINATION IMAGE

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This study aims to devise measures to develop tourism in the metropolis of Gwangju, emphasizing the activation of KimDaeJung Convention Centre which opened in September 2005 with its inaugurating exhibition. The purpose of this study is to suggest the direction for making a value added business of Exhibition & Convention with making use of the appealing tourism source of Gwangju KimDaeJung Convention Centre. Data were collected from 258 in the '2006 Gwangju·Jeonnam Regional Innovation Convention & Exposition' which was held at Gwangju KimDaeJung Convention Centre. It was followed by reliability and adequacy and carried out ANOVA. Results suggested that KimDaeJung Convention Centre has to have a differentiate plan from others, for example, the improvement of traffic system and accommodation for tourists, the development of tourism products related to around sightseeing places, the program developing a substantial course of 'city tour bus' and the database of tourism information.

Keywords: *convention, motivation, destination image, Gwangju, KimDaeJung Convention Centre, Korea*

INTRODUCTION

Convention tourism is a very important sector of the tourism industry, an industry that, in all its guises, is claimed to be the world's largest industry. Convention tourism is now a truly global industry. Exhibition and Convention can constitute a major source of shoulder and off-season demand since most corporate and association meetings take place during spring and fall, the traditional soft periods in many tourism destinations. Convention and exhibition participants are like tourist because they have a wide choice of difference locations, at varying cost and different times. Furthermore, recent competition among convention destinations and venues has highlighted the need for better understanding of the



convention visitor behaviour, including their decision-making process and their evaluation of the convention experience (PCMA Survey, 2003).

Convention studies to date have focused to a large degree on site selection factors for buyers (Crouch & Louviere, 2005; Crouch & Ritchie, 1998; Grant & Weaver, 1996; Jun & McCleary, 1999; Oppermann, 1994), visitor motivation factors (Rittichainuwat, Beck & LaLopa, 2001), meeting planner issues including decision-making process (Baloglu & Love, 2001; Oppermann, 1998a) destination perception and image assessment (Oppermann, 1996, 1998b) and general industry literature. From a business and management perspective, convention visitor decision making process and behaviour are important issues which warrant further study (Lee & Back, 2005; Yoo & Weber, 2005).

In order to achieve the above goal, understanding the behaviour of convention visitor as well as recognising why and how individuals/groups make their consumption decisions is very important. This can assist the association/event organisers and the host locations' tourism marketers in prediction and explaining how consumers are likely to react, permitting them to shape their marketing strategies accordingly, thus helping them to gain an even greater competitive advantage in the marketplace (Schiffman & Kanuk, 1997). Previous research relating to the convention industry is very sparse. Abbey and Link (1994) stated that convention and meeting-related research is, for the most part, an untapped market for researchers. More work was needed to increase understanding of this important segment of the tourism industry. As a result, this study aims to better understand this segment, in particular from the perspective of convention visitors. Consequently, it is important that researchers and practitioners understand the multiple and sometimes complex dimensions used by visitors in assessing the performance of the convention and in their intentions to revisit and/or recommend the conference to others (Severt, Wang, Chen & Breiter, 2007). This study takes the perspective of the visitors and examines a series of issues in relation to the motivating factors for attendance, their evaluation of the convention performance, as well as their behavioural intention associated with the convention.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Motivation

Crompton and McKay (1997) argued that visitors' motives for visiting a festival are the starting point that triggers the decision process. Dewar, Meyer, and Wen (2001) mentioned that knowing the motives of

visitors often results in ability to increase visitors' enjoyment; moreover, it makes it possible to attract and retain more visitors. In addition to the need to monitor visitors' satisfactions and enhance marketing effectiveness through understand visitors' decision processes. Dewar *et al.* (2001) pointed out that it is imperative to identify visitors' needs so that festival organisers can design future programs tailored to them. These are major reasons why more attention should be given to understand the motivations of convention visitors better.

Once the motivations of visitors have been identified, it is essential to given attention to the needs of different target groups at the festival (Dewar *et al.*, 2001). Target groups must be described using the skill of market segmentation. Segmentation is a powerful marketing tool because it brings knowledge of visitor identities (McCleary, 1995). In addition, Formica and Uysal (1998) demonstrated that successful tourism promotional efforts hinge on effective segmentation. It is not usually possible to identify a single motive for all tourists, studying one subgroup at a time is more realistic (So & Morrison, 2004). As such, it is important to determine the distinctive characteristics of specific groups of tourists within heterogeneous markets (Mok & Iverson, 2000).

