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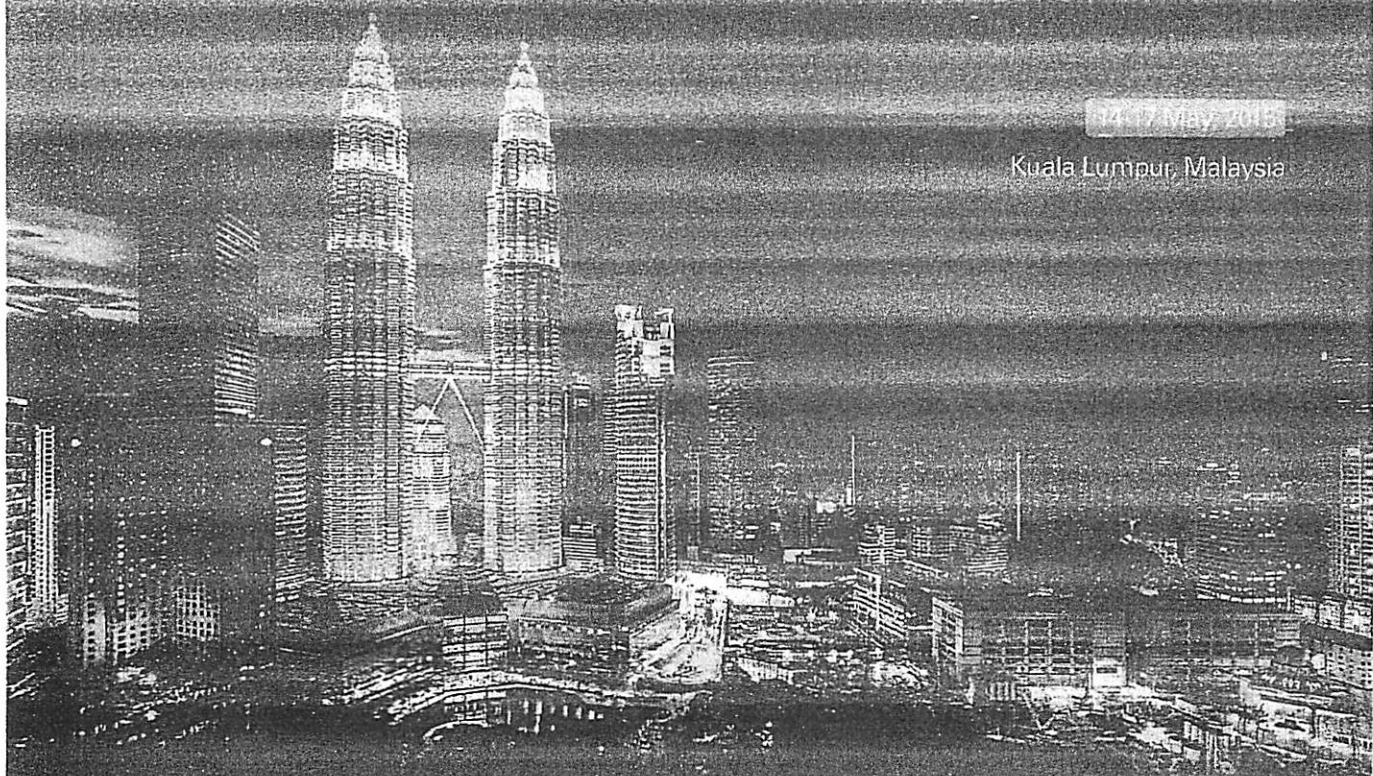
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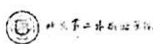
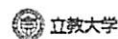
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**DEVELOPMENTS OF THE NEW TOURISM
PARADIGM IN THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION**

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APTA 2015

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Table of Contents

(Presented in Conference Schedule)

Tourism Planning 1

POST DISASTER TOURISM DEVELOPMENT OF PHI PHI ISLAND: THE INFLUENCE OF SUSTAINABILITY AND POLITICAL ECONOMY.....	1
<i>Faye Taylor</i>	

FACTORS ENCOURAGING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN PLANNING FOR TOURISM IN PROTECTED AREA: A MODIFIED DELPHI STUDY.....	4
<i>Arni A. Gani</i>	

*THE IMPACT OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES' RELATIONSHIP QUALITY AND SELF-EFFICACY ON SUSTAINABLE RURAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT.....	9
<i>Fong Sook Fun, Lo May Chium, Vikneswaran Nair</i>	

Tourism Marketing 1

DOES DESTINATION IMAGE AFFECT TOURIST SATISFACTION AND VISIT RECOMMENDATION AT A SMALL CRUISE PORT?.....	28
<i>Jenny Cave, Thu Thi Trinh</i>	

EXTENDING THE UNDERSTANDING OF ASIAN WORKING HOLIDAY MAKERS' ACCOMMODATION CHOICES IN AUSTRALIA.....	31
<i>Hayato Nagai, Pierre Benckendorff, Aaron Tkaczynski</i>	

A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP AMONG TRAVEL INVOLVEMENT, TOURISM EXPERIENCE, AND PLACE ATTACHMENT ON TAIWAN FILM-INDUCED TOURISTS: A CASE STUDY OF KOREAN DRAMA, MY LOVE FROM THE STAR.....	35
<i>Tang-Chung Kan, Yu-Yuan Hsu, Yung-Pin Chen</i>	

HR 1

*THE ROLE OF MOBILE PHONE ON THE WORK LIFE BALANCE OF FILIPINO HOTELIERS.....	40
<i>Lilibeth J. Baylisis</i>	

THE INFLUENCE OF PERSONALITY TRAITS AND CROSS CULTURAL ADAPTATION ON WORK AND TRAVEL USA SATISFACTION: THE CASE OF TAIWANESE STUDENTS.....	46
<i>Chien-En Huang</i>	

Special Topics 1

*WHICH COMES FIRST: "TOURISM OR OENOAGSTRONOMY?".....	49
<i>Ruhet Genç</i>	
*CONTENT ANALYSIS OF INTERNATIONAL AIRLINE PROMOTION VIDEOS.....	61
<i>Yu-Yuan Sheng, Tzeng-Hua Yang</i>	

- *THE POTENTIAL DECISIONS ON ATTENDING MEDICAL TOURISM IN TAIWAN:
A FREE LISTING APPROACH FOR TOURISTS FROM MAINLAND CHINA..... 69
Chienho Chen

Marketing 2

- A STUDY ON THE PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING RELATIONSHIP MODEL FOR
SENIOR TOURISTS IN TAIWAN..... 74
Joyce Hsiu-Yu Chen, Chia-Li Chan, Tang-Chung Kan

- *AN INVESTIGATION OF FACTORS DETERMINING THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF TAIWAN
AS AN INDUSTRIAL TOURISM..... 79
Cheng-Fei Lee

- POST-VISIT FACTORS INFLUENCING MULTIFACETED DESTINATION
IMAGE FORMATION..... 87
Xiong Jia, Noor Hazarina Hashim, Jamie Murphey

Operations Management 1

- *CUSTOMERS' PATRONAGE OF SELECTED PHILIPPINE AND U.S. STORES OF
A LOCAL QUICK SERVICE RESTAURANT CHAIN..... 91
Shirley Villosillo-Guevarra

- *ANALYSIS AND CONTROL ON LIFE CYCLE OF ZHANGYE DANXIA GEOPARK
TOURISM DESTINATION IN THE NORTHWEST OF CHINA..... 107
Jie Yang

- STUDY OF INFLUENCE OF CULTURE TIGHTNESS-LOOSENESS ON EMPLOYEE
SERVICE RECOVERY PERFORMANCE AT FIVE STAR HOTEL USING EXPERIMENTAL
VIGNETTE APPROACH..... 112
Tan Ai Ling, Kashif Hussain, Murali Sambasivan

Information Technology 1

- *TOURISM INFORMATION SEARCH PROCESS OF SMARTPHONE USERS:
MODEL DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION..... 116
Chaang-Juan Ho, Yu-Chun Lin, Yu-Lan Yuan, Ming-Chih Chen

- SUBJECT AREAS OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND TOURISM:
FROM 2008 TO 2014..... 126
Yulan Y. Yuan, Yuen-Hsien Tseng, Chaang-Juan Ho

