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ASSESSMENT OF DEMAND FOR ECOTOURISM HOLIDAY TRAVEL AMONG UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN MEMBERS OF STAFF

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ABSTRACT

Nigeria is endowed with great ecotourism sites such as Obudu Ranch Resort and Waterfalls, which have attracted both local and international tourists' patronage. Despite the fact that the importance of recreation cannot be over-emphasized, most Nigerians hardly go on holidays. The objective of this study is to assess the demand for ecotourism holiday travel among University of Ibadan members of staff . Respondents for this study comprised academic and non-academic members of staff of the University of Ibadan. A multi-stage sampling technique was used to draw respondents for the study. Out of the fourteen Faculties in University of Ibadan, a total of four (29%) were randomly selected. In the second stage, 57% of the Department in each Faculties were sampled. The third stage involved a stratification of the Departmental staff into academic and non-academic. Thirty percent of the members of academic and non-academic staff were sampled. Data were analysed using descriptive , Chi-square and PPMC analyses. The respondents who had positive perception about ecotourism is 52.8%. Higher percentage (46.6%) of respondents visit ecotourism sites annually. Valley and hills were the least demanded ecotourism site. There was no association or relationship between the income of the respondents and their demand for ecotourism travel. Significant relationship were drawn between demographic characteristics and demand for Ecotourism holiday of the respondents. There is significant relationship between respondent perception about ecotourism and demand for travelling to ecotourism site. Busy office schedule and low income ranked highest among the ten constraints documented and possible recommendations were drawn.

Keywords: Water-based recreation, University of Ibadan, Ecotourism demand, Academic and non-academic staff, awareness level.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is identified as an effective way to revitalize the economy of any destination and widely acknowledged as one of the fastest growing industry globally (Long, 2012). **E**cotourism has attracted increasing attention in recent years not only as an alternative to mass tourism, but has a means of economic development and environmental conservation . It accounts for a large share of some countries' gross domestic product, and so contributes to livelihood of many people, as in Kenya, Madagascar, Nepal, Thailand and Malaysia (Isaacs, 2000). It is often perceived as a mechanism for sustainable tourism development especially in countries with great ecotourism potentials (Weaver, 2001). Accordingly, ecotourism in the last decade has gained popularity and at the same time enveloped into a worldwide phenomenon that shows no sign of slowing down (Srinivas, 2010).

Nigeria is endowed with great ecotourism potentials such as Obudu Ranch Resort, Waterfalls, Warm spring among others, which have attracted both local and international tourists' patronage. Both public and private agencies that provide and manage recreational facilities must be concerned with the demand for the services they provide (Obinna *et al.*, 2009). Demand in the recreational sense refers to the number of persons taking part in a particular recreational activity and hence is manifested as a demand for facilities (Roberts, 1974). Research has shown that people that take part in recreational activities, particularly outdoor, have improved physical wellness, fewer doctor visits, and normal blood pressure than those who did not. This therefore indicates reduced stress level and better job performance (Laura, 2005; Ajani, 2015).

Despite the advantages present in recreational activities, Nigerians have negative attitude to recreation, possibly because most of them are ignorant of its health, social and economic benefits (Obinna *et al.,* 2009). Nigeria is blessed with a number of tourist centres, notably Kainji Lake National park, Erin-Ijesha Waterfall, Arinta Waterfall, Aketa Lake, Idanre hills, Turan trench and Okomu National Park among others. Till date, their patronage is still minimal due to lack of proper awareness, difficulties in terms of accessibility and low level of development among other factors.

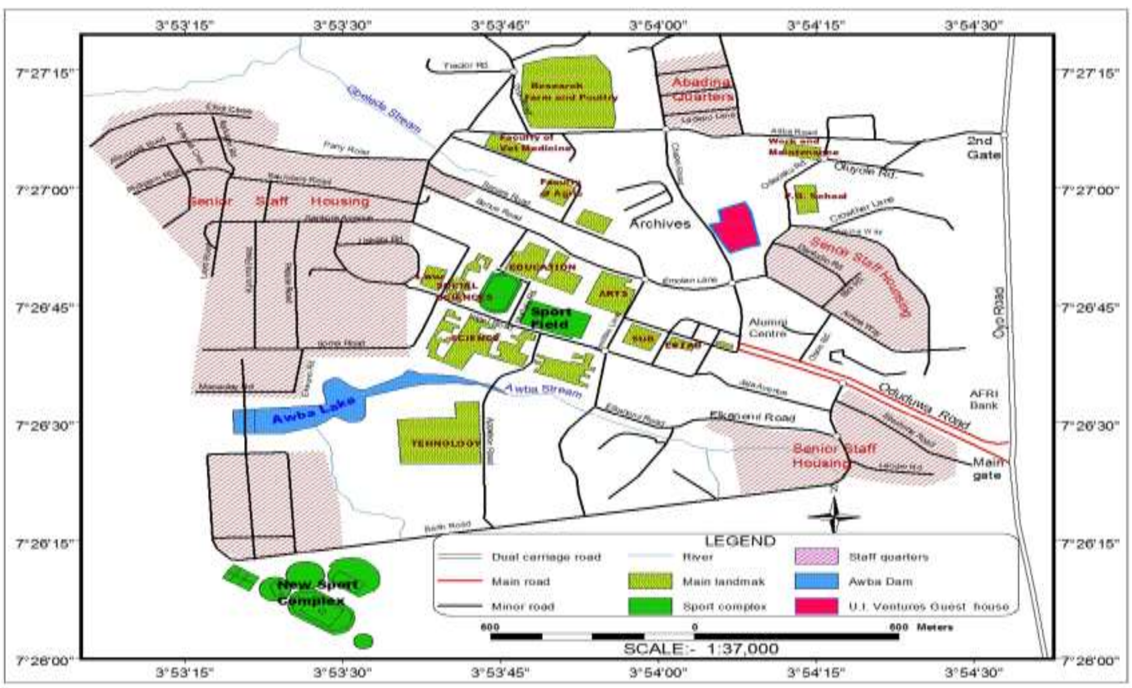
The importance of recreation cannot be over-emphasized; studies involving both outdoor and computer stimulated approaches showed that natural environments in general have a number of psychological benefits compared to urban settings (Ajani, 2015). A great number of studies have been carried out on tourism and tourist activities. For instance, Elkins *et al.,* (2011) carried out a research on the contribution of campus recreational sports participation to sport perceived sense of campus community. He reported that University recreation centers create an environment that foster social relationships and integration which can help acclimate new students to campus life and build a sense of campus community. Ojewola (2008) also did a study on sustainable management of University of Ibadan Awba dam and zoological garden for tourism development. Furthermore, Ashbullby *et al.,* (2013) study revealed that families use beach visits in general for improving psychological and physical health but none has dealt with the demand for recreation among the educational personnel. It is therefore imperative to conduct a study that will show the linkage between demand for recreation and constraint to demand for recreation of members of staff in the University of Ibadan and based on the findings, proffer solutions.

The broad objective of this work is to assess the demand for ecotourism holiday travel among University of Ibadan members of staff (Academic and Non-Academic) while the specific objectives of this study are to assess the level of awareness of ecotourism among the staff members, to assess the most visited tourism based centre and to identify hindrances debarring the respondents from going on ecotourism holidays.

METHODOLOGY

Study Area University of Ibadan was founded in 1948 and is the oldest and one of the prestigious Nigerian Universities It is located five miles (8 kilometers) from the centre of the major city of Ibadan in western Nigeria. It was originally called University College, Ibadan, then affiliated with London University. In 1962, the name was changed to the current form; the University of Ibadan sometimes called UI. The University offers academic and professional programs at doctoral, masters, diploma and certificate levels through academic Departments in the Faculties of Agriculture, Arts, Education, Science, Social Science, Technology, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Veterinary Medicine, the College of Medicine, and some academic institutes and centers. The University also has the largest number of postgraduate students in the country. The University motto is ‘‘for knowledge and sound judgment’’.

Figure 1: Map of University of Ibadan, Ibadan Nigeria



Source: Adapted from Ajani (2015)

Respondents of the Study

Respondents for this study comprised academic and non-academic staff of the University of Ibadan.

Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

A multi-stage sampling technique was used to draw respondents for the study. In the first stage, out of the fourteen Faculties in University of Ibadan, a total of four (29%) were randomly selected. The Faculties selected were Sciences, Technology, Agriculture and Forestry and The Social Sciences. In the second stage, 57% of the Department in each Faculties were sampled, which give a total of 4 in Faculty of technology , 5 In Faculty of Sciences, 3 in Faculty of social sciences and 5 in Faculty of Agriculture. This gave a total of 17 Departments on the overall. The third stage involved a stratification of the departmental staff into academic and non-academic. Thirty percent of the members of academic and non-academic staff were sampled across the selected Departments. This gave a total of 103 Academic staff and 77 Non-academic staff. A total of 180 respondents were therefore sampled for the data. However, only 176 instruments were eventually subjected to statistical analysis, giving a return rate of 97.7%.

Sources of Data

The data for the study comprised primary data and it was collected using questionnaire so as to obtain information from members of staff (academic and non-academic) of the University. The administered questionnaire was used to elicit information on respondents' demographic characteristics, ecotourism related characteristics, perception about ecotourism, level of demand of ecotourism sites and constraints to their demand for travelling.

Measurement of Variables

- Demographic characteristic variables were measured with open and close ended questions. Close ended questions provide suitable list of responses from respondents. The open ended questions were designed to afford the respondents the opportunity to give responses without being limited to any option.
- Ecotourism related characteristics were measured using dichotomy (Yes/No), short answers, open and close ended questions.
- Perception about ecotourism was measured on a 5-point scale, with strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree. The scores of 5 to1 attached respectively for positive statements and a reverse for negative statements.
- A 12-point rating scale was used to rate respondents demand for travelling to ecotourism site where 1 is the absolute demand and 12 is the least demand.
- Constraints to demand for ecotourism holiday travel of the respondents were measured as follows; Not serious=3, Mildly serious=2, Serious=1, Not a Constraint=0.

Data Analysis

Data obtained were analyzed using the statistical package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The data were mainly expressed as descriptive statistics such as frequency, mean and percentages. Chi-square and PPMC test was used to assess whether any significant difference exist between demographic variables and ecotourism related characteristics and demand for ecotourism holiday travels. PPMC techniques were employed to draw relationship between variables

RESULTS

Table 1 : Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percent(%)	Mean±SD
Age(in years)			
≤ 30	19	10.8	
31-40	59	33.5	43.02±9.71
41-50	65	36.9	
51-60	26	14.8	
61-70	6	3.4	
Above 70	1	0.6	
Sex			
Male	89	50.6	
Female	87	49.4	
Marital status			
Single	22	12.5	
Married	150	85.2	
Widowed	4	2.3	
Highest Educational Status			
SSCE	1	0.6	
OND	12	6.8	
HND	13	7.4	
B.Sc.	42	23.9	
M.Sc.	29	16.5	
PhD	79	44.9	
Religion			
Christianity	138	78.4	
Islam	33	18.8	
Traditional	5	2.8	
Race/tribe			
Yoruba	147	83.5	
Igbo	7	4.0	
Hausa	3	1.7	
Others	19	10.8	
Staff category			
Academic	102	58.0	
Non-Academic	74	42.0	

Designation			
Junior	49	27.8	
Senior	119	67.6	
Professor	8	4.5	
Family size			
1-3	57	32.4	
4-6	108	61.4	4.09±1.51
7-9	11	6.3	

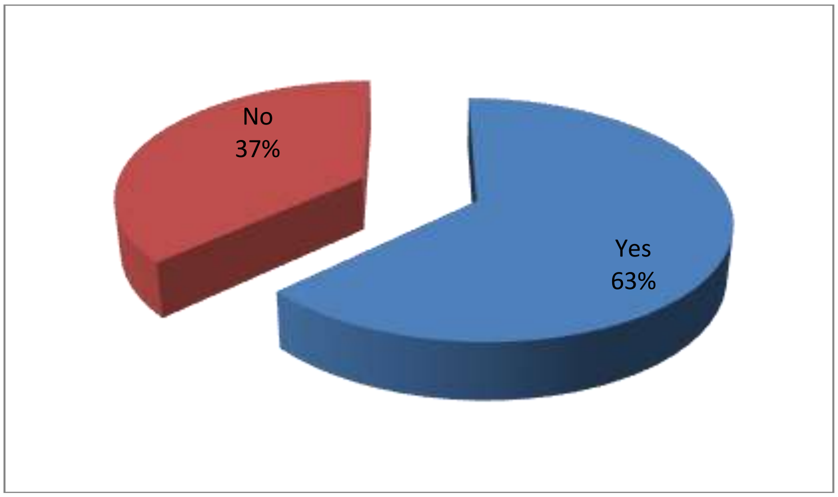


Fig. 1: Percentage of respondents that had gone on tourism before

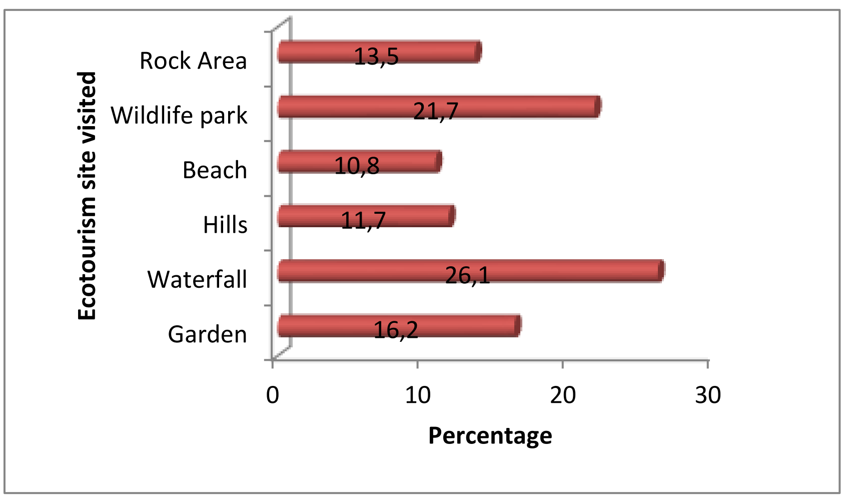


Fig. 2: Ecotourism site visited by respondents

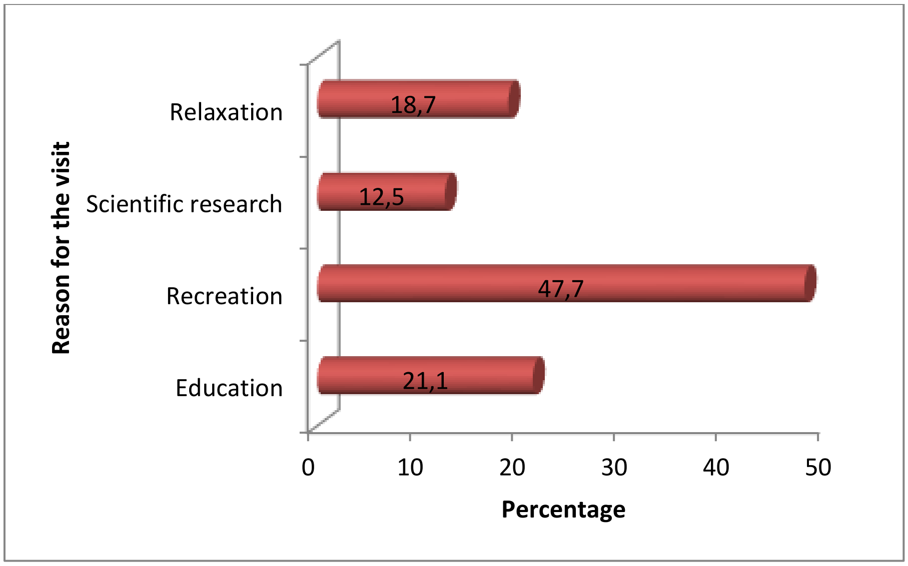


Fig. 3: Respondents reasons for visiting ecotourism sites

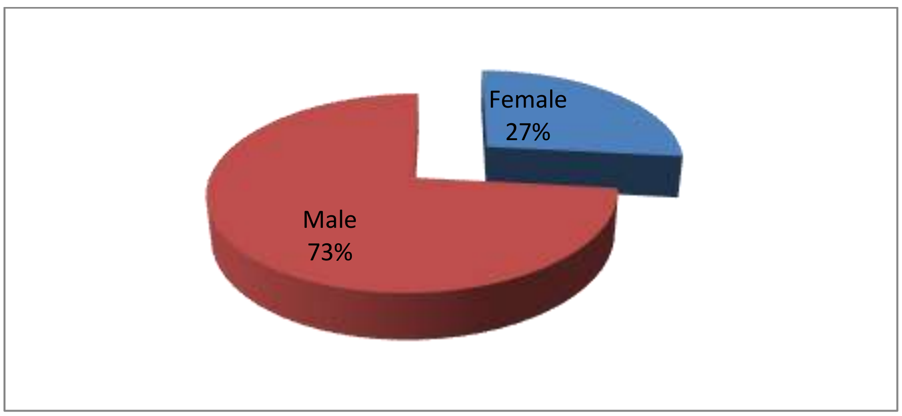


Fig. 4: Percentage distribution of respondents who go for ecotourism holidays according to gender