Since Crompton's initial empirical effort (1979), many studies have attempted to find push and pull motivational factors in different settings such as nationalities (e.g., Cha, McCleary & Uysal, 1995; Yuan & McDonald, 1990; Zhang & Lam, 1999), destinations (e.g., Jang & Cai, 2002) and events (e.g., Lee, Lee & Wicks, 2004; Nicholson & Pearce, 2001). Common push factors found in most of the studies include knowledge-seeking relaxation, family togetherness, while most frequently seen pull factors are natural and historic environment, cost, facilities, safety, and easy-access (Jang & Wu, 2006).

Motivations of visitors may be expected to vary greatly from event to event (Scott, 1996; Rachael & Douglas, 2001). However, as Schneider and Backman (1996) and Lee *et al.* (2004) suggested that visitors who are participating in various festivals are likely to share similar motives in attending festivals and special events even if they come from different cultural background albeit to different degree. As a result, it is meaningful to clarify whether or not the motivations of tourist attending festivals are homogeneous and whether they vary according to different types of festivals. With respect to background information for various tourists, Fodness (1994) found that significant demographic differences exist in the leisure motives of tourists. Sirakaya, Uysal, and Yoshioka (2003) and Jang, Bai, Hong, and O'Leary (2004), using a sample of Japanese tourists, also noticed that significant differences exist in tourists' background

information among various segments. In addition, knowledge of different types of tourists and the sizes of the segments may be used to inform decisions on festival content if tourism is a priority.

On a global scale festivals and event with a strong cultural component are substantially increasing in numbers. In addition to enhancing local pride in culture, these events also expose indigenous minorities and an increasing number of international visitors to new peoples and their customs as well as, other purposes including contributing to the local economy, and providing recreation opportunities (Long & Perdue, 1990). Getz (1991) recognises festivals and events as a new wave of alternative tourism which contributes to sustainable development and improves the relationship between host and guest. Getz (1993) also emphasised the importance of analysing visitors' motives for attending festivals and events. Identifying such motivations is a prerequisite for planning event programs effective and marketing them to visitors (Crompton & McKay, 1997). Analysis of festival motivations also helps event managers to better position their festivals (Scott, 1996).

Lee and Lee (2001) concluded that segmenting festival markets through motivations enables event managers to identify the strengths and opportunities of each market and helps guarantee their satisfaction. In most situations where festival visitors are heterogeneous, segmenting these visitor groups and understanding their characteristics based on festival motivations will be a powerful marketing tool, that enables event managers to enhance and promote event feature preferred and valued by target segments (Formica & Uysal, 1996, 1998).

Motivation has been referred to as psychological/biological needs and wants including integral forces that arouse, direct, and integrate a person's behaviour and activity (Dann, 1981; Pearce, 1982; Uysal & Hagan, 1993). In tourism research, this motivation concept can be classified into two forces, which indicate that people travel because they are pushed and pulled to do so by "some forces" or factors (Dann, 1977, 1981). In the above major studies, it is generally accepted that push and pull motivations have been primarily utilised in studies of tourists behaviour. The discoveries and issues undoubtedly play a useful role in attempting to understand a wide variety of different needs and wants that can motivate and influence tourist behaviour. Nevertheless, the results and effects of the motivation studies of tourist behaviour require more than an understanding of their needs and wants.

Recent recognition that special events are one of the fastest growing tourism businesses has promoted researchers to explore the motivations of festival visitors (Lee, Lee & Wicks, 2004). For example, Uysal, Gahan,

and Martin (1993) identified visitors' motivations for attending a country Corn Festival in South Carolina. Twenty-four motivation items were factor analysed and five dimensions of motivation emerged: 'escape', 'excitement/thrills', 'event novelty', 'socialisation', and 'family togetherness'. As expected, the results of the study did show that the motivation of family togetherness was stronger among married people than singles. It was also found that older people tended to place more importance on the 'event novelty' than other age groups. Mohr, Backman, Gahan, and Backman (1993) explored festival motivations for those attending a Freedom Weekend Aloft (a hot balloon festival) in Greenville, South Carolina. Twenty-three motivational items were selected and factor analysis delineated five dimensions of motivation: 'socialisation', 'family togetherness', 'excitement/uniqueness', 'escape', and 'event novelty'. First and repeat festival visitors were found to be significantly different with respect to the two factors to excitement and novelty. Satisfaction levels were also found to be significantly different between first and repeat visitors. In general, statistically significant differences existed between motivational factors at different types of festivals.

