

Agenda

**10th conference of the International Competence Network of
Tourism Research and Education (ICNT)
at the Westcoast University of Applied Sciences in
Heide / Germany**

Conference subject: Inter- and transdisciplinary Tourism Research – a global approach

Date: 23rd to 25th of June 2016

Thursday 23rd of June 2016

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 09:30 - 10:00 | Get Together |
| 10:00 - 10:15 | Welcome by president Hanno Kirsch, West Coast University of Applied Sciences |
| 10:15 - 10:30 | Welcome by vice dean Tim Warszta, West Coast University of Applied Sciences |
| 10:30 - 10:45 | Greetings by sponsor Telsche Ott, Förderforum Fachhochschule Westküste e.V. |
| 10:45 - 12:45 | Paper Session 1: New approaches and demands in view of a fast changing and competitive travel market.
Chair: Sonja Göttel

The Service Excellence Program: Improving the Competitiveness of Hemsedal And Sun Peaks Ski Resorts.
<i>Jan Velvin, Marit Engeset, Buskerud (Norway), John Hull, Kamloops (Canada)</i>

From high street to digital environments - changing landscapes in travel intermediation.
<i>Jarmo Ritalahti, Porvoo (Finland)</i>

Brand personality: Self-fulfilling prophecies with use of brand imagery.
<i>Bjørn Ove Grønseth, Buskerud (Norway)</i>

Marketing National Parks: From the old to the new!
<i>Melville Saayman, Peet van der Merwe, Potchefstroom (South Africa)</i> |
| 12:45 - 14:00 | Lunch break |
| 14:00 - 14:30 | Look back on 10 years of ICNT and outlook.
<i>Ellen Böhling, Bernd Eisenstein, Rüdiger Günther, Anne Köchling</i> |

The 10th ICNT conference in Heide / Holstein is sponsored by Förderforum Fachhochschule Westküste e.V. and West Coast University of Applied Sciences

14:30 - 16:00

Paper Session 2: Sustainable, barrier-free and slow: trends and issues in contemporary tourism.

Chair: Carola May

Developing scenarios for the Norwegian travel industry 2025.
Kåre Sandvik, Buskerud (Norway)

Garden tourism in Germany – niche segment with great potential.
Rebekka Schmudde, Heide (Germany)

Sustainable tourism development in the international Wadden Sea:
the need for transdisciplinary research.
Hans Revier, Leeuwarden (The Netherlands)

World Heritage Sites between protection mission, conservation management and accessibility claim and their relevance for tourism destinations.
Anja Wollesen, Heide (Germany)

16:00 - 16:30

Coffee break

16:30 - 18:30

Paper Session 3 - open for students (Audi II): Tourist experiences can take many forms. With help of various examples the contributors shed light on that special something that travelers talk about before planning their trips or after returning home.

Chair: Anja Wollesen

Experience matters – the influence of tourist experiences on travel behaviour and challenges for strategic destination management.
Sabrina Seeler, Auckland (New Zealand)

Family Tourism and the Ski Experience at Sun Peaks Resort, Canada.
John Hull, Kamloops (Canada), Jan Velvin, Buskerud (Norway)

Pre-wedding photography experiences of Chinese travellers in Australia and New Zealand.
Jing Jia, Michael Lueck, Heike Schaenzel, Auckland (New Zealand)

Finnish travelers' perceptions of holiday trips to Greek Islands during the refugee crisis.
Eva Holmberg, Kaija Lindroth, Porvoo (Finland)

18:30

“Midsommer-drink” organized by students (TAG e.V.)

20:00

Conference dinner in Heide



International Competence
Network of Tourism
Research and Education



West Coast University
of Applied Sciences, Germany

Friday 24th of June 2016

- 09:00 - 10:30 **Paper session 4: Tourism education in a globalized world.**
Chair: Bernd Eisenstein
- Cultural Intelligence in an education environment – does it matter?
Graciëlla Karijomedjo, Leeuwarden (The Netherlands)
- Creating a sustainable culture amongst hospitality students.
Alisha Ali, Sheffield (United Kingdom)
- Student satisfaction with guidance counseling services (in tourism study programs).
Lars Rettig, Eric Horster, Heide (Germany)
- 10:30 - 11:00 Coffee break
- 11:00 - 12:45 Discussion „Curricula in Tourism Management – an international comparison”.
- 12:45 - 14:00 Lunch break
- 14:00 - 16:00 ICNT Meeting and discussion international research project Global Destination Brand
- 18:30 Departure to conference dinner at the beach (Büsum)

Saturday 25th of June 2016

- 08:30 - 16:00 Excursion to a „*Hallig*“ (small island) with guided walk in the Wadden Sea and typical lunch
- Option for direct transfer (free) from Heide (FHW) to Hamburg
- 16:45 approximately arrival in Hamburg

Please note that there will be photos taken during the conference and excursions. These might be used later for press articles or publications. In case you do not want photos of you to be taken, please indicate this to the organization team. Thank you.

