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Examining How Festival Attendees' Motivation Affect Their Involvement and Satisfaction; Food & Wine Festival Attendees' Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Research on wine tourism is recent and mostly attraction-based. This study aims to understand how motivation could influence tourists' involvement, perceptions and intention. Data were collected in a Wine and Food Festival in Miami, FL and SEM method was used to analyze it. The results show that novelty seeking and socialization motivation are positively related to pleasure experience whereas socialization motivation is negatively associated with risk probability and importance. Pleasure experience, risk probability, and risk importance are related to satisfaction, yet the directions are different for the two aspects of satisfaction. Only satisfaction of intangible service is related to loyalty.

Keywords: *motivation, involvement, satisfaction, wine and food festival.*

INTRODUCTION

It is in only the recent decade that the marriage of wine and tourism has come to be explicitly recognized by government, scholars, and tourism industries (Hall, Johnson, Cambourne, Macionis, Mitchell, & Sharples, 2000). However, most relevant research is attraction-based rather than festival-focused (Mcintosh & Siggs, 2005). Moreover, it has been noted that in-depth study of wine tourists is lacking (Charters & Ali-Knight, 2002). This study aims to fill the research gap via understanding how internal driving force could influence tourists' involving experience, and then further affect their perceptions and future travel intention through exploring their underlying structural relationships in the context of a food and wine festival.

CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUNDS

Motivation has been one of the central concepts to understand tourists' perceptions. Various dimensions of festival and wine tourism have been discussed. Although it is multidimensional and situation-specific, two dimensions are most frequently generated; novelty

seeking and socialization (Park, Reisinger, & Kang, 2008). This paper analyzes how these two dimensions could influence tourists' involvement, satisfaction and their future behavior. Involvement, enabling people to show skills and to present symbolic character (Kusyszyn, 1984), offers a better understanding of leisure behavior. Different theories/scales have been postulated to anatomize it. Among all of them, Zaichkowsky's (1985) Personal Involvement Inventory (PII) and Kapferer and Laurent's (1985) Consumer Involvement Profile (CIP) are dominant. This paper employs the CIP scale primarily because tourists usually do not get a tangible return for their investment and need to face a high-level of perceived risk owing to high temporal and financial investment. The original five dimensions of CIP scale were generated based on tangible commodities. However, as tourism product is intangible, three dimensions of involvement scale including pleasure, risk probability, and risk importance were developed for this study which was based on Gursoy and Gavcar's (2003) study. Researchers have mentioned the conceptual relationship between motivation and involvement (Iwasaki & Havitz, 1998), however the need for empirical study has been called for recently (Kyle, Absher, Hammitt, & Cavin, 2006). Although it has been tested in some leisure and recreation context (Funk, Ridinger, & Moorman, 2004; Kouthouris, 2009), it has not been explored fully in tourism settings.

Satisfaction has been suggested as an excellent predictor of repurchase intentions (Tam, 2004). Many theories have been developed in order to measure the satisfaction, and the comparison paradigm is most frequently used. Yet this paradigm has been criticized arguing that the comparison method may imply that if one's expectation decreases, their satisfaction will increase (Petrick & Backman, 2002). Previous studies have analyzed tourists' perceptions towards physical and intangible service attributes separately and how they can influence intention. While some studies revealed that only intangible service can influence intention (O' Neill, Palmer, & Charters, 2002), some research showed that both attributes proved to be the significant predictors of intention (Lee, Lee, Lee, & Babin, 2008). This paper will measure satisfaction as the performance evaluations in terms of both physical and intangible service attributes and explore their relationship with this intention. Since a high customer retention rate and positive word-of-mouth are crucial factors for generating profits, it is important to better understand the determinants affecting customer loyalty. Previous research showed that the more involved tourist are, the more likely they are to be satisfied, sensitive to physical facilities and service quality (Havitz & Dimanche, 1997; Warnick, Sutton, & McDonald, 1999). Moreover, while some studies have been tested direct involvement-loyalty relationship, indirect associations where involvement as either the mediator or moderator have also been explored (Chen & Tsai, 2008; Gahwiler & Havitz, 1998; Prayag & Ryan, 2011). This paper will explore the direct and mediated effect among these three variables.

METHOD

Data were collected via intercept surveys on-site at The 2011 Food Network South Beach Wine and Food Festival in Miami, FL over a two-day period from February 26-27, 2011. This festival is one of the major wine and food festivals in U.S., drawing over 50,000 attendees over four festival days in 2010. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data on motivations, attendees' involvement, satisfaction and intention to revisit associated with overall experience of this wine and food festival. Based on the pre-test, some of statements in the questionnaire were modified to make them as concise and clear as possible. All items were measured using a seven likert-type scale and were adapted and modified based on previous studies. Out of 512 complete the survey, sixty two surveys were unfinished or were filled with the wrong response. The usable sample size for this study was 450. Descriptive statistics,

Pearson correlation, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) were utilized.

RESULTS

The hypothesized relationships were tested by means of a measurement model and structural model using Amos 17.0 (Arbuckle, 2007). Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used for the measurement model, which included eight constructs including novelty seeking motivation, socialization motivation, pleasure, risk probability, risk importance, physical service satisfaction, intangible service satisfaction and intention to re-attend the festival.