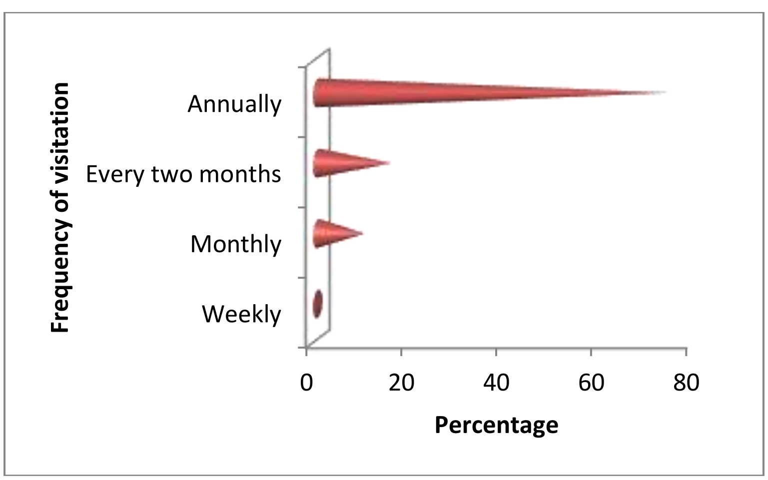


Fig. 5. Respondents frequency of visitation to ecotourism site

Table 2 Distribution of Respondents' Perception about Ecotourism

PERCEPTION (N=176)	SA	A	UD	D	SD	mean
Ecotourism holiday travel is not necessary in an academic environment	8.5	14.2	6.3	27.8	43.2	3.81
Lack of opportunity to ecotourism holiday travel is not beneficial for university staff	14.2	16.5	20.5	30.7	18.2	3.22
Ecotourism will provide avenue for university worker to refresh their mental state	33.0	48.3	9.7	2.3	6.8	1.89
Visiting the natural environment is a necessity for me	29.0	34.7	14.8	15.9	5.7	3.65
Ecotourism will help the university worker to rejuvenate their social well being	44.9	34.7	12.5	4.5	3.4	4.13
Ecotourism is highly destructive and should never be encouraged in academic environment	4.5	6.3	7.4	34.7	47.2	4.13
Ecotourism causes environmental degradation to host communities	2.3	6.8	8.5	47.2	35.2	4.06
Ecotourism encourages ostentatious display of wealth in the community	25.0	33.0	22.2	9.1	10.8	2.38
Ecotourism encourages cultural conflict	6.3	15.9	14.8	26.1	36.9	3.72
Ecotourism increases bond between researchers in the academic environment	34.7	33.0	21.0	6.8	4.5	3.86
Ecotourism brings about positive change in the academic environment	36.9	40.9	12.5	8.5	1.1	4.03
Ecotourism build environmental and cultural awareness	45.5	42.0	5.1	4.5	2.8	4.23
Ecotourism does not provide positive experience for university staff	9.1	13.6	10.8	31.8	34.7	3.69
Ecotourism provide direct financial benefits for conservation	28.4	26.1	23.9	16.5	5.1	3.56
Ecotourism recognizes the rights and spiritual belief of the people in the host community	25.0	41.5	24.4	7.4	1.7	3.81
Ecotourism is becoming unnecessary in Nigeria	10.8	22.2	27.8	19.9	19.3	2.77

Positive statement: SD=1, D=2, U=3, A=4, SA=5, Negative statement: SD=5, D=4, U=3, A=2, SA=1

Table 3 Demand for Travel to Ecotourism Centres

	Ecotourism Centre	Average demand	Rank
1	Waterfalls	6.40	4
2	Hills	5.87	11
3	Rock Areas	6.02	7
4	Lakes	5.97	8
5	Beach	6.59	2
6	Valley	5.52	12
7	Forest	5.92	9
8	Game reserve	6.55	3
9	Wildlife park	6.72	1
10	Warm spring	6.35	5
11	Mountain Resort	5.91	10
12	River	6.17	6

Table 4 Ranking of Constraints to Demand for Ecotourism Travel Holiday

CONSTRAINTS (N=176)	NOT SERIOUS	MILDLY SERIOUS	SERIOUS	NOT A CONSTRAINT	MEAN	RANK
Heavy household workload	21.7	20.0	41.1	17.2	1.13	3
Busy office schedule	11.7	23.9	32.8	31.7	1.54	2
Low income	15.6	20.0	33.3	31.1	1.56	1
Poor health	11.7	11.1	8.9	68.3	0.61	6
Religious beliefs	13.3	11.1	5.6	70.0	0.52	8
Cultural beliefs	15.0	8.9	6.1	70.0	0.51	9
Lack of Companion	17.8	12.2	4.4	65.6	0.56	7
Inadequate Awareness	15.0	20.5	13.3	51.7	0.10	10
Poor management at the ecotourism centers	17.2	12.8	45.6	19.4	1.11	4
High entrance fee	16.1	22.8	13.9	47.2	1.03	5

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis 1: Relationship between Respondents Demographic and Ecotourism Related Characteristics and Demand for Ecotourism Holiday Travel.

There is no significant relationship between the age, family size, income , marital status, staff designation, staff category and sex of the respondents and their demand ($r= 0.081$, $p>0.05$), ($r=$

0.081, $p>0.05$), ($r=0.065$, $p>0.05$), ($t= 0.945$, $p>0.05$),($t= 0.737$, $p>0.05$), ($t= 1.091$, $p>0.05$) and ($t=1.459$, $p>0.05$) respectively.

Hypothesis 2: Relationship between Perception About Ecotourism and Demand for Ecotourism Holiday Travel (PPMC)

There is significant relationship between respondent perception about ecotourism and demand for travelling to ecotourism site ($r= 0.155$: $p< 0.04$).

Hypothesis 3: Relationship between Constraints to Demand for Ecotourism and Demand for Ecotourism Holidays Travel (PPMC)

There is no significant relationship between constraints to demand for ecotourism and demand for ecotourism holidays travel ($r=- 0.019$: $p> 0.05$).

DISCUSSION

The result shows that respondents with the age bracket of 41-50years constitute the major population of members staff of University of Ibadan which means majority of the staff are of active age. Majority, (99.5%) of the respondents had tertiary education. From the result obtained from this study (table 1), it could be deduced that larger population of the respondents (50.6%) were male and Yoruba tribe dominate the total population, Majority (83.5%) of the respondent practice Christianity as a religion.

The respondents who agreed that ecotourism brings about positive change in the academic environment is 40.9%. It was also agreed by the respondents that recreation will help University workers to rejuvenate their social well being. This is consistent with the assertion of Henchy (2011) that recreation creates an environment that fosters social interaction. Also percentage of respondents who agreed that ecotourism travel build environmental and cultural awareness if they are chanced to travel to ecotourism centers was high. This study has revealed that perception about ecotourism among the members of staff is high. The respondents who had positive perception about ecotourism is (52.8%) as against the negative perception (47.2%). This agrees with Hassan and Nhemachena (2008) that perception is an important factor influencing adoption or behavior towards a particular practice. It is also in agreement with the findings of (Ajani, 2015) who reported that perceived love to participate in recreational activities at Awba dam among members of staff in the University was high. This result suggests that even though there are more respondents who had vast knowledge about ecotourism, there is need to intensify action to improve how the respondents perceive ecotourism and its importance. This could contribute to increase in demand for travel to ecotourism centers over the years. The benefit of recreation for adults is all encompassing. It has been documented by Schwarzenegger *et al., (*2005) that recreation enhances active living, helps to limit the onset of disease and impairment normally associated with the aging process.

It was gathered from this study however, that higher percentage (46.6%) of respondents visit ecotourism sites annually (figure 5). This implies that respondents find it hard to spend on leisure either weekly and monthly. This finding is in agreement with the study of Mariki *et al.,(* 2011) who reported that Africans find it hard to spend on leisure activities related to tourism. While majority of the ecotourism sites are in demand, this study reveals that Wildlife Park is the most demanded, followed by beach and game reserve. However, valley and hills was the least demanded ecotourism site. This implies that people derive pleasure in game viewing and water based recreational activities. This study is in agreement with the findings of Ajani (2015) who reported that higher percentage of University of Ibadan members of staff and students would love to visit Awba Dam if developed to water based recreational centre. Respondents (73%) that go for ecotourism holidays were male and 27% were female. This gender imbalance may be attributable to the fact that in many part of Africa, men take less roles in house chores. This provides them with more opportunity to travel to different places for business and recreation. Conversely, women's participation in tourism is limited due to heavy workload that compels them to remain at home doing domestic chores. This finding is in agreement with Mariki *et al.,* (2011) whose report showed that more than 62.9% of tourists that visit tourist site in Tanzania were male compare to number of females tourists. However, it is not in tandem with the assertions of Ledwaba *et al.,* (2011) that females do more trips to the Loskop Dam Recreation Centre (LDRC) than male in his study on factors that determine the demand for water recreation in the Middle Olifant Sub-Basin. From the result obtained from this study, there was no association or relationship between the income of the respondents and their demand for ecotourism travel. This means an increase in income may not necessarily mean increase in demand for travelling to ecotourism site. This may be the case since participation in recreation may also be the matter of interest, among several other factors. Ledwaba *et al.,* (2011) corroborated this that participating in recreation is mainly about how the recreationist plans on his time and income, because even those who earn less may visit the site more often than those who earn more. There is no significant relationship between demographic characteristics and demand for Ecotourism holiday of the respondents. This may be attributed to the fact that those factors may not be the key determinants of respondents demand for travelling during their holidays for leisure in Nigeria. This assertion is in agreement with Sirakaya *et al.,(*2002) when he deduced no relationship between demographic such as gender, age, occupation and demand for travelling. There is significant relationship between respondent perception about ecotourism and demand for travelling to ecotourism site. This implies that the respondents who perceive ecotourism favorably will more likely demand for travelling to ecotourism site.

Busy office schedule and low income ranked highest (table 4), among the ten constraints documented in this study. However, in my opinion, the major constraint we Nigerians have is lack of tourism culture or poor tourism culture. Unlike developed countries where people can afford to save for tourism holidays because all the basic amenities like accommodation, functional vehicles and so on are being taken care of by their government, in this country, the working classes have to struggle and save towards capital projects. This has become the norm and unless there is an intervention and interjection by the government, coupled by a lot of merits of tourism education, the importance that people attach to going on tourism holidays may continue to be very low.

CONCLUSION

The enormity of the benefits of tourism cannot be over-emphasized. From this study, it has been deduced that general visitation to tourist centres is low among University of Ibadan members of staff and a list of constraints has been identified. Above all, the identified underlying factor that is inherent, is lack of tourism culture. In view of this study, a regular awareness campaign through the radio, television, dailies should be effectively put in place. This might enhance the University community's awareness about tourism benefits and potentials and the Department of Wildlife and Ecotourism Management should collaborate with the University board to organize seminars and other educational programs to acquaint the people with the health benefits of recreation and stress the need for both sexes to participate actively in recreational activities.

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Economic impacts of cultural event in Slovakia

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the paper is to quantify the impact of cultural event in Bratislava through its economic benefits based on measurable selected indicators. The study is based on analyses of the collected primary and secondary data. Object of research is the Coronation Celebration 2016 in Bratislava. We focused on services which respondents pay for during the event. Taking into account the multiplier effect we quantify not only the direct but also the total economic contribution of the event by solving a number of methodological problems. In the calculations, we used the multiplier of production in cultural services, calculated on the basis of Leontief's input-output model. We calculated the total attendance expenses of the visitors of the event in the amount of EUR 1,721,720, including the multiplier effect the event generated a production in the amount of EUR 3,347,023.

Key Words: Economic impact, Event, Expenditures, Regional development

1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of the submitted paper is to evaluate economic contribution of the Coronation Celebration event in Bratislava, which is one of the largest cultural events in Slovakia. We focus not only on the direct economic benefits but also on the secondary benefits by incorporating the multiplier effect of this event.

The Coronation Celebration has been organized by the civic association Coronation Bratislava since 2003 (co-organizer is the Bratislava Tourism Board). The event takes place in June in the centre of the capital of Slovakia, in Bratislava. The main program is always based on the current anniversary of the coronation of Maria Theresa. The event is an experience-based way of explaining the coronation of kings and queens, creating a unique atmosphere in the city. Visitors are presented with authentic period costumes, craftsmen present their skills at the fair. Atmosphere is complemented by authentic music from the time of coronation of Maria Theresa, period instruments, and also the areas in which the coronation took place. The program also includes a presentation of battles for the Austrian heritage, dubbing of knights, and folk festivities. Strengths of the event also include the accompanying activities that create space for entertainment of families with young children. According to the organizer, a weakness is the exposure of the event due to the weather; its extreme manifestations have a significant impact on the attendance. Since there is no "wet variant" of this event, the impact of weather on its execution is significant.

The target group of the event are mainly families with children, but the organizers are trying to make the event as accessible as possible for the widest public. The event attracts not only the residents of Bratislava, but also visitors from abroad who appreciate the uniqueness and the historical accuracy of the coronation celebration festival. Promotional materials for foreign visitors are available in three language versions - English, German, and Hungarian, which, in addition to the event's program, explain the history of coronation in Bratislava to visitors. In regard to commentary or translation of the event, the organizers do not directly provide these services to foreign visitors; the visitors use the services of guides through historical Bratislava. The Coronation Celebration is regularly promoted at international tourism fairs abroad. When promoting the event, the organizers bet on a combination of two factors. The first is the historical accuracy of the coronation process. The second factor is exploiting the relative obscurity of Bratislava and its historical centre, which attracts visitors to combine the visit of Bratislava together with the visit of the event.

The partners of the event are Bratislava Region Tourism - regional destination management organization and Bratislava – Old City. In terms of finances the cooperation reaches financial limits of participating organizations. According to the organizer, total expenditures directly related to the event amount to approximately EUR 57,000 (PR and advertising, coronation ceremony, coronation procession, accompanying activities, technical equipment). Most of the funds are related to the coronation ceremony itself along with the coronation procession, these expenditures alone amount to approximately EUR 34,000. The capital city has provided funds in the amount of EUR 30,000 in the past two years. The civic association Coronation Bratislava had to finance the rest with its co-organizers and partners, who provided more than EUR 20,000. Total revenue of the organizer is equal to total expenditures for the event.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The impacts of the event on a particular territory are very diverse. In principle, domestic and foreign literature distinguishes, and the practical application of theoretical approaches accepts the classification of impacts into economic, social and cultural, and environmental impacts. The object of the submitted study is a cultural event held in an urban environment and therefore, due to the aim of the study, this section mainly focuses on economic or socio-economic impacts.

In the economic or socio-economic area in general, the events are attributed with the ability to contribute mainly to revenue generation in the territory, permanent or temporary (or seasonal) employment of domestic population in tourism, improvement of civic amenities in the territory, and enhancement of the living standards of the population. According to Allen et al. (2006), in terms of economic benefits of an event, the primarily monitored attributes are the financial aspects related to the justification of costs by the entities funding or co-funding the event. Bowen et al. (2003) highlights local and state tax revenue and employment growth in tourism businesses. Similarly, Custino and Perna (2008) talk about the increase of number of visitors at the destination, creation of job opportunities, and higher tax revenue. They also highlight the fact that events help to place the destination on the market and create a destination profile and its positive image, allow increasing the economic revenues of the destination, extending the traditional season, and attract both domestic and foreign visitors.

Prosser (2001) considers tourism activities to be of great benefit to regional economies by generating demand for local goods and services. Similarly Cooper et al. (1998) mentions the opportunity to support the local economy if visitors' spending is maintained in its cycle. Hall (2008) completes the economic dimensions of organizing an event, as shown in the following table. 1.

Table 1Economic dimensions of an event

Economic environment	
positives	**negatives**
increased expenditures	increased prices of goods and services
creating jobs	replacement of local labour force with foreign one
increased job offers	higher seasonal unemployment
increased real estate value	real estate speculation
increased standard of living	increased gap between the rich and the poor
greater investment in infrastructure and services	the cost of investment opportunities in tourism (i.e. other services and sectors don't receive support)
free trade growth	free trade growth
growth in foreign investment	loss of domestic ownership
diversification of the economy	excessive dependence of employment and economic development on tourism
Industry and businesses	
positives	**negatives**
increased awareness of the destination	acquiring a bad reputation as a result of inadequate practices and inflated prices

increased investor awareness of potential for investment and business activities in the destination	negative reactions of companies in the competition for human resources and state support
development of new infrastructure and facilities including accommodation and attractions	use of inappropriate destination brand and image
increased destination accessibility	
improved image of the destination	

Source: Hall, 2008.

These impacts can be immediate, such as increased overnight stays of visitors, use of catering services, local price increases at the time of the event; or long-term, when the event results in long-term investments such as transport related construction, increase in total accommodation capacity, expansion of tourism services, and so on. Chalip (2004) points out that the immediate economic impact of an event depends on the amount of visitor expenditures related to the attendance of the event. The course of the event should therefore encourage visitor spending and maintain visitor spending within the destination economy. Offerings of the destination must incite tourists to remain in the destination even after the conclusion of the event, or for multiple days.

When organizing a cultural event, socio-cultural influences also come to the forefront. Delamere (1999) classifies social impacts into positive ones - improvement of region's image, a sense of prosperity, pride in the event or region, enhancement of the quality of life, increased attractiveness of the region, and negative ones - disruption of privacy, overcrowding, increased noise, increased traffic, increased prices. Gursoy et al. (2006) outlines additional positive effects of organizing events, including the reinforcement of regional traditions and values, which can lead to a better understanding of other customs. Custido and Pernej (2008) draw attention to the negative impacts associated with the loss of authenticity, opportunity cost, "inflated" prices, and resistance of the community. Getz (2003) highlights the added value for the community in terms of the sense of pride of the people that may be associated with the organization of important events, as well as the improvement of leisure time options for the residents of the destination. In general, it's clear that an event is designed to raise awareness and it represents a challenge to make specific activities more visible in a particular destination for a shorter or longer period (Goeldner & Ritchie, 2009).

Many studies have been done in regard to quantifying the economic effects of organizing events, such as Herrero et al. (2006), Seaman (2003), Rogers (2008), which aimed to assess the economic significance of events and to analyse the activities and financial flows associated with such events. The authors highlight a number of difficulties in identifying the economic effects of events, in particular selecting a sample of respondents as a base to estimate the total expenditures of the attendees of the event. As with any other primary research, it's necessary to ensure a representative selection of respondents, but it remains an important question whether or not local population should be included in the research. Another problem is the possibility of separating different types of expenditures, such as expenditure on catering, transport, purchase of goods and their localization inside or outside of the territory under consideration.

The economic benefits of an event manifest as direct, but also secondary benefits, i.e. indirect and induced ones. Direct impacts of an event are the benefits of tourism that have been induced as a direct consequence of tourism expenditures of visitors. However, the consumption of the event's visitors has not only this direct impact associated with the visitors' expenditures before, during, and after the event. A multiplier effect is attributed to this consumption as well. All expenditures that cause a chain reaction of increased spending in downstream economic activities have multiplier effect. Indirect impact on the economy is represented by the purchases of goods and services in the region and the country made by tourism service providers in order to secure their production. Induced economic impacts are represented by an increase in consumption caused by wage increases in the sector (Pachingerová et al., 2013). The starting point for quantifying the overall economic benefits of development of tourism, i.e. direct, indirect and induced benefits at the national level is the definition of multipliers, which will enable their calculation. Indirect effects are related to production of supply sectors. They capture intermediate consumption for the production of goods and services in the tourism sector. Induced effects include the consumption of businesses that directly or indirectly benefited from the initial spending in the tourism sector (Vellas, 2011).

3 METHODOLOGY

The organizer of the event and the destination management organization in Bratislava do not specifically focus on the evaluation of the event in terms of its economic significance. The evaluation of individual years of the event from an economic point of view is based only on their economic return. Therefore, the starting point of our research was primarily the selection of relevant indicators to assess the economic significance of this event. We have defined three basic indicators, namely the aggregate expenditures of the attendees of the event, the revenues from the admission, the total production generated by the consumption of the event's attendees. We used a number of sub-indicators, including the average daily visitor spending (in total and also according to the geographical segments and the length of stay in the destination), the average daily visitor spending directly at the event, before and after the event, and we designed various indicator ratios, mainly related to the cost of organizing the event, the income tax revenue for accommodation in connection with attendance of the event, the expenditures of the city of Bratislava in support of tourism, and we put the income indicators obtained from the event in proportion to the size of the location where the event was carried out expressed by the number of residents.