Abstracts

Sequence according to the agenda

The Service Excellence Program: Improving the Competitiveness of Hemsedal And Sun Peaks Ski Resorts.

Jan Velvin – Marit Engeset – John Hull

Mountain resorts relying on snow tourism have several challenges in the future. Competition from other destinations and changes in climate will affect the future income of the destinations that focus only on winter tourism. Mountain resorts therefore need to develop their attractiveness and one way to do this is to focus on the service delivered to the guest. The personal services from courteous and skilled staff is important for motivating guests to return to the destination and to give positive recommendation about the destination and the businesses. Promoting a reputation as a destination that provides excellent personal service can build positive associations and create demand outside skiing season.

Feedback to managers and employees about tourist's satisfaction with various aspects of their experiences is important in order to monitor both the destination and the individual businesses' performance related to service quality. Such feedback give the opportunity to identify areas of particular importance for guest satisfaction and behavioral intentions, and it helps in identifying areas where the company and destination need to focus on improvement. Establishing and maintaining a system for continuous feedback and benchmarking of performance is thus a powerful tool in service quality efforts.

Over five years, the ski destination of Hemsedal, Norway has developed "The service excellence program" this is a system for tracking guest satisfaction and providing feedback to the managers of individual companies and to the destination. The system works as a loop where guest satisfaction is measured and feedback about performance provides the basis for employee training. The data allows for benchmarking on different levels: Each company's performance on guest satisfaction is compared to the average of companies at the destination, and to their own performance the previous years. At the destination level, satisfaction is benchmarked against previous years performance. To further improve The Service Excellence Program, the system is now extended in two directions: First, the system has been implemented at Sun Peaks Ski Resort in BC, Canada. This provides a new benchmarking opportunity as well as a network for exchanging experiences and ideas for service quality improvement. Second, an online system is developed to provide managers with easy to use, timely information about performance. In this presentation, we show how Hemsedal and Sun Peaks has benefited from the new developments in The Service Excellence program. We compare results from the two destinations for the 2015-2016 season both in terms of level of satisfaction with different aspects of the experience as well as relative impact of satisfaction with different aspects for overall satisfaction and behavioral intentions at the destinations. Finally, we demonstrate how the online feedback system enables managers to monitor their performance on a day to day basis.

From high street do digital environments - changing landscapes in travel intermediation

Jarmo Ritalahti
Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences
jarmo.ritalahti@haaga-helia.fi

The internet and electronic market places have changed the travel services industry completely and traditional travel intermediaries grapple with the question of what the reason for their existence is in an environment where an overwhelming amount of information is available and transactions can be conducted directly between buyers and sellers on the Internet. Although different authors have already pointed out the need for traditional travel intermediaries to reposition themselves in the market place by adding value to the services they offer clients and by acting as more than just mere ticket reservation offices, little research has been conducted to identify these value added services desired in the market. The research problem of this study is to critically evaluate the future of traditional travel intermediaries in Finland by identifying the services, tasks, competencies and skills needed by these intermediaries to remain competitive in the future.

The development and adaption of information and communication technologies have generated the development of online purchasing on the Internet. Online shopping allows the sales 7/24 that makes both selling and purchasing independent of physical spaces. The evolution of consumer behaviour on the Internet undergoes similar stages to those on more traditional channels. It begins with the adaption or the first purchase, continues with the acceptance of the channel through the first re-purchases, and end when online purchases become an everyday routine. Once the consumer has made at least one purchase online, the acceptance of the new channel is stronger. From the seller's side, it is important to understand the different consumer and purchasing behaviour between consumer groups. In the competition between online and high-street travel agencies consumers sometimes prefer to purchase air tickets in traditional travel agencies. This preference is based especially on security concerns when purchasing online, reliability and user friendliness by travel agents. For online purchasing speaks round-the-clock availability, rapid response time, and easiness of use.