Tourist Destination Image

The topic of destination images has received substantial interest in tourism research. It has been widely acknowledged that destination image affects tourists' subjective perception, consequent behaviour, and destination choice (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Castro, Armario & Ruiz, 2007; Chon, 1990, 1992; Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Milman & Pizam, 1995; Woodside & Lysonski, 1989). Tourists' behaviour is expected to be partly conditioned by the image that they have of destinations (Chi & Qu, 2008). Several destination selection process and image formation models have been proposed and discussed and a countless number of studies have investigated images of different places (Chon, 1990; Crompton, 1979; Gartner, 1993; Woodside & Sherrell, 1977; Woodside & Lysonski, 1989). It has been generally accepted in the literature that destination image has influence on tourist behaviour (Bigne, Sanchez, & Sanchez, 2001; Fakeye & Crompton, 1991; Lee, Lee, & Lee, 2005). Destination image is defined as an individual's mental representation of knowledge (beliefs), feelings and overall perception of a particular destination (Crompton, 1979; Fakeye & Crompton, 1991). Destination image plays two important roles in behaviours: (1) to influence the destination choice decision-making process and (2) to condition the after-decision-making behaviours including participation (on-site experience), evaluation (satisfaction) and

future behavioural intentions (intention to revisit and willingness to recommend) (Ashworth & Goodall, 1988, Bigne *et al.*, 2001; Cooper, Fletcher, Gilbert, & Wanhill, 1993; Lee *et al.*, 2005; Mansfeld, 1992). Convention participants are like tourists because they have a wide choice of different conferences at different locations, at varying cost and different times. Thus, just as for tourists, for convention participants it is a question of motivation, attractivity of conference and/or tourist destination, and of distance, cost and time factors involved (Oppermann, 1994).

Reasons for selecting KimDaeJung Convention Centre as the Study Area

Korea has a rich cultural heritage, some of the world's most advanced facilities and high-quality professional services. As one of the world's most sought-after convention destinations, Korea has proven time and time again its ability to successfully hold international meetings. According to the Union of International Associations Statistics released in August 2006, Korea held 185 international meetings in 2005 and was ranked 14th worldwide in the number of international meetings held. Among the countries in Asia, Korea is the second most popular place for conventions, followed by Singapore and Japan. The convention industry of Korea has become one of the most promising industries domestically. A convention promotion law was enacted on December 30, 1996, and an amendment was later added to it on August 6, 2003. The act designates and fosters development of "convention cities", facilities construction of convention centres, and guarantees national support and quality control for successful conventions to be held in Korea. Nine convention cities have been designated nationwide: Seoul, Busan, Daegu, Jeju-do, Gwangju, Changwon, Daejeon, Koyang, and Incheon (KNTO, 2008). Since its grand opening in September 2005, the KimDaeJung Convention Centre's reputation as a preferred venue for holding exhibitions and conventions among the nine convention centres of Korea has been steadily growing.

Since the researcher is situated in Gwangju, KimDaejung Convention Centre constituted the most practical and successful choice of site for a study of this kind. The researcher was further led to select KimDaeJung Convention Centre as the site for the present study because it is representative of Gwangju convention city. In other words, a compelling reason for selecting KimDaeJung Convention Centre as the site for this study is its popularity as a convention destination.

METHODOLOGY

Self-completion questionnaire for visitors was carried out. Self-completion questionnaires are believed to get the most reliable responses (Hurst, 1994), a respondents have an opportunity to review the completed questionnaire or revisit questions that are not answered initially. A field survey provides a cost-effective way to collect data and is suitable to investigate phenomena that can be observed directly by the research (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1992). The survey was conducted for visitors attending the '2006 Gwangju·Jeonnam Reionnal Innovation Convention & Exposition' which was held at Gwangju KimDaeJung Convention Centre.

Surveys were restricted to five days of the Convention Centre in 2006. By the target fieldwork completion date from 8 November 2006 to 12 November 2006, 287 completed questionnaires had been collected, of which twenty-nine questionnaires were not usable. These questionnaires were incomplete or had an excessive amount of mission data. The demographic questions are designed to elicit objective information from the respondents regarding their background such as age, sex, education, income and occupation which is intended mainly to produce information by which respondents could be classified as independent variables. The questionnaire for visitors visiting the '2006 Gwangju·Jeonnam Regional Innovation Convention & Exposition' was also divided into five sections. Based on the time constraints of this research the questionnaire was provided to as many respondents as possible. In order to track down people from different ages, beliefs, preferences.