Marketing 3

- *SERVICE QUALITY, SATISFACTION AND REVISIT INTENTION TO RURAL TOURISM
DESTINATION..... 133
Fung-Yee Law, May-Chium Lo

- * PERCEPTIONS AND TRAVEL MOTIVES OF YOUNG ASIAN STUDENTS..... 147
Asad Mohsin, Jorge Lengler, Preeda Chaiya,

- * FACTORS ARE AFFECTING INTERNATIONAL TOURIST'S DECISION ON CHOOSING VIETNAM AS A DESTINATION..... 161
Hung Nguyen Phuc, Heidi Chang, Trang Bach Thi Thuy

Tourism Planning 2

- * COMMUNITY BASED CSR FOR THAILAND'S COMMUNITIES..... 178
Suwajee Tangon

- EXPLORING POTENTIAL OF COMMUNITY-BASED ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS IN RAMSAR SITE, LOWER KINABATANGAN, SABAH, EAST MALAYSIA..... 184
Rosazman Hussin, Velan Kunjuraman

- IMPACTS OF TRANSIENT VACATION RENTALS (TVRS) ON THE HOST COMMUNITY..... 186
Evan J. Jordan, Jocelyn Chui

Finance/Economics 1

- RISK PERCEPTION CONCERNING DIFFERENT HAZARDS: A STATED CHOICE MODEL APPLIED TO TRAVEL DECISIONS..... 190
Igor Sarman

- TRIP BEHAVIOR AND CARBON EMISSION AMONG HIGH SPEED RAIL TRAVELERS..... 194
Zhi-Wei Lin, Ya-Yen Sun

- IMPACT OF INTERNATIONAL TOURISM RECEIPTS ON CAMBODIAN ECONOMY AND WELFARE: A CGE ANALYSIS..... 199
Ryda Chea

Marketing 4

- LOCAL FESTIVAL VISITOR'S MARKET SEGMENTATION BASED ON VALUE PARADIGM.. 202
Tae-Hwan Yoon

- * THE SABAH TOURISM BRAND: SENSE OF PLACE IN A MULTICULTURAL MELTING POT ON THE ISLAND OF BORNEO..... 204
Wong Siao Fui

- EXPLORING JAPANESE POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS' STUDY DESTINATION CHOICE: THE CASE OF AUSTRALIA..... 215
Sho Kashiwagi, Hayato Nagai, Tomoyuki Furutani

Special Topics 2

- * SPATIAL EQUITY IN ASIAN CITIES: URBAN ATTRACTIONS AND THEIR CONTESTIBILITY 219
Shian-Loong, Bernard Lew

- A NEW IDENTITY OF FARMERS DOING EDUCATIONAL TOURISM 229
Yasuo Ohe

HR 2

- * WORK-LIFE BALANCE TOWARDS JOB SATISFACTION AND TURNOVER INTENTION OF FEMALE HOTEL EMPLOYEES IN GENTING, MALAYSIA 232
Zhang Shegnan (Abby), Dr. Christian Kahl

- GREEN TRAINING (EMPLOYEE-TRAINING PROGRAM FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM): THE CASE OF EL NIDO RESORTS 244
Marck Bryan A. David

Marketing 5

- * THE VALUE EFFECTS OF CHANGES IN LEVERAGE: EVIDENCE FROM THE TRAVEL AND LEISURE SECTOR 247
Roberta Adami, Tugba Bas, Gulnur Muradoglu, Sheeja Sivaprasad, Stefan van Dellen

- EXPLORING THE CONSTRAINTS FOR TAIWANESE TO PARTICIPATE IN PRISON TOURISM : A CASE STUDY OF GREEN ISLAND HUMAN RIGHTS MEMORIAL PARK 259
Yu-lun Tai

- * CONSUMERS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS LOCATION-BASED ADVERTISING: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY 262
Gana Matthew Attahiru, Toney B. Thomas

Information Technology 2

- THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA BY TOURISM-ORIENTED REAL ESTATE AGENCIES IN PHUKET, THAILAND 268
Ilian Assenov, Yuwarat Boonyothayarn

- A STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODEL OF THE EFFECT OF BOOKING APPS TOWARDS ON HOTEL BRAND IMAGE: A SMARTPHONE USER PERSPECTIVE 272
Menglong Xia, Yang Zhang

- * A COMPARISON OF DESTINATION PICTORIAL IMAGES BETWEEN DMOs' WEBSITES AND PINTEREST: A CASE OF DESTINATIONS IN 279
Seob-Gyu Song, Dae-Young Kim

Tourism Planning 3

- * A CONCEPTUAL APPRAISAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE OF RURAL TOURISM IN MALAYSIA 293
Gan Joo-Ee, Vikneswaran Nair
- * TOWARDS DEVELOPING A FRAMEWORK FOR RURAL TOURISM DESTINATION APPEALS 300
Samuel Folorunso Adeyinka-Ojo, Vikneswaran Nair
- * LANGKAWI'S TOURISM BLUEPRINT (2011-2015): TRANSFORMATION FROM RURAL TOURISM TO DEVELOPED RURAL TOURISM DESTINATION 317
Vikneswaran Nair

Marketing 6

- RESIDENTS' PERCEPTION OF BALI AS A VACATION DESTINATION 326
Jerome F. Agrusa, Joseph Lema, John Tanner, Wendy Lam
- NOSTALGIC OTHERS: CONSUMING ASIAN HANDICRAFTS BY JAPANESE TOURISTS 331
Ryotaro Suzuki, Yukinori Watanabe
- APPLYING THE MOTIVATION-OPPORTUNITY-ABILITY (MOA) MODEL TO EXAMINE THE EFFECTS OF SELF-CONGRUITY, TRAVEL CONSTRAINTS, AND PERCEIVED INSTRUMENTALITY ON TRAVEL INTENTION 335
Wanching Chang, Chin-Chun Su

Special Topics 3

- * THE NEIGHBORHOOD EFFECT OF URBAN TOURISM: WALK-TIME AS A PROXY METRIC 342
Shian-Loong, Bernard Lew
- * EFFECTS OF SHORT-STAY VACATION ON THE MENTAL HEALTH OF JAPANESE EMPLOYEES 351
Atsushi Kawakubo, Mihoko Kasuga, Kenichi Itao, Makoto Komazawa, Takashi Oguchi
- * "TRAVELERS' STATE OF LIMBO": A CONCEPTUAL PAPER OF HOW LIMINOID PLAYS A CRUCIAL ROLE ON TRAVELERS POST JOURNEY 361
Amanda Ting Zhen Ee, Christian Kahl

HR 3

- * COMMUNICATING ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES TO EMPLOYEES OF SELECTED HOTELS IN METRO MANILA 371
Olivia B. Tabucol, Shirley V. Guevarra
- PERCEPTUAL DIFFERENCES IN CORE COMPETENCIES BETWEEN TOURISM INDUSTRY PRACTITIONERS AND STUDENTS USING AHP 381
Jeongja Choi, Namhyun Kim, Joungkoo Park, Jaemyung Shim

A QUALITATIVE ACCOUNT <i>Azilah Kasim</i>	388
--	-----

OBSERVING CUSTOMERS' REACTIONS TO FAMILIAR SERVICES BETWEEN OTHER CUSTOMERS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS..... <i>Kathleen Jeelyae Kim, Sung-Bum Kim, Dae-Young Kim</i>	391
---	-----

Finance/Economics 2

* DO YOU WANT TO BUILD A SNOWMAN IN NORWAY? THE IMPACT OF DISNEY'S FROZEN MOVIE ON NORWEGIAN TOURISM..... <i>Brian R. Metcalf, Cathrine Linnes, Jerome F. Agrusa, Joseph Lema</i>	395
---	-----

* POSITIVE VS. NEGATIVE ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT.....	
--	--

DEVELOPMENTS OF THE NEW TOURISM PARADIGM IN THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION

Tourism Planning 3

* A CONCEPTUAL APPRAISAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE OF RURAL TOURISM IN MALAYSIA..... <i>Gan Joo-Ee, Vikneswaran Nair</i>	293
--	-----

* TOWARDS DEVELOPING A FRAMEWORK FOR RURAL TOURISM DESTINATION APPEALS <i>Samuel Folorunso Adeyinka-Ojo, Vikneswaran Nair</i>	300
---	-----

* LANGKAWI'S TOURISM BLUEPRINT (2011-2015): TRANSFORMATION FROM RURAL TOURISM TO DEVELOPED RURAL TOURISM DESTINATION..... <i>Vikneswaran Nair</i>	317
---	-----