The approach in this research is future studies. The main method to collect future data in this study is Delphi-panel that pictures the future from experts of travel intermediaries. The quantitative survey with statements or questions will be sent to a wide but selected group of experts and executives who fulfill certain criteria relating to their experience in travel intermediation. The literature review, trend analysis and Delphi results allow a creation of scenarios of the future. Scenario planning is a method in strategic planning used in various companies and other organizations. The method can exploit the knowledge, intuition, and observation capabilities of experts. It aims to get information of alternative futures and paths to them. So, there is not only one scenario of the future. The scenarios can be possible, probable, eligible or threatening. Scenarios are neither forecasts nor end results. Scenarios are stories of future situations and developments to them as well as descriptions of dynamic processes how to reach the possible situation in the future.

Brand Personality; Self-fulfilling Prophecies with Use of Brand Imagery

Bjørn Ove Grønseth
Assistant Professor

University College of Southeast Norway
School of Business
Department of Strategy and Economics

bjorn-ove.gronseth@hbv.no

ABSTRACT

This work in progress investigates the relationship between use of brand imageries and brand personality. While brand imagery and brand personality studies are well documented in the general marketing literature, application of branding theories to places, in particular to tourism destinations, is relatively new. Using a tourism destination as a research setting in this study, we contribute to the debate on the brand imagery –brand personality relationship.

Brand personality refers to the “set of human characteristics associated with a brand” (Aaker, 1997). For example, consumers associate a destination brand with personality dimensions such as sincerity and competence but not with other dimensions such as sophistication and ruggedness. The kinds of personality dimensions attributed to a brand are important because they can influence the evaluation and consumption of products (Swaminathan, Page, & Gurhan-Canli, 2007) or destinations (Haugland, Ness, Aarstad & Grønseth, 2011).

Destination personality was captured using Aaker's (1997) five-dimensional brand personality scale (BPS). The items were measured using a 5-point Likert-type scale, with anchors (1) not descriptive at all and (5) extremely descriptive, consistent with Aaker's (1997) study. We used a snowball sampling procedure and collect data using Facebook. The final dataset consists of 287 respondents and measures the brand personality of a destination. Furthermore, pictures from different campaigns used in the marketing of the same destination are used to elaborate the assumed correlation between brand imageries and brand personality.

Results indicate that assumed destination image and the measurement of destination personality are related concepts. Implications for theory and practice are discussed, and future research directions are introduced.

Key words: Brand Personality, Brand Imagery, Destination

Marketing National Parks: From the old to the new!

Prof. M Saayman and Prof. P van der Merwe

TREES

NWU

Potchefstroom

Melville.Saayman@nwu.ac.za

Peet.VanDermerwe@nwu.ac.za

ABSTRACT

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate how national parks can revise their marketing approaches in order to be more sustainable. This is especially important in a rapid changing external environment and the main reason here is that national parks in the case of South Africa is dependent on the income from tourism operations in order to survive.

Theoretical perspectives

In essence marketing is about providing in visitor needs. The latter is changing and this requires businesses and national parks to search and apply new approaches. In a nature-based product such as a national park several aspects (e.g. changing markets, new demands and needs, use of technology and applying sound conservation principles) need to be taken in consideration and this makes marketing of national parks more complex. This study identified new markets and a new focus or conservation approach. Conservation authorities are generally slow to change but in order to remain sustainable it has to be done. The question remains how can this be achieved?

Design/ Methodology

Three surveys were conducted during the month of December 2015 at the Golden Gate National Park in South Africa. One survey focused on tourists staying in the hotel located in the park. The second survey focused on tourists staying at the chalets in the Park and lastly a survey was conducted in the nearby tourist town of Clarens. The data of the three surveys were captured and compared with one another in order to understand the profile, spending behavior, motives and accommodation decisions.

Findings

The first and foremost finding is that all three the surveys revealed different markets with their own needs and reasons for travelling. Second finding is that the current product does not satisfy the larger potential market. Which implies a different marketing approach as well as a shift in how the park is positioned and managed. Lastly results revealed a major change in how SANParks will have to manage their parks in the future in order to remain sustainable.

Conclusion

Parks like any business need to adapt to changes in the external environment. It has to address changes in the market place and needs of visitors. This, in the case of SANParks, implies a paradigm shift from one way of doing conservation to a different approach. Hence, from the old to the new.