To fulfil the objective of the paper, we conducted a primary research aimed at identifying the expenditures of the visitors of the event realized in connection with the event's attendance. The inquiry took place directly on the venue of the event in the form of a structured questionnaire, and we received valid data from 147 respondents. In order to get the most accurate result, we tracked the visitor structure according to whether it was a visitor with overnight stay (tourist) or an excursionist. In addition, a significant segmentation criterion is also the geographical origin of the visitor - we studied four different segments - a resident of Bratislava, Western, Central or Eastern Slovakia, a foreign visitor. The expenditures of these segments were monitored according to the structure of individual paid services consumed -

accommodation services, catering services, transport services, purchase of souvenirs and other goods.

The researched event is an open event, held in open spaces mostly by the city centre. From this point of view, the necessary starting point for further calculations - the number of attendees of the event - was determined by an interview with the organizer and co-organizer of the event. The event's organizer estimated 37,000 visitors, the co-organizer estimated 50,000 visitors. Therefore, we used the mean value between these estimates in calculations. Admission is collected only for the coronation ceremony and it's EUR 25 for an adult. The capacity of the temple, where the coronation takes place, is 300 people.

The objective of the paper is also to incorporate the multiplier effect, which the attendees' expenditures have in the given area, and the calculation of the relevant indicators of the event's contribution. For the sake of simplification, the presented paper works with multipliers calculated on the basis of Leontief's input-output model based on symmetric input-output table by Fodranová, Kubičková and Michálková (2015). We use the basic premise of this model that the sum of intermediate consumption and final demand is the total production (Hara, 2008). Applying this model to the tourism environment makes it possible to quantify the changes induced by the final consumption of the tourists in the total volume of production. This is a model used by the majority of authors of studies measuring economic benefits of tourism in a territory (Khan et al, 1990; Adams, 1992; Chang, 2001; Mules, 2005; Boďa, 2006; Chang at al., 2010; Bakos, 2011; Stynes, 2002; Kubičková et al., 2014 and many others).

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Primary research provided the initial findings for meeting the objective of the paper related to the structure of attendees of the event and their consumer behaviour. According to the survey of the event's visitors, the inhabitants of the Bratislava Region (81% of the visitors) are clearly predominant, and they are mostly families with children (37%), another large group are visitors who come with friends (25%). Representation of other regions and representation of visitors from abroad is roughly the same. Approximately half of the visitors will spend 1 day in Bratislava without overnight stay in connection with the visit of the event. Approximately 16% of visitors will stay for 1 night, the same percentage will stay for 2 nights, and only a minimum of visitors will spend 3 nights in Bratislava.

Attendance of the event is the target activity for the respondents, but it's not the only activity included in their stay. 65% of visitors of the event also take advantage of other attractions of the capital or nearby surroundings, especially the visit of Devin, Červený Kameň (Častá), Pezinok, but also Hainburg an der Donau (Austrian Niederösterreich) or the Schlosshof castle.

The average expenditures of the event's visitors were examined according to geographic segments. The results are broken down by the services that the visitors paid for during their stay. The values are shown in the following Table 2.

The largest amount of money was spent by residents from abroad, an average of EUR 168.10 per person and visitors from Eastern Slovakia with an average per person of EUR 128.67. Third largest expenditures were made by respondents from Central Slovakia, on average EUR

87.79 per person. Visitors from Western Slovakia spent an average of EUR 51.51. Respondents from Bratislava spent an average of EUR 10.4 per person; respondents from the Bratislava Self-governing Region (outside of Bratislava) spent EUR 19.86 per person.

Table 2 Average expenditures of event visitors according to geographic segments broken down by expenditure items, in Euro

	Accommodation services	Catering services	Travel	Souvenirs and other items	Other:	Total
visitor from BA	0.00	9.43	0	0.6	0.37	10.4
visitor from BSR (without BA)	0	13.55	2	2.59	1.73	19.86
visitor from WS	28.86	14.15	4.38	1.85	2.27	51.51
visitor from CS	46.00	25.00	9.89	2.16	4.74	87.79
visitor from ES	39.00	29.00	30.00	2.67	28.0	128.67
visitor from abroad	74.62	34.33	13.25	6.87	39.03	168.10

Note: BA – Bratislava, BSR – Bratislava Self-governing Region, WS – Western Slovakia, ES - Eastern Slovakia, CS - Central Slovakia
Source: own processing

We also analysed the respondents' expenditures according to the length of their stay in the region. Respondents were divided according to the length of their stay into excursionists, whose stay did not exceed 24 hours and tourists, whose stay in the region lasted for at least one overnight stay. On average, one excursionist has spent EUR 12.4 worth of expenditures. The average expenditure per one tourist is EUR 138.7 per day. The largest spending item of excursionists was catering, while the least amount of money was spent on souvenirs and other items, an average of EUR 3.7 per respondent. Tourists spent the largest amount of money on accommodation services, on average EUR 53 per one tourist per day. On the other hand, they spent the least amount of money on souvenirs and other items. The data found is listed in the following Table 2.

Table 3 Average visitor expenditures by length of stay, in Euro

	Accommodation services	Catering services	Travel	Souvenirs and other items	Other:	Total
Average per excursionist	0	8.6	2.8	3.7	4.2	12.4
Average per tourist	53	43.5	14.5	9.2	18.5	138.7

Source: own processing

Total average expenditure per one visitor is EUR 40.04 per day. The total average expenditure per visitor during the event is EUR 13.55 per day. The average expenditure a respondent spent outside the event was EUR 26.49 per day per person. Based on the calculated mean value between the number of visitors for all three days of the event estimated by the organizer and the co-organizer we will work with the number of 43,000 visitors. After calculating the averaged expenditure amounts for all visitors of the event, the total expenditures of the participants during the event are EUR 582,650, and the total expenditures that the visitors spent in the region before and after the event are EUR 1,139,070. Total expenditures of the event's visitors in connection with attendance of the event represent EUR 1,721,720.

Calculated values can be used to calculate other interesting indicators. One is the ratio of total expenditures of the visitors related to the event and the expenditures directly at the event. The calculated value of EUR 2.96 denotes that every 1 Euro spent as the visitor's expenditure directly during the event is able to generate a total of almost 3 Euro within the surveyed area as a total of expenditures related to attendance of the event, for every 1 Euro of expenditure spent directly during the event, EUR 1.95 is spent before or after the event. This multiplier effect of the economic base clearly indicates the economic contribution of the event, which cannot be measured only directly by the expenditures of the event's visitors, but the contribution from its organization is greater thanks to expenditures indirectly related to the attendance of the event (outside of the event itself).

The total revenue from the event can also be quantified by means of the organizer's revenue indicator, which consists of collected admission for the crowning ceremony of EUR 7,500. The obtained data can be used to calculate other related indicators. One is the amount of expenditure by visitors related to the event's attendance attributable to 1 EUR of costs of the organizer for organizing the event. Total costs of the organizer (as mentioned above) are EUR 57,000 total expenditures of the visitors have been calculated in the amount of EUR 1,721,720. It results from the above data that each Euro invested by the organizer of the event induced visitor expenditures in the amount of 30.2 Euro. This indicator is suitable for assessing the economic significance of organizing the event for the location, or region. If we calculate how many Euros of expenditures directly at the event were generated by 1 Euro of costs of organizing the event, in this case it's EUR 2.24 and it's an indicator that tells us the contribution of the event directly to the providers of paid services at the event.

Another sub-indicator, which is the income from the event for the city, can be calculated through the accommodation tax, with the tax rate in Bratislava amounting to EUR 1.70. With 9,653 accommodated guests from the total number of visitors (22.45% of the respondents used accommodation services - result of the field survey), the city receives a local accommodation tax of EUR 16,410, which covers more than 50% of the subsidy granted by Bratislava for organizing the Coronation Celebration event. In relation to the city of Bratislava, another indicator can be constructed as the ratio of the accommodation tax income in connection with the attendance of the event and the costs of the city aimed directly at supporting tourism in the given year in the amount of EUR 750,000 (Magistrate office of the capital of the Slovak Republic of Bratislava, 2015). The value of this indicator is EUR 0.022. Of course, this is only a sub-indicator that reflects only part of the benefit of organizing the event.

An interesting indicator is the total expenditure by visitors made during the event calculated per 1 inhabitant of the city of Bratislava. It's an indicator that would be particularly useful in comparison with other events. For the Coronation Celebration, the value of this indicator is EUR 1.37 per 1 resident (Note: The average number of permanently living population in the city of Bratislava for 2016 was 424,259 persons, Statistical Office of SR, 2017).

In order to determine the overall economic benefits, we also need to incorporate the multiplier effect of consumption made in connection with the event's attendance. We therefore also take into account the secondary benefits across the supply chain and the induced benefits as presented in the methodology of this paper. In the calculation we work with a multiplier of tourism production calculated for Slovakia. According to Dujavová (2015), the multiplier of domestic tourism production (version B) reaches 1.7048. Fodranová, Kubičková and Michálková (2015) provide a more specific value of the production multiplier for cultural services 1,313 for the simple multiplier and 1,944 for the induced effect multiplier. The overall economic effect achieved by incorporating multipliers of production can be calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{agggregated expenditures of visitors } \times \text{multiplier} = \text{total economic contribution generated by final consumption}$$

If we calculate based on the production multiplier according to Dujavová, the total domestic production generated by the final consumption in relation to the event's attendance is EUR 2,935,188. More specific result with regard to the subject of research of this paper, which is a cultural event, can be obtained if we calculate using the multiplier for cultural services. Thus, if we calculate using the value of a simple multiplier for cultural services by Fodranová, Kubičková and Michálková (2015), the production of EUR 2,260,618 was generated, directly and indirectly, as a result of final consumption in connection with the visitors' attendance of the event. When calculating with a multiplier that also includes the induced effect, the generated production is worth EUR 3,347,023.

5 CONCLUSION

There are several ways to measure the impact of an event on a territory. Due to the absence of data, the results reported in the paper were based on primary research supplemented by secondary data, especially in the construction of the ratios indicating the economic significance of the event for the territory. There are also certain limitations of the results due this procedure, especially in the value of the average expenditure per visitor and day and its accuracy with respect to the chosen method of queries. Another limitation is the basis for the calculations consisting in estimating the number of the event's visitors by two subjects, namely the organizer and co-organizer of the event. Authors of the paper are aware of the limitations of such an estimate, but given that the event takes place in an open space of the city, there was no other current option.

We used the total number of visitors as estimated in calculations, we did not disregard attendees of the event coming from Bratislava itself. We assume that the residents of Bratislava who attended the event would attend a non-Bratislava based event if the event wouldn't take place. We consider the Coronation Celebration a significant event that is capable of retaining the residents of Bratislava in its territory during the weekend. However, a field survey could help to answer this question. Our survey revealed that almost 58% of the event's attendees came from outside of Bratislava. By extrapolating the number of visitors from Bratislava and their expenditures, the economic significance of the Coronation Celebration would be much lower.

Application of the multiplier from the national level has another limitation. The multiplier effect at lower territorial levels is smaller, in particular with regard to the location of suppliers in the supply chain and losses from the area. However, the use of a cultural services multiplier allowed for more accurate calculation compared to the calculation on the basis of a multiplier for tourism as a sector (according to the set of sectors of the tourism satellite account).

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The Potential of Using Meeting Space Booking Platform in Egyptian Five-star Hotels

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Abstract

The objective of this research paper is to investigate the potential of using meeting space online booking in Egyptian five-star hotels. As online-room booking is booming and has proved to be effective and profitable, the tactic has extended to other hotel facilities, *inter alia*, meeting spaces. The methodology of the research employed an online survey with a purposeful sample of 15 event management managers/sales executives from five-star Egyptian hotel operations. The outcome of the research has provided evidence for the necessity of introducing Meeting Space Portals access to customers of Egyptian hotel operations as a strategy to boost the sales of meeting facilities. It also explored the challenges facing the marketing mix of this particular service channel in the Egyptian meeting space/event management market.

Key Words: *meeting spaces, online booking, event management, Egyptian hotels.*

1. INTRODUCTION

During the last two decades, there has been a growing rise of online platforms for various products/services. This booming demand was very much encouraged by a variety of reasons. These reasons include, *inter alia*, changing customer behavior and purchasing patterns, technology development and better efficiency and promptness (Zhu and Zhang, 2010).

The hospitality industry is not an exception to the rule. The service has started with online booking of rooms via authorized agents or own hospitality websites. This approach proved to be successful and profitable enhancing the yield of room sales and providing flexibility and on-the-spot sales transaction (Gavilan, Avello and Martinez-Navarro, 2018).

During the last few years, business pioneers initiated online platforms to book small meeting spaces. Good examples of such venues include LiquidSpace, Breather, PivotDesk, WeWork, **Bizly**, **SpaceBase** and Seats2meet. The ultimate goal of such venues was designed primarily to avoid the hassle of manual request-for-proposal (RFP) by providing instant direct boking capability with non-negotiable lowest quote guarantee (Skift Report, 2017a and 2017b).

Recently, many customers are not any more interested in using RFP for many reasons. It is very time-consuming to get the quote, negotiate the price and further documenting the deal. However, business clients are demanding added customization i.e. instant messaging and feedback for specific/particular services (Getz and Page, 2016).

According to Dickinger and Mazanec (2008), the process of booking a private dining room or hotel meeting space for a small corporate group can sometimes require almost as many back-and-forth emails and lengthy negotiations between the venue and customer as a larger conference. The process might begin with searching multiple hotel and event venue websites, followed by emails to determine rate and availability, and then there's the whole request-for-proposal (RFP) process to consider different bids. All of that requires an excessive amount of time, waiting, delays, stress, and expense to organize a 90-minute meal (Spencer, 2002).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

There is no doubt that the changing landscape for meeting/events business has become crucial. Appealing to multiple generations of meeting attendees and millennials is a key for success. Adhering to the needs of these segments is a must. Hotel operations are facing intense competition for customers, intensified by oversupply, an increasingly fragmented market and consumer demand for services to be provided across every channel (Getz, 2008; Shone and Parry, 2004; Wood, 2009).

Initiatives have been made by some governmental bodies in some European countries to encourage and support the hospitality industry to take a real step toward the use of meeting space portals, i.e. The German Convention Bureau catalogue of criteria (German Convention Bureau, 2016). However, there are some aspects that need to be investigated within the course of offering the meeting space booking platform for instance, technology in place and customization of the product/service. While these issues look like traditional aspects within the marketing and sales context. These aspects still need to be looked at sensibly (Göll and Evers-Wölk, 2014).

While advances in technology specifically designed for meetings and events continues to evolve. The role of technology has dramatically changed the overall competitive business environment (Eraqi, 2006). The technology has also provided the opportunity to upload floor plans, brochures, menus, and anything else to provide as much detail as possible about its listing. For those customers who want additional information before booking, or to negotiate rates and add-ons, they can chat with the venue host in the message center, just like an Airbnb guest can chat with a prospective host (CWT, 2016; Law, Leung and Buhalis, 2009; Wong and Law, 2005).

Another important issue with the course of meeting platform system is customization of the meeting/event offer to suit the potential buyer. It remains a challenge to know how to craft a meeting that will appeal to an age-diverse audience and in the meantime to be able to adapt to the specific needs of the potential buyer and make a meeting experience better and more personalized for attendees (Singh and Kasavana, 2005; Raj, Rashid and Walters, 2017).

Further, an important challenge facing meeting booking sites is to segment/classify those meeting businesses for the purpose of tracking, measuring, and reporting appropriately and further, the provision of competitive venue pricing. The segmentation of the potential customers "younger participants", alternatively named "millennials". While they are the largest generation in size right now, nothing is being done for the generation that follows them. The fact that they do share some traits with the millennials generation they're not exactly alike. Their characteristics include digital natives, more pragmatic, more cautious, more money-conscious, and more globally minded than the millennials (Hernandez-Maskivker and Rauch, 2017; Ozturk, Bilgihan, Nusair and Okumus, 2016).

Additionally, real time messaging has become an important feature that would make a significant stimulus to attract this particular segment. A more advanced feature is to provide more information about the surrounding environment and guest experience feedback as well for each property. Some of the supplements that enhance prethe instant booking capability include special demands, for instance, menu preferences, special equipment or the most common questions option (Wong and Law, 2005).

Ultimately, online booking platform websites go beyond simply promoting services. Such websites could help as interactive marketing and direct marketing channels, distribution channels, web advertising medium, supporting relationships with customers, and generate additional revenue by reaching new markets inaccessible by using the traditional systems (Tarek, 2009).

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this research paper attempted:

1- to investigate the potential of using meeting space online booking platform by Egyptian five-star hotels and;

2- to explore the challenges facing the marketing mix of this particular service in the Egyptian meeting space/event management market.

Therefore, the research question could be phrased as "how would online booking platform contribute to the booming of event management market in Egypt in five-star hotels? In line with the research objectives and the research question, the investigation will look at the potential by exploring the pros and cons of the online tool under investigation as expressed by industry practitioners.

Further, the inquiry examines the challenges facing the industry professionals and the implications of such a tool in particular as regards marketing mix as it relates to the meeting space online platform channel.

4. METHODOLOGY

The methodology for this research used an online survey to answer the research questions and attain the research objectives as stated earlier. The survey was communicated via the e-mail to a purposeful sample (Miles and Huberman, 1994) of marketing managers of a 15 different hotel brands in 3 different destinations. Those destinations are Cairo, Alexandria and Sharm-El Sheikh. These destinations were selected as they feature the most popular places for meeting/event planners. The selected brands represent*, inter alia,* the top five-star hotel brands operating in Egypt.

The survey was addressed to either Directors of Marketing and Sales or the person in charge for meeting/event sales. The survey consisted of 13 questions. The types of questions varied between closed questions and open-ended questions. No demographic questions were included as this information deemed to be irrelevant to the topic. The survey was piloted for clarity and coherence with three experts from the hospitality industry before communicating the survey. Invaluable comments were received and adjustments were made appropriately.

A cover letter was attached to the survey explaining the objectives of the survey and confirming the confidentiality of the data and anonymity of the respondents. Finally the survey took place during the months of August-September 2017.

The analytical strategy for this research was primarily qualitative due to the nature of the investigation. The objective was to identify the perceptions of the management of top leading brands of the advantages, disadvantages and obstacles of the implementation/use of online booking platform for meeting spaces. Moreover, it intended to investigate the impact of using such a tool on the marketing mix of that particular channel.

5. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The results of the survey are more likely to be described as qualitative. The survey describes and investigates the effects and requisites of the phenomena rather than the objective of reaching a statistical product about the phenomenon.

Coding for themes was primarily developed from the extensive literature review conducted earlier by the researcher and consequently inherent in the survey questions. However, further themes were brought forward as a result of participants' response. Some quantitative conclusion was also made with reference to closed questions as demonstrated in Table 1. The table provides a summary of frequency of the survey probes of the 15 participating brands.

Table 1. Summary of Frequency of the Survey Probes of the 15 Participating Brands

Probes	Frequency Yes	No
▪ Introduction of the meeting space online booking service in your hotel operation.	2	13
▪ Introduction of the meeting space online booking service by your chain in other hotel units outside Egypt.	7	8
▪ Introduction/suggestion or surveying the possibility of offering the meeting space online booking service for your corporate accounts.	2	13
▪ Consideration of the classification and/or identification of potential users of online meeting planners.	2	13
▪ Introduction/provision of information to your target customers about meeting space online booking service.	2	13
▪ Positive tendency/potential for meeting space online booking service in your hotel operation in Egypt.	5	10
▪ Cost-benefit of introducing meeting space online booking service.	5	10

The findings revealed that only two of the respondents (brands) of the selected sample are using the meeting online booking platform since 2016. The service is provided within the context of chain policy worldwide. The rest of the participating brands in the survey did not introduce the meeting space online booking service in their hotel operation yet. The main tool that is in use is Request for Proposal (RFP) in an attempt to enhance the communication with the customers and increase the efficiency of dealing with potential request as expressed by the respondents. However, 7 out of the 15 participating brands acknowledged the use of the online booking by some sister hotel units within their chain.

As regards the sources/channels of meeting space bookings, the direct booking represented 75% of the business volume, 20% from meeting/event management agencies and the remaining 5% from meeting space portals for those offering this service. For those brands not offering the service, the average ratio was 80% and 20% respectively for the first two channels.

As for the brands not offering the service, there has been no effort to classify and/or identify potential users of online meeting planners except for the brands offering the service. It was mainly a corporate/chain initiative rather than individual property action. This outcome is reflected by only two brands that managed to introduce/suggest or survey the possibility of offering the meeting space online booking channel for their corporate accounts.

Whereas for the challenges facing the introduction/use of meeting space online booking service for the participating hotel brands, a variety of reflections were given. The most important challenges included, *inter alia*, technical aspects with respect to system interface and the absence of personal communication with customers which might affect customers' relationship and closing the sale professionally. Additionally, there was also a psychological resistance on the part of the customer and the preference of using the traditional tool.

However, all the participating brands were optimistic about the potential for meeting space online booking service to flourish in the Egyptian event management market with a potential saving between 20-40% for the interest of the customers in comparison with the traditional booking tools as the services are reasonably priced and competitive. Yet, there was no real market research effort to classify and/or identify potential users of online meeting planners.

As for the advantages for using this tool, brand participants asserted that online platform booking provides a more efficient communication especially for international requests, time saving for both the customer and the seller as it is easier for the customer to check the availability, capacity and services, better use of meeting capacity and revenue management is better controlled and handled.

With regard to the disadvantages voiced by the participating brands, the possible loss of business due to inability to negotiate in person and the insensitivity to the customer needs and finally the poor communication with potential customers were amongst the list.

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The findings of this research has not been previously articulated in the literature, and as such, constitute a potential contribution to knowledge. The outcome of this research has shown some overarching themes. A number of these themes found resonance with the theoretical concepts of marketing mix and decision-making process and cultural issues. Also time efficiency was a major concern for both parties – the customer and the meeting/event planner (Spencer, 2002; Zhu and Zhang, 2010).

The study provides useful insights for practitioners and academics concerning the use of online booking platform for meeting spaces in Egypt. The results of the survey of 15 top brands have confirmed the significance of using such a tool for promoting the use of booking platform for meeting spaces in Egypt. However, some important themes were also eminent which include the possibility to track the conversation for compliance and transparency reasons (Egger and Walters, 2008). Additionally, the online booking adds more flexibility to the revenue management technique, stating the availability and adapting competitive pricing on the spot (Noone, McGuire and Rohlfs, 2011).

It is also evident from the data that there is to some extent a cultural barrier from the customers' perspective as regards direct communication associated with the construct of decision making process, better offer and negotiations (Bieger, Beritelli, Weinert and Wittmer, 2005; Steinbauer and Werthner, 2007; Wang, Law, Guillet and Hung, 2015).

The empirical findings pointed to the underdeveloped online meeting platform due to a variety of reasons. The themes that emerged from the data displayed identified the role of technology as a significant constituent of this sales tool. In fact, technology is assisting the evolution of meetings and events renewed in many ways. For instance, the shift toward virtual and hybrid meetings and how can meeting planners work to create an engaging digital experience. The instruments may include developing shorter and smarter programming via livestream or webinar and also looking at the challenges imposed by the shift toward virtual and hybrid meetings.

The research also enabled the researcher to look into the marketing mix of the meeting/event market (Jung and Butler, 2000; Kotler, Bowen and Makens, 2014; Wood, 2009). There is no doubt that the use of this tool has affected the traditional approach of the marketing mix in all aspects. The implications included all the 7Ps of the meeting space/event services. This required innovations by marketing and sales personnel on how to adapt effective marketing strategies and tactics to suit the technological characteristics of this new sales channel.

Finally, as online Travel Agents have dominated internet bookings for independent travelers, there is no doubt that hotel conference/event market will be next to face volatility.

7. RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

One of the objectives of this particular piece of research is to assist hospitality industry practitioners, namely, event management/meeting sales executives to consider the use of the onsite meeting platform for their operation. While this particular service is used in some countries to a greater extent like, USA, UK and Germany by some hotel chains and hospitality operations, this service has not yet used/introduced in Egypt on a large scale.

More importantly, hotel management practitioners have to review the pattern of decision-making process of their customers of both individuals and organizations. More market research will be required to investigate the influences and characteristics of potential customers and how they respond and interact with the platform services.

Further, technological infrastructure is also recommended to enhance the potential of using this service. The infrastructure issue is more likely related to the internet capacity which is beyond the property capacity and associated with the country investments in this domain. New technology innovations will include new ways of imparting knowledge, virtual meeting units and networking of virtual spaces, increased participation of people or man/machine interfaces. However, hotel brands can do their homework and being ready for that particular service potential. Training for human resources of customer service to deal with spontaneous proposals should also be anticipated.

Furthermore, this particular tool will boost distribution channels, provide a better competitive environment and pricing strategies, and introduce a provision of more innovative products and services and better customisation. The ability to compete will require dealing effectively with the 7Ps of marketing mix.

Finally, addressing this particular approach would to a greater extent requires educating clients to enable them to know what to look for, regulating body and an industry watchdog to monitor this potential business development.

8. FURTHER RESEARCH

Future research ideas would consider investigating how customers may react to offering such a service specifically their purchasing pattern behavior. Another area of research would signify the level of technology available and related services that features may include high speed internet service, online chat in order to guarantee spontaneous response to the customers' queries. A more robust research would consider investigating the characteristics of the meeting space market/segments that would decide on using such a purchasing practice.

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INTERNATIONAL TOURISTS' ATTITUDES AND SATISFACTION TOWARD AIRPORT F&B, AND DUTY-FREE CONCESSIONS

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ABSTRACT

Today, airport profitability and passenger satisfaction largely relies on airport concessions. This study investigates the attitude and satisfaction of international tourists toward the airport F&B and duty-free concessions. The attitude formation theory (cognitive-affective-conative model) is used to measure the attitude factors influencing tourists' satisfaction and their behavioral intentions. The area sampling method and the judgmental sampling method were used. The target respondents were the international tourists who had experienced services offered in F&B and duty-free concessions in the Cairo, Luxor, and Borg-El-Arab airports in Egypt. 320 self-administrated questionnaires were distributed. The data were analyzed with confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling techniques. The results concluded that cognitive and affective evaluations are two interdependent psychological dimensions of F&B and duty-free experience. These two-dimensions together play a critical role in generating a positive satisfaction, which in turn lead to positive behavioral intentions, such as recommending the store to others and revisiting the store. The study has key theoretical and managerial implications.

Key words: Concessions, Duty-free, Attitude, Cognitive, Affective, Conative.

1. INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH GAP

Concessions refers to the non-aircraft commercial activities to sell goods and services in terminals and on airport land, including retailing activities such as running or leasing out shopping concessions of various kinds, catering, car parking and rental, banking and so on. The most lucrative type of airport concessions is usually food and beverage (F&B), and duty-free (DF) services (Kim and Shin, 2001; Fu and Zhang, 2010; Seaman, 2011).

Airports worldwide have increased their dependency on concessions—the retail aspects of airports—to increase their profitability. The main source of airport profit comes from non-aeronautic (non-aviation) revenue rather than aeronautic (aviation) revenue. Due to high competition and pressure of airlines to minimize aeronautical fees, airports are more focused on profit maximization through retail services (Graham, 2009; Fu & Zhang, 2010; Fuerst et al., 2011; Lin, & Chen, 2013; Park, et al., 2013; Chiappa et al., 2016). Statistics indicated that 73% of passengers make purchases at concessions (of these, 68% make a F&B purchase, 25% make a newsstand purchase, 11% make a specialty retail purchase, and some passengers make purchases in multiple categories) (ACRP et al., 2011). According to ACINA (2013), retail sales from airport gift shops, eating (F&B) establishments, newsstands, and parking garages generates between 40% and 50% of the total revenue received by many U.S. commercial airports. ATRS (2006) reported that the major airports worldwide generate between 45 % and 80 % of their total revenues from non-aviation services, a major part of which is revenue from 'concession services'. Such non-aviation revenues come not only from air passengers, but also from airport employees and visitors. Thus, airports are under increased pressure to increase their commercial profit by expanding their retail operations to attract more passengers and manage the loss coming from partnerships with airlines.

Moreover, airports have increased their dependency on concessions to increase their passengers' satisfaction and create a competitive advantage. As a result of enhanced security at worldwide airports, the average waiting time spent by air travelers within the confines of airport terminals has more than doubled in recent years. The increasing 'waiting time' creates many needs for people with a desire to fulfill in the form of restaurants, cafes, book and gift stores & other services offered by airport concessions. Some passengers feel more relaxed and ready to have a meal or buy a book to pass the time. Hence, concession activities becomes a likely shopping alternative for these passengers (Kim & Shin, 2001; Torres, et al., 2005; Graham, 2009; Seaman, 2011; Fuerst et al., 2011, Lin, and Chen, 2013; Zuo, 2015). Due to increasing waiting time pressure, airports are forced to understand and meet passengers' needs through developing and managing concession or retail services.

Despite the importance of concessions for both airport profitability and passenger satisfaction, the literature on airport concessions is still limited and there is a lack of research on airport F&B and DF concessions from tourists' viewpoint (Geuens et al., 2004; Correia & Wirashinge, 2004; Fodness & Murray, 2007; Han et al. 2012; Rossi, & Tasca, 2012; Pinna and

Chiappa, 2013; Kim et al., 2015; Chiappa, et al. 2016; Mederiros et al., 2016). In particular, there are some evident research gaps:

1. There is a lack of conceptual and empirical research that examines the attitude and satisfaction of international tourists toward F&B, and DF in the airport industry in general and in the Egyptian context in particular. There are a number of challenges to measure the service quality at airport terminals with a focus on operations and retail management. Moreover, a few studies have been written in developing nations like Egypt, most of research has occurred mostly in developed nations.
2. There is a lack of studies that applying well-known methodology that is based on the attribute formation theory and its cognitive-affective-behavioral model to analyse the airport F&B and DF offering. To the best knowledge of the researcher, this theory has rarely been used to analyse perceptions of tourists' experience on the airport concessions, and particularly on the airport F&B and DF concessions. However, it is widely accepted that the assessment of both the cognitive and the affective components of attitude can be used as a predictor of tourists' satisfaction and behavioral intentions, such as intention to revisit, recommend, and spread positive word of mouth (Bigne et al., 2001:2008; Tian-Cole, et al., 2002; Back & Parks, 2003; Beerli & Martín, 2004; Pike, & Ryan, 2004; Sanchez, et al., 2006; Tasci et al., 2007; Lin, et al., 2007; Chen and Tsai, 2007; Lehto, et al., 2007; San, & Rodriguez, 2008; Chi, & Qu, 2008; Jang & Namkung, 2009; Yuksel, et al., 2010; Wang, & Hsu, 2010; Han et al., 2012; Kim & Perdue, 2013; Wen, & Chi, 2013; Agapito, et al., 2013; Song, et al., 2013; Kim et al, 2015; Slabbert, & Martin, 2017). This relationship wasn't tested in airport concessions in general and in F&B and DF concessions in particular.
3. Most of airport research focuses on companies' perspectives rather than consumers' perspectives. There is a lack of systematic understanding of airport travelers' perceptions and expectations. Airport literature focusing on quality at the attribute level and discussing with stakeholders such as airport and airline operators, consultants, regulators and travel industry managers rather than discussing with passengers. Current airport research has focused more on convenience and popular attitudes than on consumer perceptions of individual airport functions and services. However, some studies has analyzed consumers' evaluations of their experience and perceptions of the service provided in airline lounges (e.g., Han et al., 2012; Kim et al., 2015) and in airport concessions (Kim and Shin, 2001) using a small group survey of 12 experts. Overall, it can be argued that the literature on service quality in DF and F&B retailers is still scarce.
4. There is a continuous need to understand the consumers' behavior and attitude as well as the factors that influence these thoughts, feelings and actions from time to time. Consumer's behavior, attitude, and satisfaction in airport retails are change constantly due to dynamics of the industry and behavior of customers (Mason et al., 1988).

Thus, this study fills this evident research gaps by examining the international tourists' attitudes toward airport F&B and DF concessions by measuring their perception of cognitive and affective experience and its relationship with their satisfaction and behavioral intentions. The study employed a method based on the attitude formation theory and its cognitive-affective-conative model. It examines the role of cognitive and affective dimensions of F&B and DF experience in the formation of satisfaction and the role of satisfaction on behavioral intentions. Critical evaluation of consumers’ behavior and attitude plays a great impact on understanding of consumers’ needs. The more retailers know about consumer behavior, the better they responses consumer needs, and consequently, numerous effective marketing strategies can be developed to fulfill those needs (Peter, and Olson, 2008). The research outcome is expected to contribute to airport management literature and managerial decisions to improve their service and increase sales and revenues to consumers.

2. PUROPSE AND OBJECTIVES

The overall objective is to investigate international tourists’ attitudes and its relationship with their satisfaction toward the services offered by the airport F&B and DF retailers. The research examines whether dimensions of cognitive and affective evaluations influence tourists’ assessment of satisfaction and whether satisfaction influences the conative (behavioral) evaluations toward airport F&B and DF retailers. More specifically, the study focuses on measuring the effects of cognitive and affective dimensions of F&B and DF experience on international tourists’ satisfaction and behavioral intentions. The study specific objectives are to:

1. Measure the impact of cognitive evaluation of F&B and DF experience on tourists’ satisfaction.
2. Measure the impact of affective evaluation of F&B and DF experience on tourists’ satisfaction.
3. Measure the impact of tourists’ satisfaction with F&B and DF experience on their conative evaluation (intention to recommend and intention to revisit).
4. Measure the impact of cognitive evaluation of F&B and DF experience on tourists’ conative evaluation (intention to recommend and intention to revisit), and
5. Measure the impact of affective evaluation of F&B and DF experience on tourists’ conative evaluation (intention to recommend and intention to revisit).

3. PROBLEM AND QUESTIONS

The research problem is formulated in the following question: What is the attitude factors influencing tourists’ satisfaction and behavioral intentions in airport F&B and DF concessions? The five sub-questions are

1. What is the impact of cognitive evaluation of F&B and DF experience on tourists’ satisfaction?
2. What is the impact of affective evaluation of F&B and DF experience on tourists’ satisfaction?
3. What is the impact of tourists’ satisfaction on their conative evaluation (intention to recommend and intention to revisit)?

4. What is the impact of cognitive evaluation on tourists' conative evaluation (intention to recommend and intention to revisit)?, and
5. What is the impact of affective evaluation on tourists' conative evaluation (intention to recommend and intention to revisit)?

4. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

4.1. Airport Concession: Definition & Components

Concession services refer to the non-aircraft related operations in terminals and on airport land, including activities such as running or leasing out shopping concessions of various kinds, catering, car parking and rental, banking and so on (Fu and Zhang, 2010). Concession is the payment that the airport authority charges the owner or manager of an operation to conduct commercial activities in the airport. It is a payment that airports charge the operation sector for any retailing activities within the airport (Kim & Shin, 2001; Seaman, 2011). Concession describes the right or privilege for a particular use granted by an airport sponsor (usually the municipal owner of the airport) (ACINA, 2013). Meanwhile, rent or lease refers to the right to occupy certain defined premises or a specific area of realty. In general, however, concessions confer all commercial activities to sell goods and services in the airport, and sometimes the meaning of concession, rent and lease is used indiscriminately. Concessionaires are airport retail companies that compete for leased space at airports and specialize in the sale of a variety of goods and services to airline passengers, airport employees, and the public. These companies "concessionaires" must pay a "concession fee" to the airport in the form of rent for the privilege of occupying valuable commercial airport space (Kwan, 2008; ACINA, 2013).

The airport concession industry recognized three general types of retail concessions and three distinct types of F&B concessions, as identified in Table 1 (Seaman, 2011). The typical airport concession activities includes: food and beverage services, convenience stores, duty-free stores, pharmacy stores, news-stands, bookstores, souvenir stores, banks, foreign exchange moneychangers, fashion apparel stores, sports stores, electronics stores, rent-a-car services, airport advertising services, telephone services and other types of specialty stores. Other concession activities which are associated with services aimed to meet passengers' needs include business facilities, leisure facilities and lounge facilities and so on. Generally, concession shopping areas are divided into two categories: the first category is the land-side area, which is normally open to all passengers, airport employees, visitors, and greeters; and the second category is the air-side area, which has departure gates attached to it and is only accessible by ticketed passengers and airport employees (Kim & Shin, 2001; Fu and Zhang, 2010; ACINA, 2013). In this study, concession is defined as an airport commercial facility belonging to one of two categories; duty-free, and F&B services.

Table 1: Types of Concession Businesses (Seaman, 2011).