Marketing 6

RESIDENTS' PERCEPTION OF BALI AS A VACATION DESTINATION..... <i>Jerome F. Agrusa, Joseph Lema, John Tanner, Wendy Lam</i>	326
--	-----

NOSTALGIC OTHERS: CONSUMING ASIAN HANDICRAFTS BY JAPANESE TOURISTS..... <i>Ryotaro Suzuki, Yukinori Watanabe</i>	331
---	-----

APPLYING THE MOTIVATION-OPPORTUNITY-ABILITY (MOA) MODEL TO EXAMINE THE EFFECTS OF SELF-CONGRUITY, TRAVEL CONSTRAINTS, AND PERCEIVED INSTRUMENTALITY ON TRAVEL INTENTION..... <i>Wanching Chang, Chin-Chun Su</i>	335
---	-----

Special Topics 3

* THE NEIGHBORHOOD EFFECT OF URBAN TOURISM: WALK-TIME AS A PROXY METRIC..... <i>Shian-Loong, Bernard Lew</i>	342
--	-----

* EFFECTS OF SHORT-STAY VACATION ON THE MENTAL HEALTH OF JAPANESE EMPLOYEES..... <i>Atsushi Kawakubo, Mihoko Kasuga, Kenichi Itao, Makoto Komazawa, Takashi Oguchi</i>	351
--	-----

* "TRAVELERS' STATE OF LIMBO": A CONCEPTUAL PAPER OF HOW LIMINOID PLAYS A CRUCIAL ROLE ON TRAVELERS POST JOURNEY..... <i>Amanda Ting Zhen Ee, Christian Kahl</i>	361
--	-----

HR 3

* COMMUNICATING ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES TO EMPLOYEES OF SELECTED HOTELS IN METRO MANILA..... <i>Olivia B. Tabucol, Shirley V. Guevarra</i>	371
---	-----

PERCEPTUAL DIFFERENCES IN CORE COMPETENCIES BETWEEN TOURISM INDUSTRY PRACTITIONERS AND STUDENTS USING AHP..... <i>Jeongja Choi, Namhyun Kim, Joungkoo Park, Jaemyung Shim</i>	381
---	-----

Operations Management 2

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN HOTEL CORE DEPARTMENTS	385
<i>Karen M. Fernandez, Sirintorn Thepmongkorn</i>	

INNOVATIVE WATER MANAGEMENT RESPONSES AMONG HOTELS: A QUALITATIVE ACCOUNT	388
<i>Azilah Kasim</i>	

OBSERVING CUSTOMERS' REACTIONS TO FAMILIAR SERVICES BETWEEN OTHER CUSTOMERS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS	391
<i>Kathleen Jeehyae Kim, Sung-Bum Kim, Dae-Young Kim</i>	

Finance/Economics 2

* DO YOU WANT TO BUILD A SNOWMAN IN NORWAY? THE IMPACT OF DISNEY'S FROZEN MOVIE ON NORWEGIAN TOURISM	395
<i>Brian R. Metcalf, Cathrine Linnes, Jerome F. Agrusa, Joseph Lema</i>	

* POSITIVE VS NEGATIVE ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT: A REVIEW OF ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDIES	405
<i>Jeetesh Kumar, Kashif Hussain, Suresh Kannan</i>	

* PRICE LEADERSHIP IN LODGING MARKETS	414
<i>Minsun Kim, Seul Ki Lee, Wesley S. Roehl</i>	

Marketing 7

* DETERMINANTS OF TRAVEL MOTIVATION: A PLS-SEM APPROACH TOWARDS MALDIVIANS TRAVELING OVERSEAS	426
<i>David Ng., Rupam Konar</i>	

EXPLORING CONTEMPORARY INTERNATIONAL JAPANESE TOURISM: THE INTERSECTION OF DIFFERENT CULTURAL VALUES	438
<i>Eriko Yasue, Kazuo Murakami</i>	

SAFETY AND TOURIST BEHAVIOUR: HOW ACCIDENTS CAN CHANGE YOUR TRAVEL?	439
<i>Su Jin Lee, Sung Jae Im, Sang Heon Song</i>	

Tourism Planning 4

RESIDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF MULTI-LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPE IN TOURISM DESTINATION	442
<i>Maria Younghee Lee, Ruan Mingi</i>	

* DETERMINING AN APPROPRIATE INTEGRATED ASSESSMENT MODEL OF TOURISM SAFETY RISK WITHIN THE CHANGBAI MOUNTAIN SCENIC AREA	446
<i>Zhou Lijun, Liu Jisheng</i>	

Marketing 9

GENDERED DESTINATION PERSONALITY:
PERSONALISATION OF KUALA LUMPUR THROUGH PROJECTIVE TECHNIQUES..... 515
Lim Tau Sian

THE EFFECT OF EXPERIENTIAL VALUE ON VIVID MEMORY AND POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL
INTENTION IN AN INTERNATIONAL INDUSTRIAL EXHIBITION 518
Young-joo Ahn, Yuan Lee, Insin Kim, Sunghyup Hyun

Poster Session 1

* A STUDY OF FOREIGN VISITORS' MOTIVATIONS TO VISIT GUANGZHOU CHINA
BASED ON PUSH-PULL FACTORS..... 521
Ivy Ling ZaiXing, Chris Ong Siew Har

* EXPLAINING PERFORMANCE IN HOTEL AND RESTAURANT BUSINESSES..... 533
Jie Zhang, Astrid E. Enemark

IDENTIFYING CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTATION OF HOMESTAY PROGRAMME:
A STUDY IN BUM BUM ISLAND, SEMPORNA SABAH, EAST MALAYSIA..... 549
Velan Kunjuraman, Rosaznan Hussin

REDEFINING SLOW TOURISM FOR RURAL DESTINATION: A CONCEPTUAL STUDY..... 550
Farah Atiqah Mohamad Noor, Vikneswaran Nair, Paolo Mura

AFTER UNGPs ON HUMAN RIGHT AND BUSINESS :
STUDY ON SEVERAL FOLLOW-UP IN TOURISM..... 554
Yesaya Sandang

* THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN ONLINE TOURISM INFORMATION SEARCH :
CASE STUDY ON THE APPLICATION OF WECHAT AMONG 1990S OF CHINA..... 558
Yuting Wang, Shanshan Lin

INTERGROUP CONFLICTS IN COMMUNITIES IMPACTED BY GAY TOURISM
IN THAILAND..... 570
Piyaporn Deejing, Seob-Gyu Song, Dae-Young Kim

THE EFFECTS OF HUMOR ON IN-FLIGHT SAFETY ANNOUNCEMENTS..... 574
Kathleen Kim, Hyewon Youn, Dae-Young Kim

PERSPECTIVES OF THAILAND HOTEL MANAGEMENT: THE ASEAN ECONOMIC
COMMUNITY..... 577
Samart Plangpramool, Kunsutinee Worasuwan, Joseph Lema, Jerome F. Agrusa

* THE IMPACTS OF TOURISM ACTIVITIES, DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE ON THE
ENVIRONMENT OF REDANG ISLANDS: AN ANALYSIS OF VISITORS' PERCEPTION..... 583
Murugadas Ramdas, Badaruddin Mohamed