Garden tourism in Germany – niche segment with great potential

Rebekka Schmudde, M.A.,

Institute for Management and Tourism, West Coast University of Applied Sciences (Germany, Heide), schmudde@fh-westkueste.de

Garden tourism, gardening, parks, slow travel, horticultural shows, UNESCO sites

Abstract

The history of gardens has been linked to tourism already in ancient times when Roman travelers visited the gardens of Greek philosophers. In the 17th century, gardens were one of the many destinations on the “Grand Tour” and led in combination with ideal conceptions of landscape to the development of English landscape gardens all around Britain. Consequently, the “English Garden Tour” was born and replaced for those with less financial means the “Grand Tour” to Italy. In Germany, the famous parks of Dessau-Wörlitz and Muskau were established after their owners’ tours to Great Britain and other countries.

Today, more than 1,500 gardens are listed in the best-known German tourist guide on parks and gardens and the nomination of several gardens as UNESCO world heritage sites marks their historical importance. Besides public parks and gardens, many private gardens opened their gates to visitors. Palace gardens are often in the focus of marketing activities, but also monastery gardens, spa gardens, botanical gardens or rosariums are open to the public. Despite much research and presentation of current management strategies for parks and gardens, information about visitor numbers, their background and motives remains scarce.

Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to analyze the situation of (historical) parks and gardens today and the potential for garden tourism in Germany. The paper first presents the history and development of parks and gardens in Germany and their link to tourism in historic times. Second, a literature review is carried out which gives an overview of the topics that are mostly addressed: history; potential for tourism; monument preservation; economic effects; marketing management; networking; slow tourism; themed experience and horticultural shows. The topic “marketing management” is further on analyzed in more detail to show the manifold actions of the supply side of garden tourism. Afterwards, data on garden enthusiasts and people interested in visiting gardens during their holidays are presented. An analysis of the highest-circulating garden magazines shows a growing interest of consumers in gardening topics. Data of a representative study displays the range of activities that may be combined with garden tourism. As well, the study gives information about which areas or regions come to mind to customers when asked for destinations for visiting parks and gardens. To conclude, the conflicting interests of visitors, park managers and the tourism industry are summarized and the potential for garden tourism in Germany is discussed.

Sustainable tourism development in the international Wadden Sea: the need for transdisciplinary research.

Hans Revier
Stenden University, ETFI
Research group Marine Wetlands Studies

National governments and regions make great efforts to obtain international recognition for their natural heritage, for instance through UNESCO's World Heritage Sites list. Since June 2009, the Dutch Wadden Sea has been on the World Heritage List. In general the World Heritage Status contributes to sustainable development of the area in question by raising support for nature protection and by raising opportunities to stimulate economic development by attracting new tourism markets. World Heritage Sites are often a reason for tourists to visit a tourist destination.

The UNESCO status of the Wadden Sea can have all kinds of benefits for the region in question, such as conservation, cooperation, local pride, social capital, learning & education, and sponsoring & investments. But research has shown that this label will not attract more tourists automatically and generate a sustainable tourism development. To give a sustainable boost to the Wadden area as a tourism destination the UNESCO status has to be regarded as an interesting and challenging opportunity for the region. It requires a clear and focused vision and strategy with raising awareness for the values that qualify the international Wadden Sea as a natural World Heritage as a first step.

The landscapes of the adjacent coastal areas of Noord-Holland, Friesland and Groningen are a result of a long and intense interaction between its inhabitants and the sea. In this peripheral rural area agricultural activities dominate although some industry is developed near the ports of the cities of Den Helder, Harlingen en Delfzijl. The area has a rich cultural inheritance, reflecting the struggle of mankind against the forces of nature. The recent economic decline of this mainland coastal area, which is already relatively underdeveloped compared to the Dutch average, has resulted in regional and local policies to stimulate tourism development in these areas. Especially the World Heritage status of the Wadden Sea is regarded as an important opportunity.

Several large engineering projects in the coastal areas of the Dutch Wadden Sea are in preparation. Most of them are connected to the existing policies to strengthen the coastal defense in this area. An new approach for these projects is discussed focusing on the need for transdisciplinary research and integrating coastal defense, nature development and recreational facilities. This will result in more visitors to the region and contributes to an emotional attachment to the protected area and public support for the conservation programs. So in the end tourism development and nature conservation and can mutually benefit.