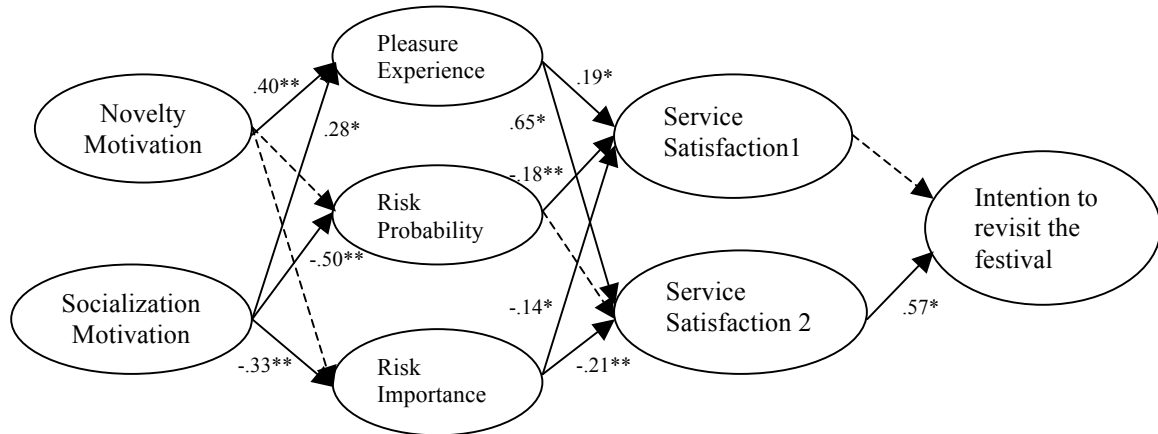


Figure 1. Estimates of the Structural Model (** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$ —→ Sig----→ Insignificant)

As the result of the CFA, all loadings were above or close to the recommended .60 threshold (Chin, 1998), indicating that all latent variables were adequately measured by their respective indicators. Furthermore, average variance extracted (AVE) of each construct was all .50 above, which was confirmed that the convergent validity of the scale was established. In addition, the internal consistency reliability (ICR) of each construct was measured by computing the composite reliability coefficients and its values were ranged from .72 (Risk importance) to .91 (Socialization motivation), which indicated that all composite reliabilities are above the .70 cut-off value (Fornell and Larcker, 1981), thus the scale was reliable. Furthermore, after performing a CFA, the measurement model showed clearly satisfactory goodness of fit indices ($\chi^2/df=2.62$, CFI=.92, IFI=.92, GFI=.88, RMSEA=.06). The structural model was conducted to validate the hypothesized relationships (Figure 1). The structural model for this study provided a good fit to the data, with scaled $\chi^2/df=2.95$, CFI=.90, IFI=.90, GFI=.85, RMSEA=.066 and most regression coefficient of each proposed relationship was significant as shown in Figure 1. More specifically, Novelty seeking motivation had only significant relationship with pleasure value, whereas socialization motivation had strong relationship with pleasure, perceived probability of making a mistake (risk probability) and perceived importance of negative consequence (risk importance), and then the perceived pleasure value had an influence on physical (such as parking space, restrooms and rest areas) and intangible (staff knowledge, staff helpfulness, accessibility of festival programs, schedules or signings) service satisfaction which could lead to the intention to revisit of the festival. More interestingly, the result of this study indicated that the perceived probability of making a mistake (risk probability) had an influence on only the physical service satisfaction, whereas the perceived importance of negative consequence had an impact on both physical and intangible service satisfaction. On the other hand, this study showed that only

intangible service satisfaction had a significant relationship with the intention to revisit to the festival.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Consistent with the research by Funk et al. (2004), novelty seeking was positively related to pleasure and was not associated with either risk probability or risk importance. Second, while the positive association was found between socialization and pleasure, socialization was negatively related to risk probability and importance, which was also supported by Kourthouris' (2009). Considering these results, it could be suggested that while novelty seekers were more likely to be interested in the pleasurable value such as specific food and wine, socialization seekers not only valued the pleasure experience of food and wine but also they more likely tend to be tolerant towards perceived probability of making mistake to choose this festival or perceived importance of negative consequences after attending this festival since their focus was to socialize with people rather than to enjoy only food or wine, hence they tended to put less weight on the risk associated with the quality, uniqueness and variety of food and wine. Third, positive association was found between pleasure and satisfaction. The more pleasurable experience visitors had, the more likely they were to be satisfied by both tangible and intangible service attributes. Interestingly, this study discovered that risk importance was negatively associated with visitors' perception of both tangible and intangible service satisfaction. It might imply that people who were more tolerant towards negative consequences caused by their poor leisure choice, they were more satisfied with both service attributes. Furthermore, consistent with O' Neill et al's (2002) work, this study also showed that only intangible services significantly influenced the visitors' loyalty. A few managerial implications were put forward. First, in order to increase visitor's loyalty, more attention should be made to enhance visitors' satisfaction of the intangible service; make information of direction and program schedules more clear and interactive, increase staff knowledge of the underlying cultures associated with food and wine. Second, as pleasure contributes dramatically to the satisfaction of the intangible service, it is essential to make visitors' experience more pleasurable by offering high-quality, unique, and various kinds of food; invite a vendor who will bring a large variety of wine providing interactive programs and opportunities which will facilitate attendees' entertainment. Accordingly, a well organized event will decrease people's perception of risk probability and increase their satisfaction and loyalty in food and wine festivals.

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