FUNCTIONALITY OF SIGNAGES OF MAJOR TOURIST DESTINATIONS IN THE BICOL REGION,
PHILIPPINES..... 590
Orbel S. Cepeda

MEASURING THE DESTINATION ATTRACTIVENESS TO GAIN A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE: A CASE STUDY OF VIETNAM AS A DEVELOPING TOURIST DESTINATION.....	592
<i>Giang Quach</i>	
LOCATION-BASED SERVICES: TOOL FOR TOURISM SERVICE PROMOTION.....	595
<i>Gana Matthew Attahiru, Catheryn Khoo-Lattimore</i>	
VIRTUAL TOURISM BASED ON VIRTUAL VISION AND INDUCTION TECHNOLOGY.....	601
<i>Zhongjuan Ji</i>	
THE INSTITUTIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF DESTINATION MARKETING UNDER THE TOURISM ACT OF 2009: AN ASSESSMENT OF THE TOURISM PROMOTIONS BOARD.....	602
<i>Jaspher Callejo, Edieser De la Santa</i>	
COGNITIVE FEAR OF OUTBOUND TOURISTS IN THE EVENT OF TRAGEDIES: IMPACT ON TOURISM PARTICIPATION.....	606
<i>Aiwa Romay, Toney. K. Thomas</i>	
THE RELATIONSHIP AMONG EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE, AND CROSS CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT OF ASIAN CHINESE STUDENT STUDY IN TOURISM MANAGEMENT DOMAIN IN TAIWAN.....	611
<i>Yi-Ting Chu, Chia-Yuan Hsu, Wan-Chen Liu</i>	
AWAY FROM HOME: REFLECTION OF THE RESEARCHER BACKGROUND AND COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE.....	613
<i>Karun Rawat, Frederic Bouchon, Vikneswaran Nair</i>	
UNDERSTANDING JOB ROLE AND JOB ESSENCE:	617
<i>DELIGHTING THE CUSTOMER, Elaine Lorilla-Bañares, Olivia Barbosa-Tabucol</i>	
WHEN BEHAVIORS CONFRONT PROFILES: A STUDY OF WINE DRINKING CONSUMERS IN TAMPERE, FINLAND.....	619
<i>Yisong Wang, Joaquim Dias Soeiro</i>	
📌 Post Session 2	
PERCEIVING AND EXPERIENCING URBAN TOURISM SPACE FROM CHILDREN'S PERSPECTIVES: AN APPLICATION OF CHILDREN'S GEOGRAPHIES.....	622
<i>Mimi Li</i>	
A STUDY ON TOURISM SPACE ORGANIZATION OF NORTHEASTERN CHINA BASED ON THE INFLUENCES OF THE HIGH-SPEED RAILWAY.....	625
<i>Ai-yun Meng</i>	
*EVALUATING HOSPITALITY MANAGERS' HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTICES RELATED TO IMMIGRATION LAWS.....	628
<i>Swathi Ravichandran, Aviad A Israeli, Farhad Sethna, Ankita Ghosh</i>	
SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD PRACTICES AWARENESS AMONG CHEFS IN THE KLANG VALLEY.....	638
<i>Murugan Krisnamoorthy, Gopinath Sangaran</i>	

RESOURCING ISSUES IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY AS PERCEIVED BY PRACTICUM TRAINEES.....	641
<i>Edgar Allan Dela Cruz Mendoza</i>	
PHRAYA RASSADANUPADIT MODEL FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PROJECT: TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY DEVELOPMENT BY CONNECTING TO PHRAYA RASSADANUPADIT MODEL.....	645
<i>Thanatip Boonyarat, Sareejit Kheniyatho, Lalita Amornhaymanon</i>	
COMMUNICATED TRAVELER'S SATISFACTION.....	650
<i>Min-Hyung Kim, Jing Luo, Yu Zhang, Wansoo Kim, Yeong-Hyeon Hwang, Seung-Woo Choo</i>	
THE LEADING CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF CITIZENSHIP PRESSURE.....	654
<i>Jong-Hyeong Kim, Hyewon Youn</i>	

* Full paper was submitted and reviewed for the inclusion of presentation.

PERCEPTIONS AND TRAVEL MOTIVES OF YOUNG ASIAN STUDENTS

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The rising income level of the middle class in Thailand has also raised the disposable income and interest to visit tourism destinations abroad. In last seven years the number of outbound tourists has doubled suggesting a growth rate of 15% per annum. With a population of approximately 63 million and a change in perception of the Thai people that travelling is no longer a luxury but a beneficial and productive activity has given boost to the outbound tourism. This study adapts the Leisure Motivation Scale to determine travel motives of young Thai university students towards holidaying. A conceptual model with six hypotheses is proposed which tests the relationship of constructs 'to challenge my abilities' and 'to explore new experiences' with experiencing adventure, the Maori Culture and natural beauty offered by a tourist destination. The study investigates if New Zealand is perceived to be the right place for such experiences by the Thai university students. Structural Equation Modelling with maximum likelihood method is used to test all relationships simultaneously from the 420 responses using Amos 20.0. The findings suggest that the young Thai university students do not perceive New Zealand as a destination where they can challenge their abilities and skills while on a holiday to experience adventure or Maori Culture. On the other hand when they are looking to explore new experiences they do perceive New Zealand as a destination to experience adventure. Maori Culture and natural beauty. The outcomes from the study are unique in relation to travel motives of the young

Thai market segment generally, and in relations to New Zealand specifically. On the theoretical front the study has adapted the Leisure Motivation Scale to develop and test constructs through a proposed theoretical model. Considering this from a marketing point of view, exploring new markets is the key for all destination marketers to sustain economic gains from tourism, the current study adds information about an unexplored market segment. Hence, suggesting implications for destination marketers to get to know about this new emerging market segment.

Keywords: Holiday attitudes, students, adventure, Maori Culture, leisure motivation, Thailand.

INTRODUCTION

Studying the travel behaviour and motives of the university students continues to be an area of interest to both tourism researchers and tourism marketers. This segment is proving to be a social group with complex and unique travel behaviour (Limanond, Butsingkorn, & Chernkhunthod, 2011; Kim, Hallab & Kim, 2012; Chen, 2012). Travel experience amongst the students has been on the increase influenced by discounted travel and tour packages for students, international student exchange programmes, and a general push by universities to send students abroad for cultural and educational experiences. Past travel experience to a destination could impact their future travel deci-

sion and choices (Kim et al 2012). The literature also suggests that perceptions of tourists about a destination impacts their travel behaviour and choice of destination (Bonn, Joseph & Mo, 2005; Beerli & Martin, 2004; Chon, 1991; Echtner & Ritchie, 2003). In examining the role of motivations, prior travel experience, social ties and destination choice in pre-trip attitude of the American university students, authors Nyaupane, Paris and Teye (2011) find that academic motivations and social ties influence students' destination selection for study abroad programme with social motivation emerging as the most important factor that impacts attitude towards the destinations prior to the travel. Such information is significant in determining pre-trip perceptions of young students which could well grow into adulthood. Authors Ballantyne, Gannon and Wells (2012) suggest in their findings that as a university student even a short-term study related travel has shown to impact on their attitude, awareness and cross-cultural perceptions.

Though several studies have recently explored the travel motives of university students highlighting significance of the student travel segment and the uniqueness associated with their travel attitudes and perceptions, research on Asian students' travel motives is scarce and in relation to students from Thailand almost non-existent in the tourism and hospitality literature. Based on this premise the current study contributes to the literature by informing travel motives and attitudes of the Thai university students generally and their perceptions about New Zealand as tourist destination particularly. Several studies related to a particular destination have been published, such as American students thinking of travel beyond Europe (Deresiewicz, 2009), student travel behaviour from the UK and China (Xu, Morgan, & Song, 2009), students' travel behaviour in terms of travel/tourism preferences, transportation, housing, food and entertainment were compared between the US, South Africa and Israel by (Shoham, Schrage, & Eeden, 2004), intention of students to travel to Mauritius (Phau, Shanka, & Dhayan, 2009), experiences of Norwegian students abroad (Wiers-Jenssen, 2003), Chinese students' perceptions about Australia (Wang & Davidson 2008), and perceptions of international students about Malaysia (Shan, Shah, & Suat, 2013).

The rising income level of the middle class in Thailand has also raised the disposable income and interest to visit tourism destinations abroad (Chaipinit & Phetvaroon, 2011). In last seven years the number of outbound tourists has doubled suggesting a growth rate of 15% per annum (Thailand Development Research Institute cited in Chaipinit and Phetvaroon, 2011). With a population of approximately 63 million and a change in perception of the Thai people that travelling is no longer a luxury but a beneficial and productive activity has given boost to the outbound tourism (World Tourism Organisation, 2006). The main age group of outbound Thai travellers is between 24–44 years of age and travelling for holidays is the largest segment comprising 54.3% (WTO, 2006).

Thailand in recent years has faced challenges in the form of floods and political unrest which impacted both inbound and outbound tourist flows. However, given the dynamism of the tourism industry it has been able to bounce back quickly, as is evident from different regions affected by the Asian tsunami, SARS, act of terrorism etc. it is believed that outbound tourism will continue to grow from Thailand. The outbound travel records from the Suvarnabhumi Airport, Thailand show that from 2006 to 2014 (September) 22,203,043 Thai tourists departed for abroad (Immigration Bureau, Police Department 2014). This reflects that even in adverse circumstances outbound travel of the Thai people did not drop extraordinarily.