World (Cultural) Heritage Sites between protection mission, conservation management and accessibility claim and their relevance for tourism destination

Prof. Dr. Anja Wollesen
West Coast University of Applied Sciences (Germany, Heide),
wollesen@fh-westkueste.de

Keywords: UNESCO World Heritage Sites, protected areas, disability, accessibility, participation, city and culture tourism, urban development, conservation, sustainability, demographic change, challenges, solutions, quality methods, innovation strategies.

Research approach

Purpose

Highlight the area of conflict that lies between the aim of protection and the requirement for societal participation by everyone in the universal heritage of UNESCO's listed sites. Analyse the opportunities, risks, possibilities and limitations of "tourism for all" at destinations which are home to World Heritage Sites. Illustrate possible solutions and examples of best practice.

Theoretical Perspective

The ability to undertake holidays and travel to areas where nature remains unspoiled, the opportunity to make use of local cultural and leisure facilities and the free organisation of daily routine are considered to be important factors for participation in societal life by persons with (and without) disabilities.

World Heritage Sites are amongst the world's top travel destinations. The idea of world heritage is based on the recognition that outstanding human cultural achievements and unique natural sites represent a common heritage for everyone rather than being the property of any one region or population group. Up until now, however, participation in these sites has not been possible for all people or else the sites have only offered limited accessibility. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities requires states to improve accessibility to UNESCO World Heritage Sites for persons with disabilities. Within the scope of a National Action Plan for the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the German Government is taking steps to ensure that service providers in the tourism industry take account of this demand. Nevertheless, creating accessibility to listed buildings and sites is an extremely complex task which is largely undertaken at local government and federal state level and involves local, regional and national coordination processes with various lobbying groups.

UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Germany comprise historic cultural sites, collections of monuments, cultural landscapes and natural locations. All of these have their own particular prerequisites and characteristics in terms of preservation. Because of this high degree of diversity, general conditions and opportunities for the implementation of accessible activities and services at the individual World Heritage Sites vary widely.

Methodology

1. Comparative and representative market research on demand data from the German source market on the importance and relevance of World Heritage Sites and national parks for the destination choice. (in cooperation with inspektour).
2. The status of implementation of accessible activities and tourist provision will initially be determined on the basis of a comprehensive Internet analysis of German World Heritage Sites. The second stage of the investigation will involve expert interviews conducted in

guided form where necessary with the local government bodies responsible and with key World Heritage Site stakeholders.

Findings

The ultimate objective is to provide a response to the question of how accessible our World Heritage Sites currently are and prospectively may be. Against the background of demographic change, a second goal is to identify the possible future significance and consequences for travel to World Heritage Site destinations given the fact that limited participation by disabled persons is expected to endure.

Conclusion

Initial market research results on the relevance of World Heritage Sites for tourist destinations will be presented. In addition to this, the status of activities aimed at accessibility in the German UNESCO World Heritage Sites will be analysed and discussed, and possible areas of action for destinations will be highlighted.

Understanding the experienced tourist – A review of the literature and identification of research gaps

Sabrina Seeler, M.A.

PhD candidate at Auckland University of Technology (AUT)

sabrina.seeler@aut.ac.nz

key words: experienced tourists, experience accumulation, experiencescape, tourist behaviour

In postmodernity, tourism is no longer considered separable from everyday life. Humans are continuously searching for new experiences to fulfil their inner needs and contribute to self-identity. The concept of experience is well-researched and widely used in academic, professional, and everyday language. Whereas 'once in a lifetime experiences' are promoted and the 'experienced tourist' addressed, conceptual questions remain unanswered. The interdependencies between prior experiences, future behaviour, and destination choice have been acknowledged from the early stages of research. It has been concluded that increased knowledge and experiences change consumer needs, consumption behaviour, and eventually contribute to identity-formation. Besides this broad approval, interdisciplinary and all-encompassing conceptualizations are missing. Furthermore, past research either adopted a managerial approach investigating experience creation from a supply-side perspective, or followed a social science approach, in which the demand-side of experience consumption and the tourist are foregrounded. However, tourist destinations and the tourists themselves are interconnected and mutually dependent: A tourist destination portrays the 'experiencescape' individuals are looking for to satisfy unmet needs. At the same time, the physical body and mind of the tourist is needed to create the experience. This interconnectedness stresses the necessity to fully comprehend whether the definitions of 'experienced tourists' differ between the supply-side and demand-side perspectives.