An on-site intercept procedure was employed for this study. The survey instrument was based upon that used by Crompton and McKay (1997) and was composed of two sections: motive-related items and demographic information, including travel modes. In total, 32 questions were listed concerning tourists' motives for attending the '2006 Gwangju·Jeonnam Regional Innovation Convention & Exposition' in KimDaeJung Convention Centre. The major reason that the tourist motivation instrument used was derived from Crompton and McKay's (1997) study, is because the scale was rigorously constructed, incorporating both push and pull factors (Iso-Ahola, 1982; Sirakaya *et al.*, 2003) into a broadly conceived scale making it appealing for assessing utility across different types of festivals (Lee, 2000; Lee *et al.*, 2004). Moreover, similar to Crompton and McKay's (1997) study, the objectives of convention tourism is multi-dimensional, including enhancing understanding by presenting cultural performances reflecting the

solidarity of tribal people, educating young group members about their customs, and obtaining economic benefits. Demographic items included age, gender, education, region of residence, and occupation. Motives were measured using a five-point Likert type scale (where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree) so as to identify the reasons visitors attended the aboriginal convention and exhibition.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Characteristics of Respondents

In total, 287 self-administered questionnaires were distributed and 258 usable questionnaires were obtained. In this study, from total 258 domestic respondents, 149 were male (57.8%) and 109 were female (42.2%). The group of domestic respondents was made up of different region of tourist. With regard to the respondents' areas, the dominant areas were Gwangju and Jeonnam (46.9%). Visitors were likely to be salesmen (19.4%), Service Industry (16.6%), with a university level of education (46.9%). Here, the age categories of visitors were those who were between 21-30 years of age those who were between 31-40 years of age (Table 1).

Analysis of Convention Visitors' Motivation Clusters

Factor analysis was used to identify the constructs underlying the 13 posited convention motivations. A principal components analysis with a Varimax rotation was used with a pre-determined cut-off eigenvalue greater than or equal to 1.0 (Heung and Cheng, 2000). Only factors with more than 0.4 loading were retained and included in the factor identification. The reliability coefficient of each factor ranged from 0.7 to 0.84 which was considered to be acceptable. As a result, the factor models were deemed to be motive. Relatively high factor loadings indicate a reasonably high correlation between the delineated factors and their individual items. The 4 factors for motivation having eigenvalues greater than 1 were grouped into four factors and named: 'knowledge', 'escape', 'exploration', and 'socialisation' (Table 2).

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristics		Frequency	Valid (%)
Gender	Male	149	57.8
	Female	109	42.2
Age	Under 20	15	5.8
	21-30	75	29.1
	31-40	74	28.7
	41-50	58	22.5
	51-60	31	12.0
	Over 61	5	1.9
Education	Under high school	22	8.5
	Graduate high school	41	15.9
	College	33	12.8
	University	121	46.9
	Graduate School	41	15.9
Occupation	Salesmen	50	19.4
	Education	24	9.3
	Self-employed	20	7.8
	Service Industry	43	16.6
	Students	36	14.0
	Professional people	41	15.9
	Others	44	17.0
Place of residence	Gwangju· Jeonnam	121	46.9
	Seoul· Central	75	29.0
	South	51	19.8
	Others	11	4.3
Monthly Income	Under 1,000,000won	10	3.9
	1,000,001-2,000,000won	55	21.3
	2,000,001-3,000,000won	81	31.4
	3,000,001-4,000,000won	43	16.7
	4,000,001-5,000,000won	46	17.8
	Over 5,000,001 won	23	8.9

The first dimension was labelled as ‘knowledge’ which explained a reliability coefficient of 0.84. The second dimension was labelled as ‘escape’ which accounted for a reliability coefficient of 0.88. The third dimension labelled as ‘exploration’ explained a reliability coefficient of 0.82. The fourth dimension labelled as ‘socialisation’ accounted for a

reliability coefficient of 0.82. In general the factor structure that was extracted was consistent with earlier convention motivation studies and adds credence to the notion that the range and grouping of convention motives are somewhat universal.