This travel pattern signifies the increasing affluence of this market which became the impetus for the current study. With scarce research on Asian students' travel motives generally in the English literature, and almost non-existent in relation to Thai students, this study provides new and unique information. This information is obtained through proposing a new conceptual model with six hypotheses and testing relationships between the constructs in the model. Further, the outcomes from the study are expected to help tourism marketers and destination management in planning targeted future promotion and activities to attract outbound tourists from Thailand.

Theoretical Background and Research Hypotheses.

Travel Motives

As a psychological term motivation compels individuals and yearns for action (Schiffman & Kanuk 2003). Several researchers have argued that travel motives is a starting point to study tourist behaviour and obtain a better understanding of their travel choice (Fodness, 1994; Jonsson & Devonish, 2008; Kim, 2007; Kim & Jogaratnam, 2003; Kim, Jogaratnam, & Noh, 2006; Pearce & Lee, 2005; Rittichainuwat, 2008). The current study largely draws upon the Leisure Motivation Scale of Beard and Ragheb (1983) as it is more of a generalised motivational scale demonstrating both stability and rigour (Loundsbury & Hoopes, 1988; Newlands, 2004). The scale continues to be used either in its original form or modified form by tourism researchers (Ryan & Glendon, 1998; Klenosky, 2002; Pearce & Lee, 2005; Wang & Walker, 2010). In studying travel motivations for the Chinese outbound market Zhang and Peng (2014) suggest that it has been a relatively under researched area and research done between 1999-2010 suggests that most common motivational factors for Chinese tourists to travel overseas were noted to be knowledge, prestige, enhancing personal relationship, relaxation, experiencing different cultures and lifestyle and shopping. Most of these factors relate to the measures used in the Leisure Motivation Scale. Additionally Kim (2014) also suggests that social interaction, cultural immersion, provides memorable experiences which have been widely discussed in the literature to become motives to travel.

Travel Activity

Travel activity helps to segment the market based on holiday makers' interest in the activity and level of involvement in the activity. Examples of such activities could be cultural tourism (McKercher et al., 2002; Kerstetter, Confer & Bricker, 1998), natural tourism (Lang & O'Leary, 1997), adventure tourism (Sung, Morrison & O'Leary, 1997, 2000), and tourism aiming to visit friends and family (Moscardo et al., 2000). This helps tour managers to anticipate personal expectations, the expected benefits (Formica & Uysal,

1998), and understand destination choices (Moscardo et al., 1996), besides improving the image of a certain destination (Beerli & Martin, 2004; Trauer & Ryan, 2005). Understanding tourists' interest then proposing the travel activity helps to generate meaningful interest and experience to remember from that travel (Kim 2014). The current study seeks to explore holiday motives of Thailand university students and their interest in activities offered by New Zealand as a destination. The study proposes a theoretical model to test the significance of the relationship of constructs such as 'to explore my abilities' and 'to explore new experiences' with 'adventure', 'Maori Culture' and natural beauty'.

The following hypotheses have been developed to test and propose implications from this study.

Tourists usually seek different travel experiences which are related to their stage in life, hence, determines their travel needs and experiences (Kim 2007; Dotson, Clark, & Dave, 2008). With university students and young travellers, it is found that risk taking and sensation seeking approach impacts their travel behavior and selection of tourism activities and destination (Pizam, Jeong, Reichel & van Boemmel, 2004). To date holiday motives of young Thailand university students have not been studied specifically in relation to activities offered by New Zealand as a destination. Considering that they represent an emerging segment on the cusp of major life stage change with potential to travel, raises questions such as - what is it that they look for to explore their abilities and skills while on a holiday? Are adventure activities such as those available in New Zealand of any attraction to them? Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:
H1: the more the Thai students challenge their abilities and skills on their holidays, the higher they perceive New Zealand as an attractive destination to experience adventure.

Ryan (1998) states that tourism experiences are enhanced when tourists are placed in a realistic situation which could involve interaction with people. Such interaction becomes more meaningful when experienced with a diverse culture and tend to result as a travel motive which is evident from the work of Richards (2002), Tung and Ritchie

Operations Management 2

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN HOTEL CORE DEPARTMENTS	385
<i>Karen M. Fernandez, Sirintorn Thepmongkorn</i>	

INNOVATIVE WATER MANAGEMENT RESPONSES AMONG HOTELS: A QUALITATIVE ACCOUNT	388
<i>Azilah Kasim</i>	

OBSERVING CUSTOMERS' REACTIONS TO FAMILIAR SERVICES BETWEEN OTHER CUSTOMERS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS	391
<i>Kathleen Jeehyae Kim, Sung-Bum Kim, Dae-Young Kim</i>	

Finance/Economics 2

* DO YOU WANT TO BUILD A SNOWMAN IN NORWAY? THE IMPACT OF DISNEY'S FROZEN MOVIE ON NORWEGIAN TOURISM	395
<i>Brian R. Metcalf, Cathrine Linnes, Jerome F. Agrusa, Joseph Lena</i>	

* POSITIVE VS NEGATIVE ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT: A REVIEW OF ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDIES	405
<i>Jeetesh Kumar, Kashif Hussain, Suresh Kannan</i>	

* PRICE LEADERSHIP IN LODGING MARKETS	414
<i>Minsun Kim, Seul Ki Lee, Wesley S. Roehl</i>	

Marketing 7

* DETERMINANTS OF TRAVEL MOTIVATION: A PLS-SEM APPROACH TOWARDS MALDIVIANS TRAVELING OVERSEAS	426
<i>David Ng., Rupam Konar</i>	

EXPLORING CONTEMPORARY INTERNATIONAL JAPANESE TOURISM: THE INTERSECTION OF DIFFERENT CULTURAL VALUES	438
<i>Eriko Yasue, Kazuo Murakami</i>	

SAFETY AND TOURIST BEHAVIOUR: HOW ACCIDENTS CAN CHANGE YOUR TRAVEL?	439
<i>Su Jin Lee, Sung Jae Im, Sang Heon Song</i>	

Tourism Planning 4

RESIDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF MULTI-LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPE IN TOURISM DESTINATION	442
<i>Maria Younghee Lee, Ruan Mingqi</i>	

* DETERMINING AN APPROPRIATE INTEGRATED ASSESSMENT MODEL OF TOURISM SAFETY RISK WITHIN THE CHANGBAI MOUNTAIN SCENIC AREA	446
<i>Zhou Lijun, Liu Jisheng</i>	

MICE

CURRENT STATUS AND ISSUES IN HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT IN
MICE BUSINESSES IN SAPPORO, JAPAN..... 453

Hiroko Ichioka

STAKEHOLDERS' INTERESTS, POWER, AND INFLUENCE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF
THE AUCKLAND MICE SECTOR..... 457

Mirrin Locke

GLOBAL OR LOCAL SPACES? EXAMINING PASSENGERS' PREFERENCE FOR
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORTS..... 461

Wei-Jue Huang

Marketing 8

RURAL TOURISM IN MALAYSIA: TOURISTS' PERCEPTION?..... 465

Uma Thivi Munikrishnan, Sushila Devi Rajaratnam

THE INFLUENCE OF FILM GENRES ON THE TOURIST'S
DECISION MAKING PROCESS..... 469

Yuri Kork

* MODELING THE FACTORS LEADING TOURISTS TOWARDS SLOW TRAVEL:
THE EVIDENCE OF INDUSTRIAL TOURS IN TAIWAN..... 473

Li-Pin (Lynn) Lin

Tourism Planning 5

* REVISITING TOURISM PLANNING APPROACHES:
THE CASE OF HONG KONG FROM AN INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVE..... 484

Tony S.M. Tse

DISASTER TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN THE TSUNAMI-DEVASTATED AREA BY
THE GREAT EAST JAPAN EARTHQUAKE..... 497

Hiroyoshi Sano

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AS A SOCIALLY AND ENVIRONMENTALLY JUST TOURISM
EDUCATION: FACILITATING STUDENT INITIATIVES IN SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY-BASED
TOURISM DEVELOPMENT 499

Kumi Kato, Koji Kanda, Yumiko Horita, Simon Wearne, Yurika Fujita, Maki Kondo

Special Topics 3

* CULTURE AND AGE IN THE HOTEL INDUSTRY:
AN EAST-WEST STUDY OF EMPLOYMENT ATTITUDES IN MID-SCALE HOTELS..... 503

Kaikee Madan, Wayne Fallon, Louise Kippist,

INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL NETWORKS IN A TOURISM CLUSTER:
A GROUNDED THEORY APPROACH..... 512

Nanhyun Kim, Changsup Shim

(2011), Funk and Bruun (2007) and Morgan and Xu (2009). To test this within the context of Thailand university students' abilities and skills in experiencing a new culture such as Maori Culture, following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: the more the Thai students challenge their abilities and skills on their holidays, the higher they perceive New Zealand as an attractive place to experience the Maori Culture.