The overall aim of this research is to develop a model that displays the process of experience accumulation and demonstrates how the respective level of individual past tourist experiences influences future travel behaviour and destination choice. Foremost, the model will add to fill existing gaps in the academic literature. Although one of the most discussed topics in tourism research, an unambiguous definition of how experiences are accumulated is lacking. In addition, the scientifically developed model might be implementable in strategic destination management and support strategic decisions. This research pursues a behavioural/psychological approach while incorporating managerial elements and will therewith contribute interdisciplinarily to tourism as well as general consumer research.

A mixed methods model will be adopted. Qualitative and quantitative tools will be implemented and a macro-micro approach used. Both research strands will be implemented in New Zealand and Germany to enable comparisons and increase transferability and generalisability of research findings. The research is guided by a post-positivism paradigm. Critical realists assume that objective reality is only approachable and true until proven false. This worldview is most appropriate giving the fact that the research investigates subjective dynamics. Firstly, semi-structured expert interviews will be conducted. Interview partners will be purposefully selected and inferences derived based on thematic analysis. In a second step, a web-based survey will be implemented. After statistical analysis, the inferences will be compared to the qualitative findings and the overall model derived.

This doctoral research is a work in progress. Data collection will commence in May 2016 and the research is planned to be finalised by May 2018. At this stage, no primary data are at hand. In the framework of the 2016th ICNT conference in Germany, a comprehensive overview of the existing literature will be provided, research gaps identified and the adopted method explained.

Family Tourism and the Ski Experience at Sun Peaks Resort, Canada

John S. Hull, Associate Professor, Faculty of Adventure, Culinary Arts and Tourism, Thompson Rivers University, Kamloops, British Columbia, Canada, Visiting Professor, University College of Southern Norway, Kongsberg, Norway (jhull@tru.ca)

Heike A. Schänzel, Senior Lecturer, School of Hospitality & Tourism, AUT University, Auckland, New Zealand (heike.schanzel@aut.ac.nz)

Jan Velvin, Associate Professor, University College of Southern Norway, Kongsberg, Norway (jan.velvin@hbv.no)

Family tourism is one of the most important sectors of the tourism industry around the world and accounting for about 30% of the leisure travel market. Family travel is predicted to grow at a faster rate than all other forms of leisure travel, partly because it represents a way to reunite the family and for family members to spend time with each other, away from the demands of work. Families include single parents, blended families, involved fathers and same sex parentage. Families, like other market segments, seek travel destinations that offer relaxation, novelty, outdoor activities and arts and heritage sites. One of the winter outdoor activities attracting large numbers of family tourists is skiing tourism. By the 21st century an estimated 65 million people participated in skiing tourism. The goal of this research is to better understand what meanings families gain from spending time in the mountains and engaging in skiing tourism. This presentation will present results of a survey of families as well as interviews with key informants conducted in the winter of 2015 to better understand the challenges and opportunities of the family ski experience through the case study of Sun Peaks Resort in British Columbia, Canada. The future scenarios for families engaged in skiing tourism remain unclear due to the effects of such global factors as climate change, environmental/cultural conflict, energy and economic shocks, declining market share in the ski sector, changes in demography, and increasing global competition.

Pre-wedding photography experiences of Chinese travellers in Australia and New Zealand

Jing Jia, *Michael Lück and Heike Schänzel

School of Hospitality & Tourism, Auckland University of Technology

*Corresponding author: mlueck@aut.ac.nz

Abstract

Bridal photography tourism is a unique practice in Taiwan and mainland China - it is an emerging form of personalised and Special Interest Tourism (SIT) with the goal of shooting bridal portraits and enjoying a honeymoon simultaneously in the same trip. It is usually done ahead of the wedding, although sometimes it can also take place when the couple were "just married". Bridal photography tourism can also be combined with destination wedding, bridal photo-shooting, and even the honeymoon itself, which directly replaces the custom of having a traditional wedding. The aim of this study was to gain an understanding of the experiences of Chinese couples travelling to Australia and New Zealand for bridal photographs, through discovering and exploring their travel blogs and online forum posts.

This research adopts an interpretive approach, using qualitative internet research and unobtrusive data collection methods to obtain 20 relevant blogs and online forum posts; 10 for each destination. The selected data analysis methods include narrative inquiry involving the approach of thematic analysis for examining the data. Main themes and concepts were revealed in the analysis process of two destinations (Australia and New Zealand), including motivations for bridal photography tourism, and the methods of photographing bridal portraits. The findings draw out key meanings of the couples' experiences of bridal photography tourism, such as capturing fun and happiness in their relationship, capturing and reminiscing romance, exotic dreams and being there, and nature and naturalism, with a focus on highlighting the concepts of framing the bride's beauty and the 'bridal gaze'. These outcomes lead to a deeper overall understanding of bridal photography tourism, and help to gain knowledge of this emerging form of tourism by examining their experiences.