Type of Retail	Examples	Type of Food & Beverage	Examples
Convenience	Toiletries; reading material; film	Fast Food/Quick Services	Branded or non-branded
Specialty	Souvenirs; clothing; electronics	Sit Down /Casual Bar	Chiles, TGI Fridays, Outback, Carrabbas, Max and Emma
Duty Free	International departures only; especially outside the United States	Specialty Coffee	Starbucks, Peet's Coffee, Seattle's Best Coffee, or local versions

There are a number of management styles of airport concessions. Table 2 identifies the four general types of concession contracts. Most airports have used either the multiple prime concessionaire or the standard/direct leasing approaches (Kim & Shin, 2001; Seaman, 2011). Furthermore, five general types of potential concession customers were identified based on their primary reason for being in an airport: (1) domestic; (2) international; (3) "meeters and greeters" focused on arriving passengers; (4) "well-wishers" focused on departing passengers; and (5) airport and airline employees (Seaman, 2011).

Table 2: Types of Concession Contracts (Seaman, 2011).

Type of Contract	Basic Description
Prime or Multiple Prime Operators; Master Concessionaire if 1 only	Single firm or > 1 firm is granted the right to operate all of a certain type of concession. Many airports have a prime operator for food service and a different prime operator for retail
Developer Model	The developer concessionaire makes big investments in infrastructure and then acts as a manager, leasing out all concession spaces to independent businesses. Developers do not operate any concession space.
Standard or Direct Leasing	Airports lease out each concession space individually to separate vendors.
Fee or Leased Manager	Airports pay a fee to a third party who manages the facility, while making no investment in the infrastructure (In contrast to developers).

4.2. Duty-free

Duty-free (DF) shops are those retail outlets of different brands which can sell products to different tourists or customers without paying for the taxes or duties when those customers or tourists go out of the country, and this motivate tourists' shopping at DF shops because it not only provides lower price and high quality products, but also, it offers the special characteristics of products to satisfy tourists' needs and want, such as limited edition for travelers and souvenir gifts (Zuo, 2015). DF stores are actually tax-free because they have not paid duty on the merchandise they sell. In essence, companies import goods and sell them to consumers who are leaving the country, who are not charged a tax on these items (Park, et al., 2013). DF stores are exclusively available to international passengers who are departing a country. In these stores, items are identified with tickets which have a green box on them with the wording 'Only available to passengers flying OUTSIDE the country' (World Duty Free, 2018).

Although the DF shops tend to be located at international airports, they also are located at ports, cruise ships, ferries, airplanes, border towns, and some downtown stores as well. DF shops offer a great range of products: liquor and alcoholic beverages, tobacco, jewelry, cosmetics, crystal, fragrances and luxury goods, chocolates and sweets, and a range of selected spirits. However, DF shops are expanding and moving beyond these products to include everything. According to duty-free officials, the savings at duty- free shops can range from 10% to 50% (Kwan, 2008; Rossi, & Tasca, 2012; Park, et al., 2013).

4.3. Consumer Attitude

Attitude is gaining importance because its influence on an individual's behavior and marketers use it to understand consumers. Attitude predicts and explains consumer behavior (Jain, 2014). "Consumer behavior involves the thoughts and feelings people experience and the actions they perform in consumption processes" (Peter & Olson 2008).

Attitude is ''a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor'' (Eagly, & Chaiken, 1993). It is "a relatively enduring organization of beliefs, feelings, and behavioral tendencies towards socially significant objects, groups, events or symbols" (Hogg, & Vaughan 2005). Thus, Petty et al (1997) conclude that an attitude is the way we think, feel, and act toward some aspect of our environment such as a retail store, television program, or product. Many authors described attitudes as a person's general evaluations, whether favourable or unfavourable towards an object, person, thought, or issues (Malhotra, 2005; Jain, 2014).

However, there are many models of attitude, the three-components model (Fig 1) is one of the most cited to predict consumer behavior. The three-component of attitude has been proposed in numerous discussions of attitudes, particularly in the area of marketing (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993 ; Oliver, 1997; Baloglu, & McCleary, 1999; Back, & Parks, 2003; Lin, et al., 2007; Kwon, and Vogt, 2008; San, & Rodriguez, 2008; Bigné, et al., 2008; Kim, & Perdue, 2013; Agapito, et al., 2013; Wen, & Chi, 2013; Jian, 2014; Pike, & Ryan 2014; Yuksel et al., 2016; Basaran, 2016; Slabbert, and Martin, 2017). According to this model, attitude is a construct consisting of three main components:

1. *Cognitive (knowledge/beliefs).* Cognitive refers to thoughts, beliefs, or perceptions formed through direct interaction with product or service offerings, or through processing secondary sources of information, such as word-of-mouth and advertisements. It is an opinion evaluation of the entity that is based on a combination of the knowledge, experience and perceptions about an attitude object. This component is both the starting point as well as the strongest base for information of a perception and later an attitude.
2. *Affective (feelings/emotions).* Affective is the consumer's feeling, mood, and emotional reactions (liking/disliking) towards an attitude object. Sometimes feelings can precede and influence beliefs. In some instances people like or dislike a product without any cognitive basis for the feeling.
3. *Conative/behavioral (Response/ Action).* Conative is the individual's intention, likelihood or tendency to respond in a certain manner (favorable/unfavorable) towards an attitude object. Conative component is the action step based on cognitive and affective evaluation: how one acts on the information and how they feel about a destination. The actions comprise individual's actual conduct or intention to revisit, recommend to others or spread positive word of mouth. It is a strong component that actually dictates the behavior. This component is a result of the other two components.

From consumers' perspective, their wants in three basic psychological domains: cognitive, conative and affective must be fulfilled, and the features of fulfillment can be viewed as quality As Figure 2 shows, customers' enjoyment is based on the continuous improvement of these three dimensions. When retailers try to fulfill consumers' wants, they will enhance consumers' enjoyment and provide high-quality service at the same time (Kwan, 2008). Numerous hospitality scholars have agreed that the three-component of attitude is helpful in explaining consumers' experiences in service settings (Baloglu, & McCleary, 1999; Bigne et al., 2001:2008; Back & Parks, 2003; Beerli & Martín, 2004; Pike, & Ryan, 2004; Sanchez, et al., 2006; Tasci et al., 2007; Lin, et al., 2007; San, et al., 2008; Chi, & Qu, 2008; Jang & Namkung, 2009; Yuksel, et al., 2010; Wang, & Hsu, 2010; Han et al., 2012; Kim & Perdue, 2013; Wen, & Chi, 2013; Agapito, et al., 2013; Song, et al., 2013; Kim et al, 2015; Basaran, 2016; Slabbert, & Martin, 2017).

In summary, after reviewing various definitions and models, it is generally accepted that nearly all definitions and models of attitude have one thing in common: they all refer to a person's overall evaluation (positive or negative) toward a concept which is formed primarily or exclusively on the basis of any one of three types of components: cognitive, affective, and conative. Hence, this study applied the concept of attitude formation theory and its three-component model.

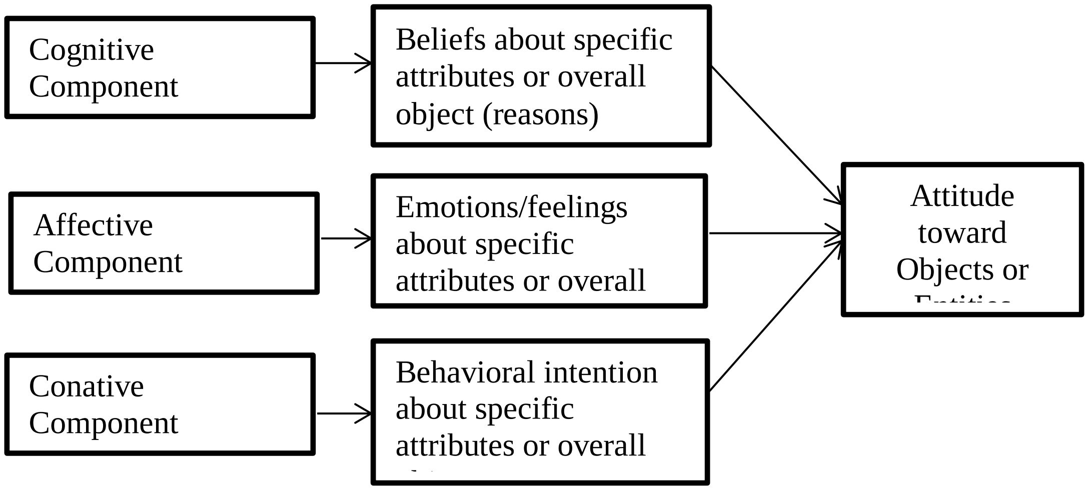


Figure 1: The three-component model of attitude (the researcher based on: Eagly & Chaiken 1993; Jain, 2014; Back, & Parks, 2003; Agapito, et al., 2013; Pike, & Ryan 2014; Yuksel et al., 2016; Basaran, 2016; Slabbert, and Martin, 2017).

Continuous Improvement in the Three Basic Psychological Domains.			
Domain	**Deals with**	**Relevant Dimension**	**Relevant Consequences**
Cognitive	Perceptual aspects	Time	Works faster
Conative	Behavioral aspects	Work	Works better
Affective	Feeling aspects	Delight	Exceeds expectations

Figure 2: Continuous Improvement in the 3 Basic Psychological Domains (Kwan, 2008).

5. CONCEPTUAL RESEARCH MODEL AND HYPOTHESES

The research model and hypotheses is based on the "attitude formation theory" (the cognitive-affective-conative model). According to the theory, the formation of attitude relies on affective and cognitive domains which influence each other and consequently produce different images of goods, services, places and even intangible products that lead to intention to return or revisit. Moreover, it is widely accepted that the assessment of both the cognitive and the affective components of attitude can be used as a predictor of tourists' satisfaction and behavioral intentions, such as intention to revisit, recommend, and spread positive word of mouth (Baloglu, & McCleary, 1999; Bigne et al., 2001:2008; Tian-Cole, et al., 2002; Back & Parks, 2003; Beerli & Martín, 2004; Pike, & Ryan, 2004; Sanchez, et al., 2006; Tasci et al., 2007; Lin, et al., 2007; Chen and Tsai, 2007; Lehto, et al., 2007; San, & Rodriguez, 2008; Chi, & Qu, 2008; Jang & Namkung, 2009; Yuksel, et al., 2010; Wang, & Hsu, 2010; Han et al., 2012; Kim & Perdue, 2013; Wen, & Chi, 2013; Agapito, et al., 2013; Song, et al., 2013; Kim et al, 2015; Slabbert, & Martin, 2017). Following this attitude formation theory, this study proposed that the overall tourists' perception (attitude, image, satisfaction) toward F&B and DF concessions is predicted or measured by cognitive evaluations (e.g., quality of facilities/reasons) as well as affective evaluations (e.g., feeling relaxed and refreshed) that leads to their conative evaluations (e.g., intention to recommend, return or revisit) (Fig. 3). This model examines whether dimensions of cognitive and affective evaluations influence tourists' assessment of satisfaction and whether satisfaction influences the conative/behavioral evaluations (intention to recommend and intention to revisit). The two independent variables are cognitive and affective evaluations. The two dependent variables are intention to revisit and intention to recommend. The satisfaction is the mediator. A research model was proposed in which eight hypotheses were developed (Fig. 3).

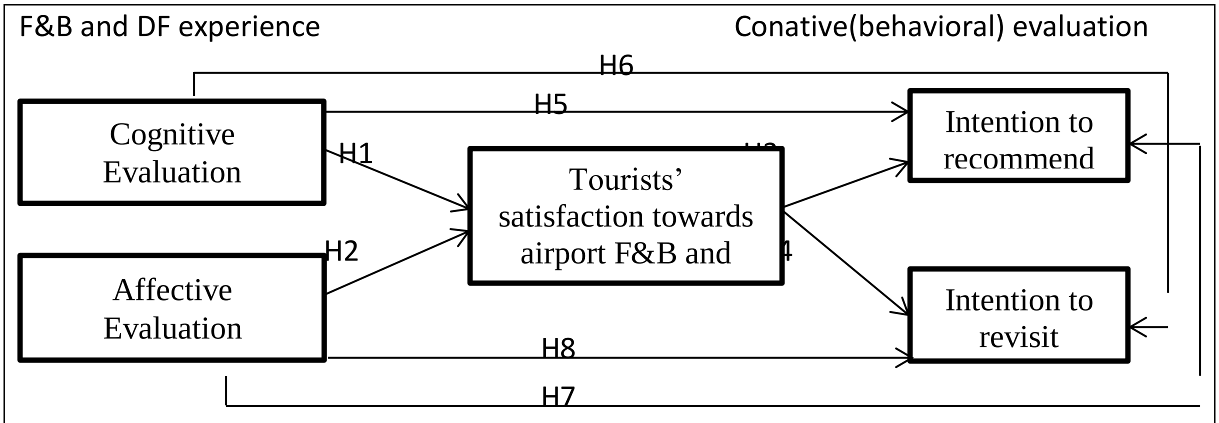


Figure 3: Conceptual hypothesis model (the researchers)

Influence of Cognitive Evaluation on Satisfaction and Conative/behavioral Evaluations

However, previous hospitality studies indicated that cognitive evaluation of quality plays an important role in customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions (intention to recommend and intention to revisit) (Baloglu, & McCleary, 1999; Bigne et al., 2001:2008; Back & Parks, 2003; Beerli & Martín, 2004; Pike, & Ryan, 2004; Sanchez, et al., 2006; Tasci et al., 2007; Lin, et al., 2007; San, & Rodriguez, 2008; Chi, & Qu, 2008; Jang & Namkung, 2009; Yuksel, et al., 2010; Wang, & Hsu, 2010; Han et al., 2012; Kim & Perdue, 2013; Wen, & Chi, 2013; Agapito, et al., 2013; Song, et al., 2013; Kim et al, 2015; Basaran, 2016; Slabbert, & Martin, 2017), this relationship wasn't tested in airport F&B and DF concessions. Thus, it could be conjectured that, a higher level of cognitive evaluation leads to more positive outcomes (i.e. satisfaction, intention to recommend, intention to revisit). Based on this theoretical and empirical evidence, the following hypotheses are suggested:

H1: Cognitive evaluation of airport F&B and DF experience statistically and positively influences airport international tourists' satisfaction.

H5: Cognitive evaluation of airport F&B and DF experience statistically and positively influences international tourists' intention to recommend these concessions.

H6: Cognitive evaluation of airport F&B and DF experience statistically and positively influences influence international tourists' intention to revisit these concessions.

Influence of Affective Evaluation on Satisfaction and Conative/behavioral Evaluations

However, previous studies suggested that customers' emotions/feelings is directly linked to their subsequent behavior, such as satisfaction and behavioral intentions (Baloglu, & McCleary, 1999; Lehto, et al., 2007; Pike, & Ryan, 2004; Baloglu, & McCleary, 1999; Bigne et al., 2001:2008; Back & Parks, 2003; Beerli & Martín, 2004; Sanchez, et al., 2006; Tasci et al., 2007; Lin, et al., 2007; San, & Rodriguez, 2008; Chi, & Qu, 2008; Jang & Namkung, 2009; Yuksel, et al., 2010; Wang, & Hsu, 2010; Han et al., 2012; Kim & Perdue, 2013; Wen, & Chi, 2013; Agapito, et al., 2013; Song, et al., 2013; Kim et al, 2015; Basaran, 2016; Slabbert, & Martin, 2017), this relationship wasn't tested in airport F&B and DF concessions. Based on the above arguments, the following hypotheses are developed:

H2: Affective evaluation of airport F&B and DF experience statistically and positively influences airport international tourists' satisfaction.

H7: Affective evaluation of airport F&B and DF experience statistically and positively influences international tourists' intention to recommend these concessions.

H8: Affective evaluation of airport F&B and DF experience statistically and positively influences international tourists' intention to revisit these concessions.

Influence of Satisfaction on Conative/behavioral Evaluations

Satisfaction is defined as the consumer's fulfillment response based upon a judgment that a product or service feature has provided a pleasurable level of consumption (Oliver 1997). However, the positive relationship between tourist satisfaction and behavioral intentions has been well established in various hospitality settings (Chen and Tsai, 2007; Bigne, et al., 2001:2008; Tian-Cole, et al., 2002; Back & Parks, 2003; Chi & Qu, 2008; Yuksel, et al., 2010; Wang, & Hsu, 2010; Song et al., 2013), this relationship wasn't tested in airport F&B and DF concessions. Integrating with this background, the following hypotheses are developed:

H3: International tourists' satisfaction with F&B and DF concessions statistically and positively influence their intention to recommend these concessions.

H4: International tourists' satisfaction with F&B and DF concessions statistically and positively influence their intention to revisit these concessions.

6. METHODOLOGY

6.1 Research Type and Approach

In this descriptive analytical research study, a quantitative approach has been utilized for examining the attitude and satisfaction of the international tourists' toward both airport F&B, and DF concessions. The "attitude formation theory" (the cognitive-affective-conative model) is used in this research to measure the attitude factors influencing consumers' satisfaction and their behavioral intentions. To the best knowledge of the researcher, this theory has rarely been used to measure perceptions of tourists toward airport concessions, especially F&B, and duty free concessions. According to the theory, the overall tourists' perception (attitude, satisfaction) toward F&B and DF concessions is influenced or measured by cognitive evaluations (e.g. quality of facilities/reasons) as well as affective evaluations (e.g. feeling relaxed and refreshed) that leads to their conative/behavioral evaluations (e.g., intention to recommend, return or revisit) (Fig. 3). The assessment of both the cognitive and the affective components of attitude is used as a predictor of tourists' satisfaction and behavioral intentions, such as intention to revisit, recommend, and spread positive word of mouth (Baloglu, & McCleary, 1999; Bigne et al., 2001:2008; Tian-Cole, et al., 2002; Back & Parks, 2003; Beerli & Martín, 2004; Pike, & Ryan, 2004; Sanchez, et al., 2006; Tasci et al., 2007; Lin, et al., 2007; Chen and Tsai, 2007; Lehto, et al., 2007; San, & Rodriguez, 2008; Chi, & Qu, 2008; Jang & Namkung, 2009; Yuksel, et al., 2010; Wang, & Hsu, 2010; Han et al., 2012; Kim & Perdue, 2013; Wen, & Chi, 2013; Agapito, et al., 2013; Song, et al., 2013; Kim et al, 2015; Slabbert, & Martin, 2017). This study is categorized as deductive research since deductions would be made from the data collected to test hypotheses set and relating findings to the sample or population.