Table 2. Results of Factor Analysis of Visitors' Motivations

Attribute	F1	F2	F3	F4	
Knowledge					3.1938
-To get some information	.870				3.28
-To improve the career	.905				3.21
-To learn new knowledge	.842				3.33
-To be with people who enjoy the same things I do	.637				2.96
Escape					3.2468
-To escape from routine life		.866			3.21
-To relieve daily stress		.896			3.22
-For a change of pace from everyday life		.844			3.31
Exploration					3.2984
-To enjoy culture in its cultural/historical setting			.786		3.10
-To enjoy the local festival			.889		3.24
-To experience local cultures			.732		3.55
Socialization					3.5090
-To be together as family or friends				.834	3.65
-To help my family or friends learn more about new knowledge				.772	3.31
-To increase family or friends kinships				.868	3.57
Cronbach's α	.847	.888	.826	.820	
KMO 0.769					

Analysis of Tourist Destination Image

The 14 factors for satisfaction were grouped into five factors and named: 'facilities', 'food', 'cost', 'recreation', and 'cultural attraction' (Table 3)

Table 3. Tourist Destination Choice

Attribute	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	
Facilities						3.7461
-Ease if transportation access	.714					3.69
-Attractive location	.646					3.71
-Hotel room availability	.650					3.74
-Transportation availability	.727					3.84
Food						3.7422
-Food level		.668				3.93
-Food diversity		.885				3.56
Cost						3.5065
-Residents' attitude			.751			3.17
-Travel cost			.716			3.94
-Price level			.758			3.41
Recreation						3.1279
-Nightlife				.892		2.89
-Recreational facilities				.811		3.37
Cultural Attraction						3.5930
-Historical Attraction					.836	3.63
-Event and local festival					.864	3.68
-Movie/drama destination					.801	3.47
Cronbach's α	.707	.691	.661	.752	.790	
KMO 0.688						

From a practical standpoint, the findings offer important implications for the development of convention destination marketing strategies. In today's competitive climate, creating and managing an appropriate destination personality have become vital for effective positioning and differentiation. More specifically, destination marketers should concentrate on developing efficient communication methods to launch a distinctive and attractive personality for their places. Convention destination marketers could differentiate their places based on the personality characteristics over and above perceived images. Thus, one area of future research would be the positioning of tourism destination using the personality dimensions found in this study, for example, infrastructure (traffic system and accommodation), tourism product

development, city tour course development and tourism information system.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to profile the motives and demographic characteristics of visitors to the '2006 Gwangju·Jeonnam Regional Innovation Convention & Exposition' in KimDaeJung Convention Centre. The findings of this study reflect that tourists visiting convention centre are somewhat heterogeneous. Therefore, differentiated marketing strategies should be stressed and executed by relevant parities. Segmenting convention markets and understanding their characteristics based on motivations will be important for successful convention and event managers in the future. In addition, motivation can be stressed as important preconditions for attitudinal and behaviour change (Moorman & Matulich, 1993). Furthermore, motivation increases attention to festival visitors and produces more stable and enduring attitudes (Batra & Michael, 1986; Celsi & Olson, 1988; Moorman & Matulich, 1993). Therefore, the relationship between convention motivation and attitude and behavioural intentions suggested to be explored using a structural equation model in future research.

This study explored convention destination selection criteria and perception. This study suggested the direction for making a value added business of exhibition & convention with making use of the appealing tourism source of Gwangju KimDaeJung Convention Centre. If additional tourism research continues to show that there are compare and contrast some of those differences by profiling foreign visitors by segment clusters. The results presented in this study need to be qualified in the light of several limitations. The study was conducted in the fall, thus findings were limited to fall visitors. Visitors who participate in different seasons may from different opinions of a destination. Seasonality restricts the generalisability of tourism research findings, and should always be taken into consideration in the interpretation stage. To overcome this limitation, future researchers could conduct similar surveys in different seasons. The survey results can then be compared to identify similarities and differences in them. Further, the population of this study was limited to visitors of a tourist destination in Korea. Thus, future study could analyse convention segmentation between domestic and international visitors (e.g. Japanese, Chinese) to obtain more useful information. Theses limitations, along with the study's findings, suggest directions for further research. Also, future work which compares the motivators of

visitors with meeting planners would be helpful to the convention literature body of knowledge. Greater insights into visitor behaviour will also aid in scholarly discussion and could help the practitioner and destination managers to achieve a deeper understanding of the visitor's decision-making process.

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SUBMITTED: NOVEMBER 2008

REVISION SUBMITTED: FEBRUARY 2009

ACCEPTED: MARCH 2009

REFEREED ANONYMOUSLY

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