Finnish travelers' perceptions of holiday trips to Greek Islands during the refugee crisis

Eva Holmberg & Kaija Lindroth
Haaga-Helia UAS

Several years of armed conflicts in countries such as Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan has resulted in millions of civilians being forced to leave their homes. For many of these people Europe is seen as a paradise with political stability and a high standard of living. The legal possibilities to move to Europe are few, contributing to dangerous and expensive attempts to get into Europa as refugees. One of the main routes goes from Turkey mainland to Greek islands. Small boats full packed with people try to navigate to islands such as Kos and Samos, resulting in many children drowning on the way. Finnish media is weekly following the situation in the Mediterranean Sea highlighting the high number of people dying and the suffering of those making it alive.

Greek archipelago has been one of the most popular destinations for Finns for decades. For instance the island Kos is by the main Finnish tour operator Aurinkomatkat (2016) marketed as a "holiday in a calm countryside environment" even if the fact that in 2015 some 7000 refugees landed at Kos as a first stop for their journey for mainland Europe and even more refugees are expected in 2016.

Consumer behavior research in tourism can take a variety of starting points such as decision-making, satisfaction and attitudes. The aim of this study is explore the perceptions of and motives for holidays to Greek archipelago among Finns in a time when the refugee crisis has been one of the main discussions in media during the last 12 months.

The concept of perceptions has been widely used in tourism research in the context of studying risks and safety, sensation seeking and destination attributes. Perceptions of travelers are important, since these will directly influence the image of a destination and thereby also the decision-making of whether a destination is interesting to visit or not. Motives, on the other hand are the push factors for traveling, according to previous studies main travel motives can be grouped into looking for novelty, self-development, cultural experiences, and escape. Travel motives can also be divided into selfish and altruistic.

The research approach of the study is case study research and methods for data collection are interviews, an electronic survey and netnography. One of the main tour operators Aurinkomatkat, decided already in February to cancel all trips to Lesbos Island but on the other hand has the demand for islands such as Korfu and Parga risen. Preliminary results from the netnography study conducted in some of the main Finnish discussions forums show that Finns are still interested in traveling to Greek archipelago for a relaxing holiday. Many of the discussions on the Internet are related to what places to avoid in order not to get the holiday "disturbed" by the misery of the refugees in the same time as it becomes clear that Greek islands still is one of the most popular destinations for Finns in the summer season. Thus, the Finnish travelers' main perception of the Greek Islands positive and the destination is seen as a place for escaping the daily routines and the travelling motives are rather selfish. Rather few would travel to the area for altruistic motives such as helping the local community to cope with the crises.

“Cultural Intelligence in an education environment – does it matter?”

Graciëlla Karijomedjo
Stenden University of Applied Science
ETFI | European Tourism Futures Institute
Leeuwarden, The Netherlands
E: graciëlla.karijomedjo@stenden.com

Abstract

The main aim of this study is to address the question what the level of cultural intelligence is of these employees in their work environment in an emerging country like Qatar. It also aims to identify the predictors that may influence the level of cultural intelligence of an employee, as well as to identify the main areas of concern within cultural intelligence for an employee working in a diverse environment. A review of the existing studies on cultural intelligence in the Middle East revealed a research gap; no studies have explored the level of cultural intelligence of employees – academic and non-academic - in an educational context in the region (only a few studies in USA & Europe exist).

The research studied the cultural intelligence level of 34 non-academic and academic employees of a higher education institute in Qatar, a country known for its multi-cultural challenging environment. A quantitative research method consisted of two-questionnaire self-assessment surveys followed by a number of selected participants who took part in a focus group. The participants provided data and information to understand how the concept of cultural intelligence and its related capabilities were brought about in a diverse workplace.

1. The findings indicate that the level of cultural intelligence for the overall staff is average to high and positive, which leads to the generally conclusion that employees in this education setting are aware of their own cultural intelligence and how to use it in other cross-cultural encounters and in their multi-cultural workplace.
2. There is a certain grade of relationship between the level of cultural intelligence and the academic degree of an employee. Education gives the employee knowledge and build relationships with other cultures.
3. There is a clear difference between the level of cultural intelligence and the job of an employee in an educational environment. It indicates that the non-teaching staff has lesser cultural exposure, interactions and encounters with other individuals from different cultures on the workplace than teaching staff.