Attributes and perceptions about a destination usually impact travel motives to that destination (Kim 2014). For example natural beauty, shopping, cultural immersions and other experiential activities have an impact on destination choice (Echtner & Ritchie, 1993; Chi & Qu, 2008; Kim et al., 2012). New Zealand is quite famous for its natural beauty and according to Crouch (2011) destinations with unique attributes should take full advantage of their competitive edge. Is New Zealand perceived to be an attractive destination to experience natural beauty by the Thailand university students? The following hypothesis is proposed to test the question:

H3: the more the Thai students challenge their abilities and skills on their holidays, the higher they perceive New Zealand as an attractive destination to experience natural beauty.

Discovering novelty and visiting new places has always been of attraction for travellers. Adventure activities become part of discovering new experiences, they are often demanding and need particular interest while on holiday (William & Soutar, 2000; Crompton, 1979; Pizam et al., 2004). New Zealand is full of adventure activities of different levels soft to active thrill and, it is a segment which is growing (Bentley, Page, & Laird, 2003) leads to a question - do the adventure activities offered by New Zealand help Thailand university students discover new experiences when planning a holiday? The following hypothesis is proposed to assess:

H4: the more the Thai students go on holidays to explore new experiences, the higher they perceive New Zealand as an attractive destination to experience adventure.

Experiencing new cultures continues to be an attractive activity and travel motive for travellers as is evident from the contemporary tourism literature (Sharpley & Sundaram, 2005; Tung & Ritchie 2011 ; Funk & Bruun, 2007; Morgan & Xu, 2009). New Zealand provides a unique opportunity to experience the Maori Culture. Do the Thailand university students consider this as a new experience? The following hypothesis is proposed to test their attitude:

H5: the more the Thai students go on holidays to explore new experiences, the higher they perceive New Zealand as an attractive destination to experience the Maori Culture.

Beautiful landscape with natural surroundings is one of the selling attributes of any tourist destination, it adds to the competitive advantage. Though some researchers have examined the relationship between destination attributes, tourism performance and tourists' experience (Assaf & Josiassen, 2012; Meng, 2006), largely research is scarce in this area (Kim, 2014). Hence, is the natural beauty of New Zealand attractive enough to provide a new experience for the Thailand university students? The following hypothesis is proposed to assess:

H6: the more the Thai students go on holidays to explore new experiences, the higher they perceive New Zealand as an attractive destination to experience natural beauty.

In summary our hypotheses propose that there is a relationship between exploring abilities and skills, and new experiences with adventure, Maori Culture and natural beauty as perceived by the young Thailand university students. Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework and the proposed hypotheses tested in this research.

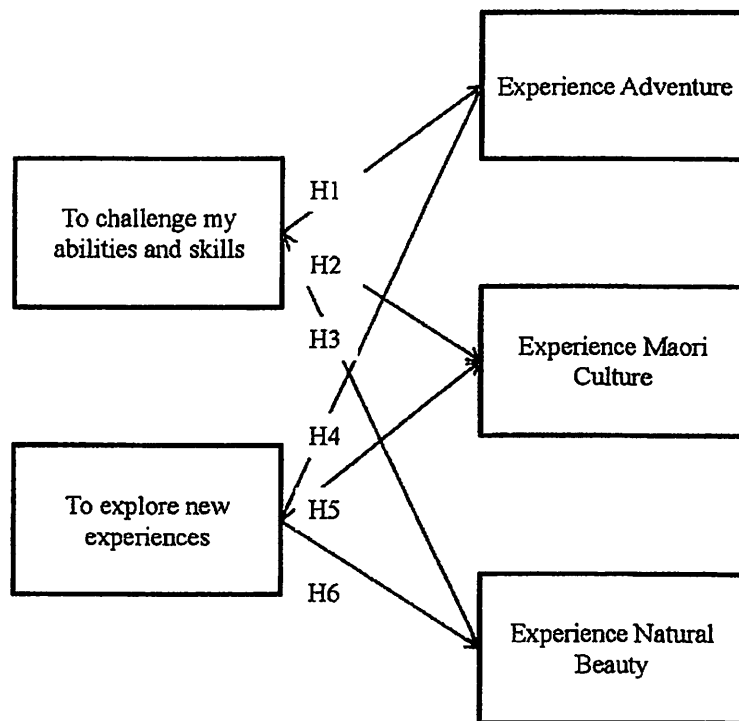


Figure 1 Conceptual Model

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sample and data collection procedure

Growing income level of the middle class in Thailand has also generated interest to visit tourism destinations abroad (Chaipinit & Phetvaroon, 2011). In last seven years the number of outbound tourists has doubled suggesting a growth rate of 15% per annum (Thailand Development Research Institute cited in Chaipinit & Phetvaroon, 2011). With a population of approximately 63 million and a change in perception of the Thai people that travelling is no longer a luxury but a beneficial and productive activity has given boost to the outbound tourism.

The research sample was composed of 420 tertiary level students from Thailand. In order to assess young Thailand students' attitudes towards New Zealand as a holiday destination, university students were chosen as a sample as they not only represent the youth of Thailand but also a segment which is expected to grow professionally and earn a better disposable income relative to many of their peers. We used a structured questionnaire to gather data from our sample. In order to develop the struc-

tured questionnaire we extensively reviewed the existing literature in the tourism management area. We also interviewed three academic and management experts in the field to help developing the questionnaire. Following Churchill's (1979) recommendation we asked three experts in the area to assess the content validity of the questions and constructs. The questionnaire was originally written in English and translated into Thai Language by two bilingual experts. Yet, in order to enhance questionnaire's consistency we followed Van de Vijver and Leung's (1997) translation procedure.

With the purpose to gather a sample of Thai students, questionnaires were distributed to 900 tertiary level students in different universities and locations in Thailand. Students were approached in the main entrance of public and private universities in Thailand. They were asked then, to fill out the structured questionnaire. Special attention was given to the gender and public and private universities distribution proportion of students in Thailand. 51% of questionnaires were distributed to male students and 49% to female students on an attempt to meet the gender criteria of the country. We also met the

proportion of students from private and public universities. The students were asked to return the questionnaires to the secretariat office with no identification or contact details. That procedure yielded 420 valid questionnaires, representing a response rate of 46%. According to Zou, Andrus, and Norvell (1997) this response rate represents a fairly high response rate for a developing country. Previous studies that have been conducted in similar research settings are usually in the range of 15 percent to 20 percent (Menon, Bharadwaj, & Howell, 1996).

Development of Measures and Questionnaire

The survey questionnaire had three sections. The measures used in the questionnaire were largely based on the Leisure Motivation Scale (Beard & Ragheb, 1983) and its modified version used by Ryan and Glendon (1998). The other sources with regard to adventure and tourism activities offered by New Zealand as a destination were adapted from Mohsin (2005) and Mohsin & Ryan (2007). The first section of the questionnaire gauged respondents' motivations for going on holidays. All measures were assessed a 7-point Likert Scale which ranged from 1 (of no importance) to 7 (extremely important). These measures have been frequently used in previous research (Mohsin & Ryan, 2007; Mohsin & Alsawafi, 2011).

The section 2 of the questionnaire measured the constructs related to tourists' level of attraction with regard to activities offered by New Zealand as a tourist destination. These measures were adapted from the study done by Mohsin and Ryan (2007) and Mohsin and Alsawafi (2011). A 7-point Likert Scale was which ranged from 1 (of no attraction) to 7 (extremely attractive). The section gauged attitudes about travel and touristic activities of the young Thailand students. Such measures help to segment the market for promotional purposes. Examples could be cultural tourism (McKercher et al., 2002; Kerstetter, Confer & Bricker, 1998), natural tourism (Lang & O'Leary, 1997), adventure tourism (Sung, Morrison & O'Leary, 1997, 2000), and tourism aiming to visit friends and family (Moscardo et al., 2000). Understanding tourists' interest then proposing the travel activity helps to generate meaningful interest and experience to remember from that travel (Kim, 2014).