6.2 Data Collection Instrument

A self-administered questionnaire was chosen to collect the primary data, as survey deemed the best approach answer the research question, as well as supports the selection of research design and philosophical assumptions (Saunders et al., 2009). A self-administrated questionnaire was developed by the in-depth review of related attitude literature as well as the stated hypotheses of the study. The multi-item constructs validated in previous studies were modified to fit the study context. The final questionnaire consisted of two parts. Part I of the questionnaire gathered descriptive information about each participant. Part II gathered information about international tourists' attitude and satisfaction regarding airport duty-free and F&B concessions. This section asked the respondents about their perceived cognitive evaluation, affective evaluation, satisfaction and conative/behavioral evaluation (recommend intention, and revisit intention). All the following constructs were measured with a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree):

- "Cognitive/perceptual (knowledge/beliefs) evaluation" was measured with ten items adapted from several studies (e.g., Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001; Sanchez, et al., 2004; Beerli & Martin, 2004; Lin, et al., 2007; San et al., 2008; Chi & Qu, 2008; Wang, & Hsu, 2010; Agapito et al., 2013; Wen, & Chi, 2013; Song et al., 2013; Chiappa, et al. 2016; Basaran, 2016; Slabbert, & Martin, 2017). Respondents were asked to indicate their perception of the facilities and services provided in the airport F&B and DF stores.
- "Affective (feelings/emotion) evaluation" was measured with six items adapted from several studies (e.g., Baloglu & McCleary 1999; Beerli & Martin, 2004; Lin, et al., 2007; San et al., 2008; Wang, & Hsu, 2010; Wen, & Chi, 2013; Lehto, et al., 2014; Basaran, 2016; Slabbert, and Martin, 2017). Respondents were asked to rate their feelings during their stay at the F&B and DF stores.

- "Conative (behavioral) evaluations" (intention to recommend and intention to revisit) were measured with five items developed from previous studies (e.g., Zeithaml, et al., 1996; Bigne et al., 2001:2008; Tian-Cole et al., 2002; Nadeau, et al., 2007; Chi & Qu, 2008; Wang, & Hsu, 2010; Agapito et al., 2013; Song et al., 2013; Zhang, et al., 2014; Basaran, 2016; Slabbert, and Martin, 2017). Respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which they would share the positive things with other people and the likelihood of re-patronizing in the future the F&B and DF stores.
- "Satisfaction" was measured with three items adapted from several studies (e.g., Oliver, 1997; Back & Parks, 2003; Wang, & Hsu, 2010; Tian-Cole, et al., 2002; Chi & Qu, 2008; Yuksel, et al., 2010; Song et al., 2013). Respondents were asked to rate the degree to which they think the F&B and DF offering has enhanced their experience.

To verify its reliability and validity, the questionnaire survey was later modified and finalized based on feedback from five university researchers as well as pilot tested with a sample of 15 tourists in Borg-El-Arab Airport in Alexandria. Many valuble information is provided to improve the content validity of the survey (e.g., language, length and complete time, clearness and misinterpretations). For instancce, the survey was written in the Arabic and English languages. For convergent validity, the composite reliability (CR) and the average variance extracted (AVE) were calculated in order to determine whether the measurement variable was representative of the related construct. All AVEs exceed the cutoff value of 0.50, and all CRs exceed the cutoff value of 0.70. These results provided evidence for convergent validity of each of the constructs involved in the research model of the study. The reliability or internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) for each measure was above the recommend value of 0.70 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 1998).

6.3 Sampling Plan and Data Collection

The target respondents were the international tourists who had experienced services offered in F&B and duty-free retailers in the Cairo, Luxor, and Borg-El-arab airports in Egypt. For this study, the area sampling method and the judgmental sampling method were used. Judgmental sampling was employed as only international travelers who had experienced and used facilities and services offered in airport F&B and DF were invited to participate in the study. Only international tourists were chosen due to duty-free service is accessible only to international flights passengers, they do not have any restriction accessing stores. Domestic airline passengers cannot be considered as duty-free customers due to airport regulations. Moreover, international passengers are more likely to shop in airport stores, compared to domestic travelers. Area sampling was used since the data were collected at only the Cairo, Luxor, and Borg-El-arab airports in Egypt. These three international airports were chosen as, they serve many international tourists who had visited many different F&B and DF stores from the most popular destinations. These three airport are also the busiest airports in Egypt during the research period. The busiest airports already experience a higher number of passengers who are potential customers that can generate non-aeronautic revenues. For this reasons, these particular airports were chosen as a sampling group in order to collate primary data.

Moreover, this research employed the non-random sampling and the convenient sampling technique, due to the airport is a special place with more restrictions. This non-random sampling increases the chance of an effective result, which would contribute to practical methodology. Every international tourist who had experienced F&B and DF stores were approached. The significance of this approach is that, creating value for customers requires knowing how they use and evaluate their perceptions of the services and products immediately after the experience or purchase. The researcher believes that they would be the ones who have accurate opinions concerning the service quality.

Table 3: Demographic profile of the respondents (N =215)

Demographics	Category	Frequency	(%)
Gender	Male	109	51 %
	Female	106	49 %
Age	16-24 years	22	10%
	25-34 years	29	13%
	35-44 years	41	19%
	45-54 years	55	26%
	55-64 years	60	28%
	over 64	8	4%
Education	Below secondary school	12	6%
	Secondary school	40	19%
	High school	118	55%
	University degree	35	16%
	Postgraduate degree (Master/PhD)	10	4%
Occupation	Administrative worker	80	37%
	Executive manager	20	9%
	Freelance	30	14%
	Retired	70	33%
	Unemployed	3	1%
	Student	7	3%
	Other	5	2%
Travel purpose	Leisure	160	74%
	Work	38	18%
	Other	17	8%
Nationality	Arabian	32	15%
	Asian	88	41%
	American	45	21%
	European	50	23%

Fieldworkers approached the respondents from September to October, 2017, explained the goal of the survey and asked for respondents to participate willingly (on a voluntary basis). A total number of 320 questionnaires were delivered and 215 usable samples were obtained, resulting in a response rate of 67%. The respondent profile is summarized in Table 3.

6.4 Statistical Data Analysis

SPSS 19.0 was the software chosen for statistical computation. Descriptive statistics, validity and reliability analysis, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and Structural Equation Model (SEM) are used to explore the interrelationships between the study variables; cognitive evaluations, affective evaluations, satisfaction, intention to revisit, intention to recommend. Results were interpreted as significant if the associated p-value was less than .05 and highly significant if p-value was less than .01. Hypotheses Tested by Structural Equation Model (H0: $p > 0.05$ versus H1: $p \leq 0.05$).

7. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

7.1 Validity and Reliability of the Measurement Model

As shown in Table 4, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with a maximum likelihood was used to examine the validity and reliability of the measurement model. Convergent validity was confirmed in that all factor loadings of the items under each construct exceeded the recommended cut- off value of .40, and all were significant ($p < .001$). In addition, the average variance extract (AVE) values for cognitive evaluation, affective evaluation, customer satisfaction, recommend intention, and revisit intention were above the minimum criterion of .50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 1998), indicating that the variance explained by the respective construct was larger than the variance explained by measurement error. All of the composite reliability (Cronbach's alpha) of each construct ranged from .76 to .84, which was above the recommended value of .70 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 1998), indicating that the multiple measurement items were reliable for measuring each construct. The measurement model shows that good fit indices to the data: ($\chi^2 = 587.22$, $df = 261$, $\chi^2/df = 2.25$, $p < .001$, CFI = .96, RMSEA = .054). All the indication shows the measurement model fits the data reasonably well. These results implied that cognitive (knowledge/beliefs) and affective (feelings) evaluations are two interdependent psychological dimensions of F&B and DF experience.

Table 4: Results of Measurement Model: Validity and Reliability Analysis

Description	Validity and Reliability Analysis			
	Loading	**AVE**	**α**	**Mean (St. Deviation)**
Cognitive evaluation (7 items)	0 .68	0.785	0.84	4.12 (0.59)
	0.64			
	0.67			
	0.68			
	0.68			
	0.66			
	0.65			
Affective evaluation (6 items)	0.61	0.762	0.81	3.57 (0.57)
	0.58			
	0.59			
	0.53			
	0.55			
	0.57			
Customer satisfaction (3items)	0.72	0.713	0.78	4.06 (0.58)
	0.70			
	0.74			
Intention to revisit (2 items)	0.64	0.787	0.82	4.02 (0.55)
	0.62			
Intention to recommend (3 items)	0.70	0.79	0.83	4.04 (0.54)
	0.73			
	0.71			
Goodness-of-fit statistics: $\chi2$ = 587.22, df = 261, $\chi2$/df = 2.25, p < .001, CFI = .96, RMSEA = .054)				

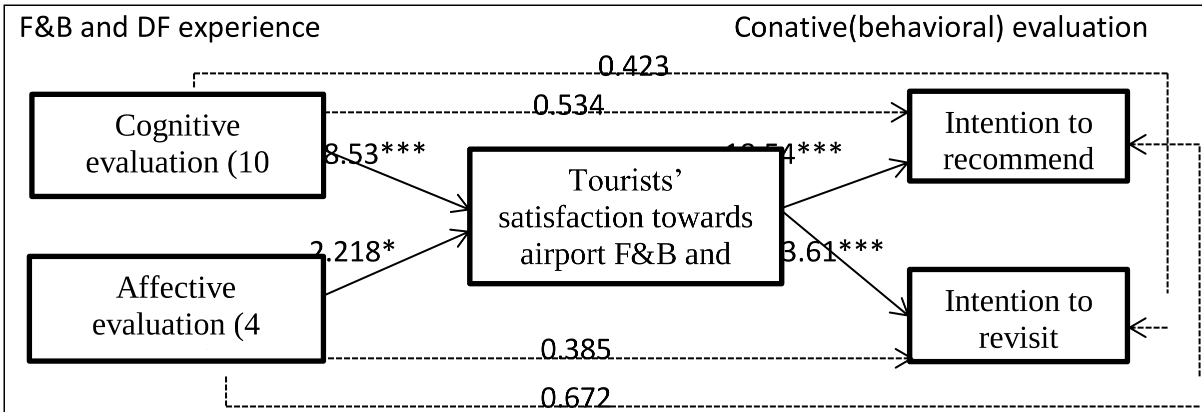
7.2 Structural Equation Model Results

After confirming the measurement model, structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to test the proposed model and hypotheses by exploring the relationships among the independent and dependent variables. The goodness- of-fit indices ($\chi2$ = 651.33, df = 276, $\chi2$/df = 2.36, p < .001, CFI = .95, RMSEA = .058) of the proposed model revealed that the model reasonably fits the data, and thus provided a good basis for testing the hypothesized relationships. Table 5 and Figure 4 present the results of the structural model and hypotheses testing.

Table 5: Results of the Structural Equation Model: Testing Hypotheses (n = 215)

Hypothesized paths	**Standardized path coefficients**	**t-values**	**Results**
H1: Cognitive evaluation→ tourist satisfaction	0.410	8.53***	Supported
H2: Affective evaluation→ tourist satisfaction	0.113	2.218*	Supported
H3: tourist satisfaction → recommend intention	0.892	18.54***	Supported
H4: tourists satisfaction → revisit intention	0.716	13.61***	Supported
H5: Cognitive evaluation → recommend intention	0.024	0.534	Not supported
H6: Cognitive evaluation → revisit intention	0.015	0.423	Not supported
H7: Affective evaluation → recommend intention	0.017	0.672	Not supported
H8: Affective evaluation → revisit intention	0.014	0.385	Not supported
R2 (customer satisfaction) = .710 **R2 (recommend intention)** = .845 **R2 (revisit intention)** = .710			
Goodness-of-fit statistics: $\chi2$ = 651.33, df = 276, $\chi2/df$ = 2.36, $p < .001$, CFI = .95, RMSEA = .058)			

Notes: *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001. CE: cognitive evaluation; AE: affective evaluation; TS: tourist satisfaction; RI: recommend intention; VI: revisit intention.



Notes: *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

Figure 4:Results of Structural Equation Model

The SEM parameters indicated that cognitive evaluation ($\beta_{CE\rightarrow TS}$ = .41, $t_{CE\rightarrow ST}$ =8.53, $p < .001$), and affective evaluation ($\beta_{AE\rightarrow ST}$ = .11, $t_{AE\rightarrow ST}$ = 2.21, $p < .05$) had positive significant influence on satisfaction perception. Therefore, the first two hypotheses (H1 and H2) were supported. These result implied that the two dimensions (cognitive and affective) of the F&B and DF experience play an important role in generating satisfaction and are fundamental components of the consumption process. Moreover, adjusted R2 was 0.71 which indicated that approximately 71% of the total variance in the overall satisfaction was explained by these two dimensions of F&B and DF experience (cognitive evaluation and affective evaluation). The large amount of variance in satisfaction indicated that cognitive evaluation and affective evaluation were key antecedents of tourists' satisfaction with airport F&B and DF experiences. This results emphasized that cognitive evaluation and affective evaluations was a significant predictor of tourists' satisfaction regarding F&B and DF experience, supporting H1 and H2. The study confirms previous studies that emphasizing the importance of experiential value in enhancing customer satisfaction (e.g., Bigné, et al., 2008; Wang, & Hsu, 2010; Yuksel, et al., 2010; Wen, & Chi, 2013; Kim, et a., 2015).

The outcome of the SEM analysis showed that cognitive evaluation was more influential than affective evaluation in enhancing tourist satisfaction toward F&B and DF experience. This result emphasized that cognitive factors of airport stores are the most powerful driver of tourists' satisfaction than affective factors. One possible explanation for the strong positive effect of cognitive evaluation on tourists satisfaction could be because consuming tourists are rationally driven, as they place a greater importance on functional factors/reasons (e.g., to use the facilities, amenities, benefits,) than on emotional motivation (e.g., to seek pleasure) when visiting airport F&B and DF stores. Since cognitive factors are physical or non-physical attributes that provide functional benefits (Kim & Perdue, 2013). It could thus be interpreted that the greater the perceived facilities and services in the airport concession, the greater the perceived satisfaction. This implied that concession managers need to provide more knowledge and information about physical or non-physical attributes that provide functional benefits to increase consumers' cognitive evaluation (knowledge and beliefs). On the other hand, a possible explanation for the low influence of affective evaluation on satisfaction might be because the respondents' affective (emotional) response was measured after they had visited the airport stores. The time interval could potentially cause a memory bias in the resultant estimates. To increase the accuracy of evaluating consumers' emotional response to a service experience, it should be measured during service consumption.

Moreover, results revealed that satisfaction had positive significant influence on intention to recommend ($\beta_{TS\rightarrow RI}$ = .89, $t_{TS\rightarrow RI}$ =18.54, p <.001), and on revisit intention ($\beta_{TS\rightarrow VI}$ = .71, $t_{TS\rightarrow VI}$ = 13.61, p<.001). Thus, the second two hypotheses (H_3 and H_4) were supported. Moreover, adjusted R2 of revisit intention was 0.71 which indicated that approximately 71% of variance in intention to revisit was explained by overall satisfaction. Also, adjusted R2 of recommend intention was 0.84, which indicated that approximately 84% of variance in willingness to recommend was explained by overall satisfaction. This result implied that satisfaction was a significant predictor of behavioral intentions: intention to recommend and intention to revisit. Consequently, high satisfaction level was crucial in retaining customers and spreading recommendations. In line with previous studies, this result supported the positive effect of satisfaction on behavioral intentions in service experiences (e.g., Chi, & Qu, 2008; Yuksel, et al., 2010; Wang, & Hsu, 2010; Song, et al., 2013).

On the other hand, the results demonstrated that cognitive evaluation did not significantly influence intention to recommend ($\beta_{CE \rightarrow RI}$ = .024, $t_{CE \rightarrow RI}$ =0.53, p >.05) and intention to revisit ($\beta_{CE \rightarrow VI}$ = . 015, $t_{CE \rightarrow VI}$ = 0.423, p >.05). Similarly, affective evaluation did not significantly influence intention to recommend ($\beta_{AE \rightarrow RI}$ =. 017, $t_{AE \rightarrow RI}$ =0.67, p >.05) and intention to revisit ($\beta_{AE \rightarrow VI}$ = . 014, $t_{AE \rightarrow VI}$ = 0.38, p >.05). Overall, the results concluded that cognitive evaluation and affective evaluation did not significantly influence recommend intention and revisit intention, failing to support the last four hypotheses (H5, H6, H7, H8). This result implied that cognitive evaluations and affective evaluations was not a significant predictor of recommend intention and revisit intention in airport F&B and DF experience.

Overall, while satisfaction was a significant predictor of intention to recommend and intention to revisit, cognitive evaluation and affective evaluation was not a significant predictor of intention to recommend and intention to revisit.

8. CONCLUSION AND CONTRIBUTIONS

However its importance for airport profitability and passenger satisfaction, the literature on airport concessions is still sparse. In particular, there is a lack of research on airport F&B and DF concession from tourists' viewpoint. Thus, this research fills this research gap by investigating international tourists' attitudes and satisfaction toward the services offered by the airport F&B and duty-free concession. It examines the role of cognitive, and affective dimensions of F&B and duty-free experience in the formation of satisfaction and the role of satisfaction on conative/behavioral dimensions (recommend intention and revisit intention). Four major findings emerged from the hypotheses testing. **First,** the results indicated that cognitive evaluation and affective evaluation had positive significant influence on perception of tourists' satisfaction. These two dimensions were positive significant determinants of tourists' satisfaction with airport F&B and DF experiences. This result emphasized that cognitive evaluation and affective evaluations was a significant predictor of tourists' satisfaction regarding F&B and DF experience, supporting the first two hypotheses (H1 and H2). **Second,** the results showed that cognitive evaluation was more influential than affective evaluation in enhancing tourist satisfaction toward F&B and DF experience. This result implied that consuming tourists are rationally driven and they place a greater importance on functional reasons (e.g., to use the facilities, amenities, benefits) than on emotional motivation (e.g., to seek pleasure) when visiting airport F&B and DF stores. **Third,** the results indicated that tourists' satisfaction had positive significant influence on behavioral intentions (intention to recommend and intention to revisit), supporting the second two hypotheses (H3 and H4). This result supports previous studies that satisfaction was a significant predictor of intention to recommend and intention to revisit F&B and DF concessions. **Fourth**, the results revealed that cognitive evaluation and affective evaluation did not significantly influence recommend intention and revisit intention. This result implied that cognitive evaluations and affective evaluations was not a significant predictor of intention to recommend and intention to revisit, rejecting the last four hypotheses (H5, H6, H7, and H8). **In summary,** the results could be interpreted in the following way: cognitive and affective dimensions of airport F&B and DF experience is critical for generating a positive satisfaction level, which in turn lead to positive behavioral intentions, such as recommending the store to others and revisiting the store.