These findings confirm the key debates and statements made in the literature, but also suggest further research into exploration of cultural intelligence in education and the Middle East region. The study proposes more research to comprehend completely the effective use of cultural intelligence in an education environment.

Key words: cultural intelligence, behaviour, knowledge, workplace and education

Creating a sustainable culture amongst hospitality students

Alisha Ali
Sheffield Hallam University
Alisha.Ali@shu.ac.uk

Hilary Catherine Murphy
Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne
hilary.murphy@ehl.ch

Sanjay Nadkarni
Emirates Academy of Hospitality Management
Sanjay.Nadkarni@emiratesacademy.edu

Keywords: sustainable development, hospitality education, graduate employability

This research examines hospitality employers and students perceptions of sustainable development, the repercussions for hospitality education and graduate employability. An exploratory approach is used in this research where focus groups and semi-structured interviews were conducted with hospitality students' and graduate employers respectively. The results established that respondents had mixed understandings of the meaning of sustainable development but recognised the importance of sustainability for businesses.

These respondents are gradually recognising the value of sustainability for their business; however it is not currently a priority in terms of a critical employability skill. Thus hospitality educators need to take appropriate actions in subject specific areas where sustainable development is critical to employment opportunities, creating more industry ready graduates who are also globally aware citizens. The findings of this research challenge educators to endorse a more integrated and multi-disciplinary approach to curriculum design, fostering a culture of sustainability amongst students.

Student satisfaction with guidance counselling services and its influence on student retention in distance learning programs (directed at professionals in tourism)

Lars Rettig, M.A. and Prof. Dr. Eric Horster

Affiliation: Fachhochschule Westküste – West Coast University of Applied Sciences
E-mail: rettig@fh-westkueste.de or horster@fh-westkueste.de

Keywords: student satisfaction, student retention, student drop-out, mature aged students, life-long learning, e-learning, student counseling, adult learners, online study programs, tourism management online, master program.

Purpose

For more and more universities life-long vocational development of the working population has become an additional and interesting field. The key task of the Fachhochschule Westküste (FHW), a University of Applied Sciences in Heide on the west coast of Schleswig Holstein, Germany, is to qualify people on an academic level for the job market. This involves not only enhancing the number of students in study programs on site, but also winning over new target groups to participate in academic programs.

Consequences of demographic changes for the German tourism market were discussed on last year's ICNT conference and the importance of life-long learning was addressed. Additionally the results of a qualitative research named hindering reasons for participation in further education. Afterwards, distance learning and e-learning as employee-friendly types of further education in the German tourism industry were debated.

Building upon these thoughts further research in the field of student counselling, student satisfaction and student loyalty was suggested.

Theoretical perspective

To approach the matter of student guidance counseling and its possible effects on student's enrollment and retention in a program, students have to be understood as customers of the university with specific needs regarding the services the university offers. In the research conducted in the project LINAVO¹ satisfaction with the service received is assumed to have an impact on the decision making process both to enroll in a program and to retain in or drop out of it.

Design/methodology/approach

To find out if and how student guidance counseling services foster enrollment and counter drop outs, research by questionnaire will be conducted. The first hypotheses is: The better guidance counseling, the more likely is the student to enroll in a further education program.

After enrollment in the program quality depends on different variables like for instance the quality of teaching, the quality of material and the quality of student guidance counseling during studies. Therefore, the second hypotheses is: The better the program quality, the lower the drop-out quota.

¹ The German acronym LINAVO stands for *Lernen im Netz – Aufstieg vor Ort*, which means *studying online – advancing on site*. It is a government funded project, sponsored by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) under FKZ 16OH12030.

The approach is an interdisciplinary one as it combines ideas, models and concepts from disciplines reaching from educational studies to economics (i.e. service quality, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty etc.).

Findings/discussion (or potential findings)

The survey is due for 2016. Findings may already be presented at the ICNT conference in June 2016. An interesting result of the discussion on last year's conference was for instance that students at some of the participating universities get credits for having regular talks with their student guidance counselors. The approach to support the communication between students and student guidance counselors may be part of a resulting counseling concept for the touristic study program at the Fachhochschule Westküste (West Coast University of Applied Sciences) as well.

Conclusion/Contribution (originality/value)

It would be appreciated to extend the survey to other universities and countries to compare student satisfaction and retention globally.