In addition to the variables presented in the model we included age and gender as control variables, which comprised the third section of the questionnaire. Previous research suggests that age and gender have an influence on the reasons for going on holidays (e.g. Mehmetoglu & Normann, 2013).

Reliability and Validity

The content validity was assessed through the literature review and by consulting experts in the tourism management area which helped to conclude that our measures have content validity. We apply the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) paradigm proposed by Anderson and Gerbing (1988) to assess convergent validity and scale reliability. The results obtained from the estimation of the CFA model indicate that the overall chi-square for the measurement model was 61.04 ($p < 0.001$) with 34 degrees of freedom (Table 1). Due to the fact that the chi-square value can be inflated by the large sample size (Byrne, 2001), we examined four other measures of fit: comparative fit index (CFI=0.985), Tucker-Lewis fit index (TLI=0.975), incremental fit index (IFI=0.985), and RMSEA (0.044). According to the results of the CFA model the items employed to measure the constructs were both considered valid (convergent validity) and reliable (composite reliability, variance extracted, and internal consistency – Cronbach's Alpha). The large and significant standardized loadings of all items present in the model (> 1.96 ; $p < 0.05$) indicate that convergent validity was achieved. In terms of internal consistency and composite reliability, Table 1 shows that all constructs were deemed acceptable, since all Cronbach's Alpha fell well above the cut-off point of 0.5, ranging from 0.66 (to explore my abilities and skills) to 0.83 (Adventure) (Cronbach, 1951). Regarding composite reliability, all constructs fell above the minimum threshold of 0.60 established in the literature (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). Yet, all five constructs fell above the minimum level recommend of 0.5 for average variance extracted criterion. Based on the results above presented for the procedures undertaken, the measurement model and its variables were deemed acceptable.

Table 1 Constructs Measurements Summary Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Scales Reliability

Constructs/Variables	Standardized Loading	t-Value	AVE	Composite Reliability (ρ)*	Cronbach's Alpha (α)**
1. To challenge my abilities and skills			0.52	0.67	0.66
S1_12 To challenge my abilities	.837	Set to 1			
S1_13 To use my physical abilities/skills in sport	.577	8.063			
2. To explore new experiences			0.52	0.68	0.69
S1_15 To see new cultures	.724	11.096			
S1_17 To explore new ideas	.719	Set to 1			
3. Experience Maori Culture			0.67	0.80	0.80
S2_13 To buy authentic indigenous Maori souvenirs	.871	Set to 1			
S2_14 To experience indigenous Maori culture	.759	12.769			
4. Experience Natural Beauty			0.65	0.79	0.79
S2_20 To experience wildlife in natural setting	.817	Set to 1			
S2_21 To experience other natural attractions	.799	13.765			
5. Experience Adventure			0.62	0.83	0.83
S2_02 A chance to go canoeing/kayaking	.775	15.721			
S2_01 A visit to Albatross colony	.795	15.431			
S2_03 A chance to go for ballooning	.798	Set to 1			
Chi-square = 61.04					
Degrees of freedom = 34					

* ρ - composite reliability ($\rho_c = (\sum \lambda_i)^2 \text{var}(\xi) / [(\sum \lambda_i)^2 \text{var}(\xi) + \sum \theta_{ii}]$) (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988).

** α - Cronbach's alpha (Cronbach, 1951)

AVE = Average Variance Extracted (Fornell and Larcker, 1981)

Testing of Hypotheses

Because of the complexity of the specified structural model (Figure 1) we used structural equation modeling with maximum likelihood method to test all relationships simultaneously (Amos 20.0). The overall chi-square for the structural model was 91.57 ($p < 0.001$) with 37 degrees of freedom (df). Byrne's (2001) recommendation of using additional fit indices to chi-square in the case of large samples was adopted. We also analyzed the comparative fit index (CFI=0.969), Tucker-Lewis fit index (TLI=0.954), incremental fit index (IFI=0.955), and root means squared error of approximation (RMSEA = 0.059). All fit indices (including RMSEA; IFI; CFI; TLI) fell within the recommended range values (Browne & Cudeck, 1993; Vandenberg & Lance, 2000; Byrne, 2001). We can advocate that the estimated model was acceptable. Table 3 presents the path analysis results and hypotheses of the specified structural model.

Hypothesis 1 proposed that the relationship between to explore my abilities and skills as a motivation to go on holidays and their attitude towards New Zealand as an attractive destination to experience Adventure was positive. Surprisingly, the result suggests that that relationship was significant but negative (-0.215; $p < 0.10$). Thus, hypothesis 1 was not supported.

The results for hypotheses 2 are significant but again negative (-0.349; $p < 0.01$). This means that the more young Thai go on holidays to explore abilities and skills the less they perceive New Zealand as an attractive place to experience Maori Culture. Thus, hypothesis H2 was rejected. The results fail to provide support for H3, because the results were not significant (-0.128; $p > 0.10$).

The results for the hypothesis 4 support the notion that the more young Thai students go on holidays to explore new experiences, the greater

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The results for the hypothesis 4 support the notion that the more young Thai students go on holidays to explore new experiences, the greater

they perceive New Zealand as an attractive place to experience adventure (0.857; $p < 0.01$). Then, the results support H4.

Hypothesis 5 was also supported (0.974; $p < 0.01$). This means that the more young Thai go on holidays to explore new experiences, the higher they perceive New Zealand as an attractive destination to experience the Maori culture.

Finally, in relation to hypothesis 6, the results indicate that young Thai students who go on holidays to explore new experiences perceive perception of New Zealand as an attractive tourism destination to experience natural beauty (0.864; $p < 0.01$).

In summary, three out of the six hypotheses were supported, while H1 and H2 were rejected, and H3 was not significant (see Tables 2 and 3). Despite the three hypotheses that have been rejected, these results reveal an interesting situation.

Regarding the control variables testing, neither age nor gender influenced on the dependent variables search for adventure, experience the Maori culture and experience natural beauty. Additionally, none of the path coefficients tested in the model were affected by the control variables (see Figure 2).

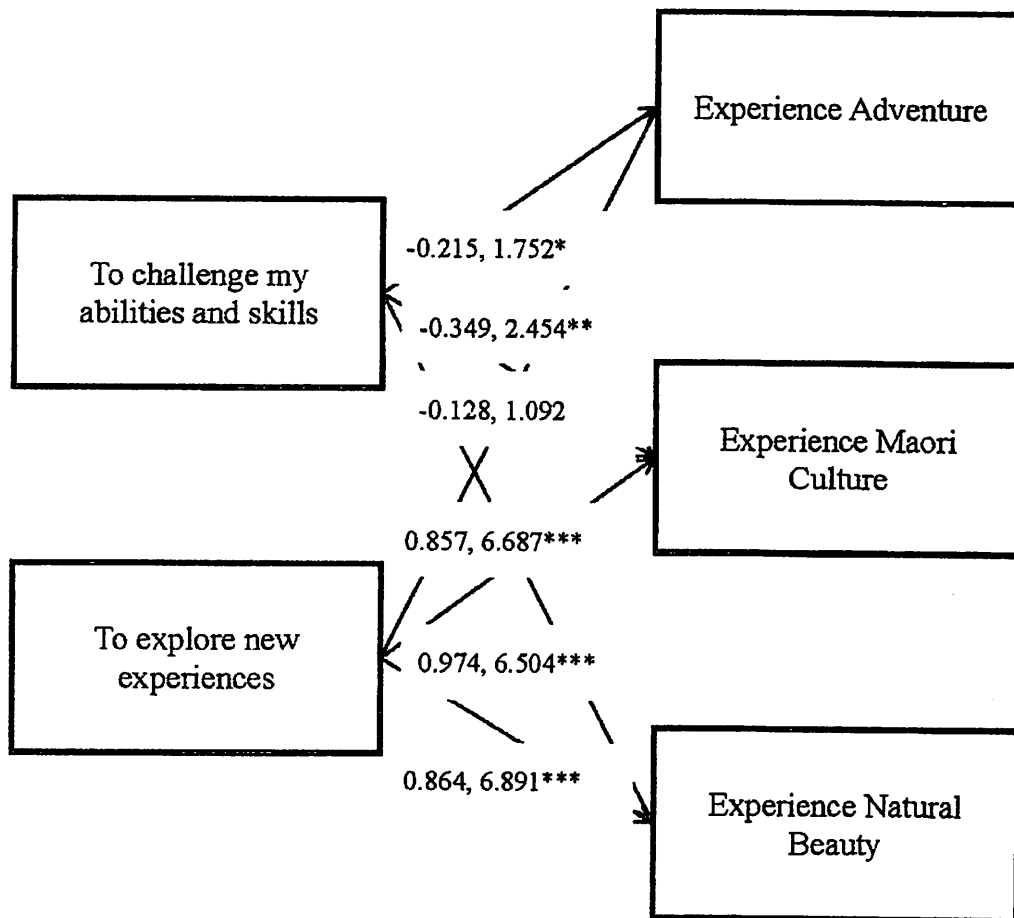


Figure 2 Final Model

Note:

* $p < 0.10$

** $p < 0.05$

*** $p < 0.01$

Table 2 Correlation between Constructs

Construct	1	2	3	4	5
1 To challenge my ability and skills	0.72				
2 To explore new experiences	0.345	0.72			
3 Experience Natural Beauty	-0.150	0.478	0.81		
4 Experience Maori Culture	-0.326	0.391	0.346	0.82	
5 Experience Adventure	-0.317	0.365	0.352	0.590	0.79

Table 3 Path analysis of the Structural Model and Hypotheses Results

Linkages in the model	Standardized parameter estimates		Hypotheses Results
	Estimate	t-value	
H1) To explore my abilities and skills → search for adventure	-0.215	1.752*	R
H2) To explore my abilities and skills → experience the Maori culture	-0.349	2.454**	R
H3) To explore my abilities and skills → experience natural beauty	-0.128	-1.092	NS
H4) To explore new experiences → search for adventure	0.857	6.687***	S
H5) To explore new experiences → experience the Maori culture	0.974	6.504***	S
H6) To explore new experiences → experience natural beauty	0.864	6.891***	S

Note:

* $p < 0.10$

** $p < 0.05$

*** $p < 0.01$

R - Rejected

S - Supported

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Studying tourist behaviour to determine travel motives and interest in travel activities is of significant interest to destination marketers and helps to develop targeted marketing strategies (Bryant & Morrison, 1980; Cha et al., 1995; Jurowski, Uysal & Noe, 1993; Loker & Perdue, 1992; Mo, Havitz & Howard, 1994; Mudambi & Baum, 1997; Cho, 1998; Sung, Morrison & O'Leary, 2000; Shoham et al., 2004; Xu et al., 2009). Exploring new and emerging tourism markets not only provides a commercial opportunity but also adds information to the tourist behaviour literature based on new research findings on trends and interest specific to the market. From this perspective the current study examines the travel motives and level of interest in different touristic activities of the young university students from Thailand. The rising income levels of the middle class in Thailand (Chaipinit & Phetvaroon, 2011) assure good future for the university graduates as future travellers. The findings of the current study provide information on the holi-

daying attitudes of this new emerging market - Thailand.

The current study adopts the Leisure Motivation Scale to determine the travel motives and level of interest in touristic activities of young Thailand university students. A conceptual theoretical model was proposed (see Figure 1) highlighting six hypotheses. The hypotheses test relationships between exploring individuals' abilities and skills with adventure, Maori Culture and natural beauty. Likewise exploring interest in new experiences and their relationship with adventure, Maori Culture and natural beauty.

The need to study travel motives becomes necessary to help understand travel patterns and interest of different market segments which vary from market to market and person to person (Shields 2011; Correia, Valle & Moco 2007; Jonnson & Devonish 2008; Kim 2007; Meng & Uysal, 2008). In studying travel motivations for the Chinese outbound market Zhang and Peng (2014) suggest that though this

is a relatively under researched market segment. most common motivational factors to travel overseas were noted to be knowledge, prestige, enhancing personal relationship, relaxation, experiencing different cultures and lifestyle and shopping. Most of these factors relate to the measures used in the Leisure Motivation Scale which has also been used in the current study. Additionally Kim (2014) also suggests that social interaction, cultural immersion, provides memorable experiences which have been widely discussed in the literature to become motives to travel. In testing the theoretical construct *to challenge my abilities and skills* as a motivation to go on holidays and its relationship with New Zealand being perceived an attractive destination to experience adventure as part of **H1**, the results suggest that the relationship was significant but negative (-0.215 ; $p < 0.10$). This is somewhat surprising as it means that the young Thai students in challenging their abilities and skills seek adventure activities but do not perceive that New Zealand can fulfil their this desire. What an ironic message for a country full of activities from soft to hard adventure? This finding provides an opportunity for Tourism New Zealand to understand the travel motive and interest of this emerging market, plan and promote adventure activities offered by New Zealand to build an interest to holiday in New Zealand.

The **H2** tested the theoretical construct *to challenge my abilities and skills* as a motivation to go on holidays and its relationship with New Zealand being perceived an attractive destination to experience Maori Culture. The results suggest that the relationship is significant but again negative (-0.349 ; $p < 0.01$). This finding only adds to the surprise that New Zealand being the core country to experience Maori Culture is not perceived by young Thai students as a destination to provide them with this experience when on a holiday. Yet another opportunity for Tourism New Zealand to promote and correct the perception of this emerging market with regard to Maori Cultural experience. The results of **H3** suggest that relationship between the construct *to challenge my abilities and skills* as a motivation to go on holidays and its relationship with New Zealand being perceived an attractive destination to experience natural beauty were not found significant.

The second theoretical construct to explore new experiences of our model tested its relationship with experiencing adventure as part of **H4**. The results (0.857 ; $p < 0.01$) support the notion that the more the young Thai students explore new experiences on a holiday the more they perceive New Zealand as a destination to experience adventure. This finding represents another anomaly that though New Zealand perceived as a destination to experience adventure, it is not perceived by the young Thai segment as a destination to challenge their abilities and skills. In some ways it makes the promotion of New Zealand as an adventure destination to the young Thai market segment somewhat easier. Likewise the results of **H5** (0.974 ; $p < 0.01$) in testing the relationship between exploring new experiencing and perception of New Zealand as a destination to experience Maori Culture is also supported.

This finding adds to the advantage of promoting New Zealand as a place to experience Maori culture and also provide opportunity to the young Thai market to challenge their ability and skills in experiencing new cultures. The notion in **H6** highlighting and testing the relationship between new experiences and perception of New Zealand as a destination to experience natural beauty is also supported (0.864 ; $p < 0.01$).

In summary, the results based on the six hypotheses testing the relationship of the two theoretical constructs in the model i.e. *to challenge my abilities and skills* and to explore new experiences suggest that the young Thai university students do not perceive New Zealand as a destination where they can challenge their abilities and skills while on a holiday to experience adventure or Maori Culture. On the other hand when they are looking to explore new experiences they do perceive New Zealand as a destination to experience adventure, Maori Culture and natural beauty. These findings not only report an interesting situation but also suggest that promotion of New Zealand as destination to challenge abilities and skills in experiencing adventure, Maori Culture should become a travel motive for them to visit New Zealand. Several studies have noted that young travellers enjoy thrill which challenges their abilities (Dotson, Clark, & Dave, 2008; Swarbrooke & Horner, 1999; Hallab, Price & Fournier, 2006; Pizam et al., 2004, Bywater, 1993).

So what is the significance and implications of this study?

The distinctiveness of the study is embedded in the fact that it explores travel motives of young Thai generation towards holidaying. Comparatively the literature is full of studies done in the Western context on young travellers' motivations to travel. Within the context of young travellers from Asia, studies are scarce and in relation to Thailand almost non-existent. From this perspective the study adds to the literature on travel motivations. On the theoretical front the study has adapted the Leisure Motivation Scale to develop and test constructs through a proposed theoretical model (Figure 1). These constructs and their results are unique in relation to travel motives of the young Thai market segment generally, and in relations to New Zealand specifically. Considering this from a marketing point of view, exploring new markets is the key for all destination marketers to sustain economic gains from tourism, the current study adds information about an unexplored market segment. Hence, suggesting implications for destination marketers to get to know about this new emerging market segment.

Like any other study, the current study also has limitations in form of small sample size, subjectivity in responses hence cannot claim to be wholly conclusive. The results should be considered in light of this limitation. However, the study provides some value through its findings for other researchers for comparative studies and suggests further research with a larger sample size and focus on cultural and other leisure related issues.

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