This study has key theoretical and managerial implications. **Theoretically,** this research adds to the much-needed research on airport concessions in general and on F&B and DF concessions in particular. Consumer behavior and attitude research in the airport industry still remains limited. Moreover, the originality of this study resides in the application of a well-known methodology that is based on the attribute formation theory (cognitive-affective-conative model) to analyse the tourists' attitude and satisfaction on the airport duty-free and F&B retailers, a sector that has been scarcely studied. To the best knowledge of the researcher, this theory has rarely been used to measure perceptions of tourists towards airport concessions in general and in airport F&B and DF in particular. By bridging this gap, the study makes theoretical contributions to the existing literature. **In practical terms**, this study helps airport F&B and DF concessions to better understand and improve their consumers' experience, thereby enhancing consumers' satisfaction which, in turn, affects their behavioral intentions. The study assists in understanding how tourists perceive F&B and DF concessions or an airport as a whole. Particularly, two implications are suggested to improve concession consumers' satisfaction through cognitive and affective experience:

First, resources should be allocated toward improving tourists' cognitive experience by:

- Providing and upgrading practical facilities, amenities, and services in an airport F&B and DF concession to enhance concession consumers' satisfaction (e.g., offering various menu and shopping choices, provide frequent travelers with complementary fresh, delicious, and nutritious food offerings, Wi-Fi speed, seating arrangement, reading materials, shower room and restroom, quiet room, meeting facilities, etc.).
- Upgrading and complementary amenity may be the indicator of an airport store's desire to please travelers.

Second, it is important to pay attention to create positive emotions which would support affective image. Resources should be directed toward improving tourists' affective experience by:

- creating a participative festive atmosphere, arranging personal meetings and more personal communication with loyal visitors and allowing the posting of pictures of people enjoying themselves at the store, as this would reflect the positive emotions they have towards it and would contribute towards the evaluation of affective image and make them return to the store. Constant reminders of the enjoyable time they had at a previous store experience is needed (Slabbert, and Martin, 2017).
- Maintaining pleasant personal interactions between employees and tourists. Store employees should attend to consumers in a courteous manner. Courteous, responsible, and competent employees are the key to making customers satisfied (Parasuraman, et al., 1988). The stores should apply a hospitality- focused approach to customer service.

- Creating an inviting and comfortable environment (physical surroundings) for travelers to enjoy while they are in airport stores. Controlling lighting levels, temperature, and scent based on the travelers' preferences to create a comfortable atmosphere.

9. LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This study has a number of limitations that create a gap for further investigation of the topic and lead to new research topics. Firstly, this study was limited to Egypt and three international airports in Egypt. Thus, future studies should adapt the study framework to other tourism locations (countries) with more international airports. Secondly, this study was limited on only two types of airport concessions (duty-free and F&B concessions), future studies should focus on the other types of airport concessions. Thirdly, the nature of the research was quantitative studies. The absence of qualitative studies is considered a limitation of this research. Ideally, it is suggested to conduct a combination of qualitative and quantitative studies for the future research. Fourth, the questionnaires were developed in the English and Arabic language. However, there were some respondents who did not understand English and Arabic; and due to this reason; they could not participate in the survey. Thus, future studies are suggested to translate questionnaire into popular languages like Mandarin, Spanish…etc. Finally, this study was limited to international tourists who had experienced the F&B and duty free offering. The researcher believes that they would be the ones who have accurate opinions concerning the service quality. Future studies should examine cultural differences. Concerning future research, it is suggested to examine customer satisfaction as a mediating factor between cognitive-affective evaluations and behavioral intentions.

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THE RECIPROCAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENERATION Y (MILLENNIALS) AND CREATIVE TOURISM WITH APPLICATION ON EGYPT

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ABSTRACT

Creativity has become a strategy to be pursued by many countries in a search for tourism growth and product innovation. This has coincided with the emergence of generation y (millennials) as a new generation of tourists that improves tourism potential in destinations. Therefore, understanding the needs and desires to ensure that they are attractive to each new generation of travellers, as well as, identifying the creative content and activities that meet the needs of visitors has become of paramount importance.

This paper is a first contribution towards exploring the reciprocal relationship between generation y and creative tourism to improve the tourism potential to Egypt. On the academic level, it attempts to shed light on the dimensions of creative tourism and the characteristics and preferences of generation y to provide insight concerning the two concepts. At the practical level, it explores the relationship between both and provides implications for tourism decision makers and travel agencies' managers. This is in order to innovate their decisions and products to match the characteristics of generation y and the scope of creative tourism as a new strategy to increase the tourism demand to Egypt so that it can compete internationally and face the worldwide challenges. The results indicated that that there is a relation between the millennials characteristics and preferences and creative tourism activities, meaning they can constitute a substantial segment of tourism demand on creative tourism activities especially in Egypt. Finally, the paper provides suggestions to stimulate further research and management action on this specific topic.

Key Words: Generation y (Millennials), Creative tourism, Relationship, Egypt.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, tourists are searching for more interactive and fulfilling experiences rather than just being served by the travel industry. In recent years, a growing interest in generations and their behavioural characteristics has emerged and an increasing number of studies have started to explore the younger generations, especially generation y (Glover, 2009).

Generation y is a distinctive and dominant consumer group whose behavior, habits and consumers' psychology is often discussed but not fully understood yet. Strictly influenced by the technology revolution, the digital media development and the Internet, this market segment has developed differently as regards attitudes, needs and characteristics from previous generations, making it the largest market segment and mean of improving economic and tourism potential. Accordingly, understanding the needs and desires provides opportunities to anticipate changing demand patterns and to put actions in place that address these medium to long-term changes (Hamed, 2017; Naumovska, 2017), thus increasing the probability of providing competitive tourism experiences and destinations, as well as, ensuring destinations are attractive to each new generation of travellers (Glover, 2009).

Especially that coincides with the emerging creativity, as a new strategy and approach linked to tourism. Creativity has become a strategy to be followed by cities and regions in a search for growth, as well as, a strategy for promoting innovation and individual skill development (Ray, 1998). Furthermore, it has been employed to transform traditional cultural tourism, shifting from tangible heritage towards more intangible culture and greater involvement with the everyday life of the destination (Richards, 2011).

Although several studies have focused on creative tourism, few studies have considered what tourists actually want in this context. According to Raymond (2009), it is easier to establish a supply of creative tourism experiences than to create demand for it. Therefore, there is a need for more detailed analysis of creative tourism based on the tourist's perspective.

As regards Egypt, it mainly concentrates on traditional cultural tourism and often new policies and innovation in the tourism products are neglected. That's why, this research is important at both academic and practical levels. Academically, this paper attempts to shed light, in more details, on the dimensions of creative tourism and provide deeper understanding for the characteristics of generation y, their buying habits and preferences and most importantly their media preferences as a basis for deeper and qualitative consideration of this marketing segment. At the practical level, it explores the relationship between generation y and creative tourism to provide insight and implications for tourism decision makers and managers of travel agencies to innovate their decisions and products to match the characteristics and preferences of generation y, as well as, the scope of creative tourism, as a new approach to increase the tourism demand to Egypt, diversify the tourism supply and compete with the worldwide challenges.

This raises the following questions for the research:

1- What are the main characteristics and preferences of generation y (millennials)?
2- Does a reciprocal relationship exists between the characteristics and preferences of generation y (millennials) and creative tourism?

3- Can generation y be attracted to a destination, especially Egypt, by promoting creative tourism experiences?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Creative Tourism

Creative tourism has evolved from the integration between creative industries and tourism in order to develop creative thinking and explore tourists' potential. Generally, creative industries can be defined as knowledge-based creative activities that link producers, consumers and places by using technology, ability or skill to generate significant intangible cultural products, creative content and experiences (OECD, 2014; Yi Wu et al., 2017).

The concept of creative tourism has been developed for a number of years in many countries, including New Zealand, Austria, Spain, Canada, the United States and Taiwan. Although different places have their own definitions of creative tourism, they agree on some concepts, such as 'active participation', 'authentic experiences', 'creative potential development', and 'skills development' (Richards, 2011). These experiences are mostly related to everyday life, and the 'creativity-base' of creative tourism includes traditional crafts/ handicrafts-making, gastronomy, perfume-making, porcelain painting and dancing (Richards & Wilson, 2006).

Creative tourism has emerged as an approach from a traditional cultural tourism, as a reaction to mass tourism, as well as, in response to the shift towards values and needs of new tourists who become excited to acquire knowledge or explore different skills resulted in a cross cultural learning. This approach is based on deepening the contact with the local culture by directly participating in creative activities which integrate different creative contents and lifestyles rather than merely displaying creative products. By time, creative tourism activities have been expanded to include taster experiences, shopping and less tangible culture like media (films or music concerts) and lifestyle. In other words, this new concept of tourism helps tourists to understand the values of the community (OECD, 2014; Tiyapiphat, 2017; Yi Wu et al., 2017). More specifically, it is "travel directed toward an engaged and authentic experience, with participative learning in the arts, heritage, or special character of a place, and it provides a connection with those who reside in this place and create this living culture" (UNESCO, 2006, p.3). In addition, it "offers visitors the opportunity to develop their creative potential through active participation in courses and learning experiences which are characteristic of the holiday destination where they are undertaken" (Richards and Raymond, 2000, p.4).

Moreover, it should be mentioned that creative tourism differs from cultural tourism in terms of (a) tourist interaction in which the tourists are active rather than passive; (b) sources which are basically knowledge instead of built heritage; (c) information which is gained through collaboration and co-creation instead of broadcasting; (d) value gained which is very less restrictive; (e) the final principle is innovation rather than conservation and (f) supportive channels are more commercial compared to cultural tourism which is supported by the public sector (OECD, 2014; Sziva & Zoltay, 2016; Tiyapiphat, 2017; Yi Wu et al., 2017).

Richards and Wilson (2006) acknowledge that creative tourism has arguably more potential than traditional cultural tourism, because creativity can add value more easily, enhances destinations to innovate new products, and thus creative resources are more sustainable and mobile than tangible cultural products. This is further indicated by OECD (2014); Sziva & Zoltay (2016) and Yi Wu et al. (2017), who argue that the linkage between creativity and tourism could help the destination to gain a competitive advantage through

- Adding value and exploiting creative potentials,
- Increasing tourism demand and generating new tourist profile,
- Diversifying tourism supply and building destination image,
- Creating unique atmosphere and driving new creative trends and intermediaries (sharing economy platforms),
- Developing small-scale creative businesses, courses, experiences as creative networks, allowing interaction between tourists and local community, and
- Using creative technology to develop and enhance the tourism experience.

Table 1 displays some examples of creative tourism activities in some destinations (OECD, 2014; Sziva & Zoltay, 2016; Tiyapiphat, 2017; Yi Wu et al., 2017):

Table1 Creative tourism activities in different tourist destinations

The destination	**Creative tourism activities**
UK	Developed “Cool Britannia” campaign to promote the UK as an innovative destination based on creative elements such as music (opera/concerts/fistival), film (film locations), theatre, ballet and fashion.
Japan	The Japanese tourism board encouraged creative tourism activities under the “cool Japan” strategy in purpose of engaging different stakeholders. This strategy promotes; (a) Japanese food in Korea by creating venues for exchange between agricultural and fishing Korean villages; (b) Japanese crafts by inviting creators, artists, overseas fashion leaders and journalists to the artistic exhibitions; enhancing the destination through gamification applications.
New Zealand	Namely in Wellington, there is a major creative destination for local film industry, “Weta Studios” that organizes the Weta Cave interactive tour with cruise ships.
Croatia	The creative community of Croatia revolves around enhancing creative thinking, imagination, musical performances and many creative workshops.
Thailand	Launched “Discover the Other You” campaign in 2012 to engage creative activities such as; Thai cookery, Thai massage, Thai boxing and performing arts
Paris	Paris integrated creative tourism approach in the tourism policy, encouraging tourists to practice their passion through a course or a creative workshop offered via www.creativeparis.info. The website contains more than 400 arts’ centres and 1000 courses in photography, digital arts, fashion, design, jewellery, and gastronomy. Moreover, the website www.cookening.com, offers unique

	authentic cuisine by sharing meals of hosts with tourists which resulted in cultural exchange through cooking via an authentic gastronomic experience.
Taiwan	The Zhengxing Street in Tainan City of Taiwan was developed to be the most well-known creative tourism destination. Initially, the street was unknown until the creative class reorganized under the name of “street gang” that consists of twenty owners. Generally, they do not compete with each other, depending on teamwork (restaurants, handicraft, clothing, food shops) and organize activities together (such as the music market of “Singing on Zhengxing Street”) to maintain the atmosphere of the community, Moreover, they publish the Zhengxing News magazine. However, the street gang is responsible for funding the activities of the street.
Hungary	There are two main creative tourism destinations in Hungary. The first is Tokaj wine region that delivers an authentic experience to millennials through living tradition of wine production and providing interactive tours and dining restaurants. The second destination is Ferto lake that provides cultural attractions and local gastronomy. Moreover, both regions have their own websites, facebook pages and mobile applications.

Source: Adopted from many studies (OECD, 2014; Sziva & Zoltay, 2016; Tiyapiphat, 2017; Yi Wu et al., 2017).

Generation Y (Millennials)

The different segments of tourists have a lot of classifications; one of these classifications is based on generation theory. Basically, most of the studies have agreed that there are three main generations; (a) Silent Generation – born 1945 or before; (b) Baby Boomer – born between 1946-1964; (c) Generation X – born between 1965-1979; (d) Generation Y/ Millennials – born between 1980-early 2000; (e) Generation Z – born between 2001-later (Rivera et al., 2015; Sziva & Zoltay, 2016; Bonadonna et al., 2017; Hamed, 2017; Harti & Munandar, 2017; Sziva, 2017; VisitScotland, 2017). However, some studies have classified generation y into three subcategories as follows; (a) Generation Y (1982–1985), (b) Millenials (1985–1999); (c) I Generation (1999–2002) (Hamed, 2017; Sziva, 2017). Meanwhile, others have divided this generation into younger cohort (16- 24) and older cohort (25-36). This classification is adopted by this research (VisitScotland, 2017).

Moreover, millennial generation is the upcoming dominating generation and will be the core focus of the marketers in the future. They are well-educated and the most demanding generation who always search for new things; which is considered a big challenge. Accordingly, there are an increased interest in attracting this generation from policy makers, DMOs and employers (Rivera et al., 2015; Bonadonna et al., 2017; Hamed, 2017; Harti & Munandar, 2017; Sziva, 2017).

On the other hand, millennial generation is called the foodie generation. Gastronomy has a critical value for them along with the social side in terms of sharing their experiences with friends (Rivera et al., 2015; Sziva, 2017). Furthermore, they give very strong interest towards the good value, worthy price and quality of online communication (Rivera et al., 2015; Sziva & Zoltay, 2016; Sziva, 2017). Besides, millennials are price sensitive, smart spender and selective segment. They often spend money on travelling instead of possessions with the aim of gaining a worthy value from unique experiences (Bonadonna et al., 2017; Hamed, 2017; Harti & Munandar, 2017; VisitScotland, 2017).

In terms of brand and product preferences, millennials are attracted to authentic, handmade, locally produced goods – and they're willing to pay more for products from companies with active socially responsible programs. In terms of interactions, technology greatly defines millennials consumer behavior. Namely, modern consumers belonging to generation y are demanding personal connections with brands that appeal to their emotions, principles, standards, and feelings. (Howell, 2012).

Namely, technology plays a very effective role in millennials generation's life generally and in different stages of their trip. They are tech-savvy and economical regarding travel decisions, therefore, they frequently use diverse media especially digital media (Hershatter and Epstein, 2010). In general, they are considered as last minute decision-makers. In addition, they are mostly attached to wearable technology devices, which makes mobile phones and lap tops an efficient way to locate, follow or target them. Moreover, bloggers, influencers and review websites, such as trip advisor, are very critical sources for trustful information about different issues related to travel experiences. On the other hand, this generation depends on online websites and mobile applications (Google Maps, Expedia, and airline apps) in booking their trips. During trip, millennials tend to share their experiences on different channels of social media and expect to find free WI-FI as they are connected all the time via smart phones. Further, they generate very strong word-of-mouth strengthening with real pictures since they keen to share their feedback about the whole experience (VisitScotland, 2017; Hamed, 2017; Harti & Munandar, 2017; Sziva, 2017).

Usually, millennials prefer unique experiences rather than ordinary ones, aiming to understand the local traditions. That's why their activities preferences differ from their parents'. They tend to have meaningful memorable interactive experiences whether these experiences include adventure, local activities, special events such as music concerts, wine and food festivals. Furthermore, this generation is very curious to learn something new. Moreover, the importance of sharing economy platforms (specially airbnb) have become very popular with this generation, facilitating connection with local community and ensuring authentic local experiences and value of money (Bonadonna et al., 2017; Hamed, 2017; VisitScotland, 2017).

Additionally, millennials are very sociable; since they enjoy travelling in groups and tend to deal with other members of group, the local people or even with the other older generations through participating in activities. However, there is a strong debate about the extent of their involvement with local community; some studies discussed that they are very attached to devices and show less interest in direct interaction, while others claimed that they are very keen to explore the value of community through the direct interaction. Concerning their length of stay, the older generation tends to travel more frequently compared to the younger generation. Regarding accommodation, millennials are no longer spending many times in their rooms; they prefer 'grab-and-go' option anywhere in hotel and to work and socialize in the hotel lobby (Hamed, 2017; VisitScotland, 2017; Sziva, 2017).

Hence, it could be concluded that millennials need high quality, affordable price, local experience, technology (mainly free Wi-Fi) and unique design of their trip.

Research Methodology

This research uses a qualitative exploratory approach in order to gain some insights into tourist's characteristics and preferences with regard to creative tourism. Exploratory research is ideal for uncovering important meanings that participants have in their minds (Babbie, 1998) and is specially suitable for examining new areas where little is known about the phenomenon under study (Sekaran, 2003). Then descriptive analysis was adopted to uncover the profile of generation y tourists and explore their possible attraction to a destination, especially Egypt, by providing creative tourism experiences and thus increasing the demand and diversifying the tourism product. Maitland (2008) states that there has been very limited research that explores what tourists want, although the tourists themselves, their perceptions and what they enjoy, should be at the heart of any related activities.

For the purpose of this paper and to answer its questions an online questionnaire was launched on the various facebook groups' sites targeting generation y who are between 16 and 36 years old.

The questionnaire developed depended on previous studies; however, it was reviewed from a panel of experts in the field before launching.

Basically, the questionnaire is classified into four main sections (a) demographic characteristics; (b) spending and travelling patterns; (c) using technology before, during and after trip and (d) creative tourism activities identified by previous studies including attending local traditional celebrations and concerts, buying local handicrafts, attending workshops to get knowledge on how to make local crafts, food or language learning, participating in creating local handicrafts or preparing local food with local people, talking and interacting with local people, participating as volunteers to solve problems facing local people and having innovative experiences such as; fashion shopping or film location visits.

RESULTS

The researcher obtained 219 completed and valid questionnaires for analysis.

Dimension 1: Demographic Characteristics

The younger generation of the millennials represented (54.4%) of the respondents while the older one represented (45.6%).

The females accounted for (67.6%), while the males accounted for (32.6%).The majority of respondents were Egyptians (86.2%), while the foreigners represented only (13.7%) including Japanese; Italian; French; Vietnamese; Argentine; Belgian; Canadian; American; Spanish; Finnish; Polish; German; Slovakian and Austrian.

More than half of the respondents' monthly income is under 1500 LE/US (56.4%), while the monthly income of (33.6%) of them is between 1500-4000 LE/US, only (10%) earn more than 4000 LE/US. Almost half of the respondents have a bachelor degree (52.3%), while (31.8%) of respondents are high school graduates. Only (15.9%) of them respondents have Master or PhD degrees.

The majority are students (43%), while (23.8%) of the respondents are private employees and only (15%) of respondents are governmental employees. However, only (12.6%) of the respondents have not worked yet.

The majority of the respondents are single (70.7%). meanwhile, (20.5%) are married and (8.8%) of the respondents are engaged.

Dimension 2: Spending and Travelling Patterns

The majority of the respondents (88.4%) prefer to travel rather than to save money and (78 %) prefer to spend money on travelling rather than purchasing precious items.

Work duties prevent the majority of respondents (67.3%) from travelling. It was obvious, that (41.9%) of them prefer to travel in group, while (28.6%) prefer to travel with the family and only (17.5%) prefer to travel individually. Moreover, other respondents stated that their mood and feelings determine to an extent their decision to travel alone, with family or in group.

The low price of the trip is very important for the majority of respondents (85.2%). However, as regards the place of stay, (36%) of them prefer to stay at luxurious hotels, while (29.9%) of them prefer to stay at low-cost ones, whereas only (17.2%) prefer to stay at local houses and (16.3%) prefer camping.

More than half of the respondents (54.4%) prefer to travel by low-cost airlines, while (22.6%) prefer to travel by traditional airlines, while (13.4%) prefer travelling by car and (9.7%) by bus.

Dimension 3: Using technology before, during and after trip

The majority of the respondents (86.5%) use social media and smart phone applications when arranging their trips. They think that social media and travel apps are trustful sources to get trip information. Furthermore, (90.7%) of them prefer to check review websites before making a travel decision and (60.8%) prefer to check the destination via an online game before travelling.

Besides, more than half of the respondents (58.8%) prefer to book trip online rather than by a travel agency. Moreover, free Wi-Fi is an important service within the trip for the majority of respondents (86.2%).

Dimension 4: Creative tourism activities

The majority of the respondents (89.4%) prefer discovering new places rather than authentic ones (10.6%) and most of them (91%) like to make a local trip and to try the local food.

The most preferred creative tourism activities for the respondents are attending local traditional celebrations and concerts (69%); buying local handicrafts (62.3%); talking and interacting with local people (59.8%); having innovative experiences such as; fashion shopping or film location visits (50.5%).

On the other hand, only (37%) of respondents prefer attending workshops to get knowledge on how to make local crafts, food or language learning; (31.4%) of them prefer participating in creating local handicrafts or preparing local food with local people. Meanwhile, participating as volunteers to solve problems facing local people was the less interesting activity for respondents (21.1%). However, (43.8%) of the respondents mentioned that they like to have adventurous experiences rather than recreational or traditional cultural trips.

Dicussion and conclusion

The results of the questionnaire revealed that the sample is approximately balanced between the two sub-segments of millennials: the younger generation (54.4%) and the older generation (45.6%). Females were the majority, mainly from Egypt with a less percentage of foreigners, which implies that there is a room for attracting this generation of foreigners to Egypt while retaining the Egyptians. Moreover, most of the respondents were students, single and not employed yet. This can be due their young age. Meanwhile, the common level of education is university degree with a less percentage of highly educated respondents, which is justified by Harti & Munandar (2017) that they are well-educated.

Concerning spending and travelling patterns of millennials, it was obvious that they prefer to travel rather than to save money and to spend money on travelling rather than purchasing precious items, which is in line with the study of the World Youth Student and Educational Travel Confederation (WYSETC) (Richards, 2007). The majority of the respondents prefer to travel in group, as they are very sociable as previous studies indicated. At the same time, they are selective travelers; unlike the results of the study of Sziva & Zoltay (2016). In addition, it was revealed that this generation prefers to stay at luxurious hotels and tend to spend more money for obtaining a higher quality. Furthermore, the most interested experiences for them are the adventurous, then the cultural ones, confirming the study results of Sziva & Zoltay (2016).

Additionally, this generation depends on social media and smart phone applications to a great extent when arranging their trips as trustful sources of information with growing interests in travel blogs and review websites – especially before making a travel decision, confirming the study results of Sziva & Zoltay (2016). Also, they tend to book their trip online rather than by a travel agency, which is in line with the study of the World Youth Student and Educational Travel Confederation (WYSETC) (Richards, 2007). This implies further that they should be attracted by innovative means of media.

On the other hand, unlike the results of Sziva (2017) study, sharing economy platforms are very important to millennials as booking channels. The questionnaire also indicated that adventurous experiences will be more considered by millennials than authenticity in the future.

Regarding local gastronomy, this generation prefers to try the local food with some concerns regarding cleanliness and uncertainty of food ingredients. This implies shat more care should be given to the quality of local food offered to tourists.

According to the respondents' preferences, the most interesting creative activities are (a) attending local traditional celebrations and concerts – confirming the study of Rivera et al. (2015); (b) buying local handicrafts; (c) talking and interacting with local people and (d) having innovative experiences such as; fashion shopping or film location visits. Whereas, they are less interested in acquiring skills such as attending workshops to get the knowledge on how to make local crafts, food or language learning, the same as to volunteerism and problem solving.

Based on literature review and survey, millennials are a very growing generation and will be the most important segment in future. Furthermore, it can be noted that they are sociable, keen to interact with local people and prefer to undertake innovative and adventurous experiences which are the main pillars of creative tourism. Thus, they can form a potential demand on creative tourism activities which was also justified by the research of Harti and Munandar (2017).

In this regard, management organizations of tourist destinations, especially Egypt, should focus on attracting this segment through developing a variety of creative tourist experiences in rural areas, as well as, the various cities, such as Siwa, El-Fayum, Nubia, Luxor, Aswan, Old Cairo, El-Arish etc. gathering between authentic and innovative experiences with more focus on adventurous trips, for example, presenting authentic oriental shows, songs of previous famous singers like Um Kalthum, Abdelwahab, Sayed Darwish, etc. , in addition to, folkloric shows and events. Sessions of how to prepare Egyptian, Bedouin or Nubian food, local crafts, and utilizing the Egyptian Media Production City for film location visits. Moreover, the power of social media and travel influencers should be used correctly with the aim to influence the biggest number of this generation, along with developing the official websites to be more interactive through posting more adventurous and authentic photos and integrating interactive maps.

FUTURE RESEARCH

For further research, it is recommended to develop innovative programs that apply to the characteristics and preferences of generation y with the aim of attracting this generation to Egypt. Second, it is suggested to put a strategy and a plan to implement the suggestions of the present research. Furthermore, a survey of all authentic places in Egypt can be conducted where creative activities and experiences can be undertaken which can add to the Egyptian tourism supply.

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EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF PERSONALITY TRAITS ON TOURISM STUDENTS' ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION

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ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship is believed as a solution to unemployment problems especially in today's societies, which face vast economic and social challenges. In Egypt, it is believed that governments and NGOs have been offering support for the potential and actual entrepreneurs through variety of trainings and funds. Tourism and Hospitality sector is one of the top entrepreneurial sectors. On individual-level, it is argued that Entrepreneurial traits are keys for a person to be an entrepreneur. Thus, this study aims to examine the personality characteristics of tourism students regarding student's entrepreneurial intention.

A questionnaire survey was distributed among tourism students across three Egyptian universities. Collected data were statistically analysed using SPSS. The findings indicate that there is a statistically significant relationship between agreeableness, risk taking prosperity, locus of control, innovation and socio-cultural background and entrepreneurial intention. Demographic attributes do not seem to play a significant role in fostering entrepreneurial intentions of students. Detailed findings related to each determinants of Entrepreneurial intention of tourism students and discussion of them will be explored further in the paper.

The paper contributes to the literature by empirically testing how some factors affect the entrepreneurial intention of university students. It is also one of the first comprehensive studies of the attitudes of undergraduates and freshly graduates toward entrepreneurship in Egypt. While the study is subject to some limitations, it is believed that these limitations can be overcome with future studies.

Key Words: Entrepreneurial intention, personality traits, contextual factors, Tourism students

1 INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship is of significance for contemporary career concepts such as flexible career, the boundary-less career, the post-corporate career, and employability (Gelderen et al., 2008). Entrepreneurs are an important source of economic development through producing new ideas and transforming them into profitable projects (Türker and Selçuk, 2009). Entrepreneurial activities provide employment opportunity, increase competitiveness, economic development and solve problems associated with inflation (Davidsson, 1995; Zahra, 1999; Setiawan, 2014).

Sectors such as Hospitality, leisure are considered as typical entrepreneurial activities which can therefore perform a crucial role in economic development (Altinay et a., 2012). The Reasons for the high popularity of small businesses in tourism include the fact that smaller businesses are linked with the idea of a minimum of capital, little specific prerequisite qualifications are needed for most tourism-related businesses and the fact that the owner-managers are generally families, therefore, both the small business and entrepreneurship literature suggests the connections between entrepreneurs and small business owners (Jaafar et al., 2015).

Entrepreneurship in developing countries seems to be different from that of developed countries. It has been indicated that students from developing economies are more likely to see future careers as entrepreneurs and think more positively towards entrepreneurship than their industrialized European counterpart (Davey et al., 2011). This difference is of great significance to higher education (Arasteh et al., 2012).

All what mentioned above mentioned can be summed up that promoting entrepreneurship may be vital for the success of today's societies, which face enormous economic and social challenges (Audretsch, 2007). Traditionally, Egypt has relied heavily on the donor/aid culture. As Farid (2007, p. 430) has observed:

[. . .] although many millions of dollars are spent annually to Egypt by international organizations and donors in the name of empowering the poor, supporting the transition to a free economy, and promoting the development of entrepreneurs [. . .] Egypt's overall business environment and its ability to create desperately needed private sector jobs, continues to be ranked below average when compared with the rest of the world; and thus there is a general agreement that Entrepreneurship is needed. Besides, unemployment is still a severe social problem in Egypt. After accomplishing their higher education in the university, high percentage of university graduates cannot get a job (Setiawan, 2014).

Given the growing importance on entrepreneurship and the lack of empirical research in Egypt especially on student's entrepreneurial intention profiles and since recent literature suggests that studies into tourism students' intentions to be drawn in entrepreneurial endeavours are very rare (Gruel et al., 2010); this study seeks to characterize the student's entrepreneurial intention profile of tourism students of the Egyptian universities' as a predictor for future entrepreneurship trends (Yurtkoru et al., 2014)

The main research question is; which factors affect entrepreneurial intention of tourism students. To answer the research question, firstly, clear objectives have been set as follows;

1. To describe the tourism student's entrepreneurial intention profile in Egyptian universities.
2. To identify the determinants of tourism student's entrepreneurial intention.

Secondly, to answer the study main question and to fulfil the study objectives, an extensive literature review followed by a fieldwork study throughout three Tourism and Hospitality faculties have been undertaken during last semester of students study before graduation as will be present in the forthcoming section followed by some conclusion and future implications.

2 Literature Review

Human behaviour has been predicted truthfully by intention (Krueger, 2008). It has been argued that there is no clear and consistent definition of entrepreneurial intentions (Küttim et al., 2014). Entrepreneurial intentions have been defined as the conscious state of mind that directs personal attention, experience, and behaviour toward planned entrepreneurial behaviour (Bird, 1988).

More recently, Entrepreneurial intentions have been used in previous studies as a reference to own a business or become self-employed (either by setting up an own firm or taking over an existing one), as a pool of broader personal orientations, tendencies, desires, or interests that might lead to project establishment, and also as promising entrepreneurship including those who have only thought about establishing an own business and those who have taken more specific steps towards that (Thompson, 2009).

Researchers suggested that personal characteristics are significant in pursuing entrepreneurial activities. It has been suggested that personality as well as demographic factors and cultural background will predict who will become entrepreneur, therefore researches in the field considered the concept of entrepreneurial personality (Arasteh et al., 2012).

Personality traits include abilities (e.g., general intelligence, motives (e.g., need for achievement, power), attitudes (including values), and characteristics of temperament as overarching style of a person's experiences and actions (Openness to Experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism, called the Big Five with the acronym OCEAN) (Brandstätter,2011p.223).

Meta-analytic findings indicate that the Big Five traits (i.e., extraversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness, openness to experience, and neuroticism) are relevant for entrepreneurship as well as specific personality traits (the need for achievement, risk taking, innovativeness, autonomy, focus of control and self-efficacy) (Rauch & Frese, 2007). Antoncic (2009) referred to previous researches concerning entrepreneurial personality characteristics and confirm the importance of the big five and related them to entrepreneur's readiness of technological development. Obschonka et al. (2010) suggested that the entire personality may be worth more than the parts and, thus, consider individual patterns of Big Five traits rather than singular traits to be of importance for entrepreneurial intentions. Moreover, narcissism in correlation to self-efficacy, locus of control and risk propensity was evidenced to play a significant role in explaining entrepreneurial intentions (Mathieu & St-Jean, 2013).

Although the results vary across the previous studies of personality traits and entrepreneurial intention, they often indicate a link between entrepreneurial intention and some personality factors, such as self-confidence, risk-taking ability, need to achievement, and locus of control (Turker and Selcuk, 2009).

Studies on entrepreneurship in the tourism area are narrow (Jafaar et al., 2011). In general, few researchers find entrepreneurs in the tourism industry to be innovative and willing to engage in risk-taking activities. The researchers find that the entrepreneurs are people with high internal locus of control, high achievement motivation and autonomy (Lerner and Haber, 2000), independence, and self-reliance (Schroeder, 2003). These traits, among others, have been recognized as significant attributes that contribute to the success of an entrepreneur.

According to the above mentioned, Personality has been found to be the predominant predictor of entrepreneurial intention. However, whereas some researchers emphasized the central role of personality (Rauch & Frese, 2007), others argued that this may be misleading as more factors that mediate the effects of personality traits on entrepreneurial outcomes have to be considered (Turker and Selcuk, 2009; Altinay et al., 2012; Yurtkoru et al., 2014). Turker and Selcuk (2009) debated that a person is surrounded by an extended range of cultural, social, economic, political, demographical, and technological factors. Consequently, personality traits cannot be isolated from these contextual factors. They developed entrepreneurial support model (ESM) which suggest that entrepreneurial intention is a function of structural support (the support of public and non-governmental organizations), educational support and relational support (supports of family and friends). Yurtkoru et al. (2014) also examined the same contextual factors as antecedents of personal attitude and perceived behavioural control; in return they found they have an impact on entrepreneurial intention.

Studies have shown that entrepreneurship education programs contribute to the development of entrepreneurial intentions and exert positive impact on these intentions (Küttim et al., 2014). Türker and Selçuk (2009) argue that university education is an efficient way for obtaining necessary knowledge about entrepreneurship. According to results of their research, university education has a positive impact on entrepreneurial intention. Setiawan (2012) has shown that entrepreneurship education had positive impact on the strengthened entrepreneurial characteristics among students. Remeikiene et al. (2013) concluded that entrepreneurial intention is commonly influenced by personal factors (personality traits) which can be developed acquiring entrepreneurial education. The results of the research have confirmed that the main factors of entrepreneurial intention can be developed during the study process. In contrast, Gurel et al., (2010) found that education does not appear to foster entrepreneurial traits and intentions of university students.

Regarding the family background, Wang &Wong (2004) found three background factors; gender, family business experience and education level significantly affect interests in starting one’s own business. A business tradition in the family impacts the intention to start a business by preparing individuals with the skills and vision of entrepreneurial activities (Altinay, 2008). Business knowledge and interest are enhanced by family business background which exposes the person to a business environment from a young age. A career selection decision of a young person might be influenced by family members and friends; however, there is no significant impact of relational support on entrepreneurial intentions (Türker and Selçuk, 2009). In contrast, family entrepreneurial background and innovation have been proved to impact the intention to start a new business (Altinay et al., 2012).

Along with the aforementioned, the study seeks to characterize the tourism student's entrepreneurial intention profile of Egyptian Tourism students **more specifically** through;

1. Identifying the most effective traits on entrepreneurial intention.
2. Investigating the effect of the contextual factors on entrepreneurial intention.

A holistic approach will be to investigate entrepreneurial intention in relation to the influences of traits, socio-cultural backgrounds and education of individuals. In particular, it will respond to Altinay et al. (2012) call for a more holistic approach when researching the factors that influence entrepreneurial intention.

3 Methodology of the study

A quantitative approach has been adopted to examine the relation between the study variables (Neuman, 2013). The survey has been used as a research method throughout three Tourism and Hospitality faculties in three universities namely, Alexandria University, Arab Academy for Science and Technology (Business school) and finally, Pharos University during spring 2017.

A questionnaire has been uploaded online, within last semester students (before graduation), and postgraduates in the three tourism faculties in order to obtain as actual views as possible. It is expected that higher education which is provided by universities can create a potential of future entrepreneurs (Remeikiene et al., 2013).

181 valid responses have been returned (this was very accepted percentage due to the small total of students in tourism faculties during the last five years). All participants were asked to respond to a self-report questionnaire entitled "Entrepreneurial intention of Tourism students". This questionnaire consists of 33 items, and takes around 10 minutes to complete. Participants are required to respond to the items on a forced five-point Likert scale ranging from '1' = totally agree to '5' = totally disagree.

The 33 items measures all the Entrepreneurial traits, the socio-cultural background, as well as the education as independent variables and finally the variables entrepreneurial intention as the dependent one.

Entrepreneurial traits items encompass a mix of all the big five with the most traits associated with entrepreneur namely; risk taking propensity(openness), innovativeness(openness), tolerance of ambiguity(Neuroticism), Internal locus of control (Neuroticism), Conscientiousness, Extraversion and Agreeableness. All traits items are adapted from a number of instruments used by the previously reviewed studies within the literature. For validity purpose, the questionnaire questions had been reviewed by a couple of professors in the faculty of Tourism and Hospitality. Accordingly, questions had been reworded for clarity. In order to assess the reliability of survey questions, the researcher obtained a coefficient Cronbach's Alpha score.

Table(1) Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.751	**24**

The Table 1 shows that the coefficient of consistency for survey is 0.751. It declares that this survey is reliable.

4 Results and discussion

After research design and data collection phase, data were analysed by using SPSS software. Different statistical tests have been accomplished for data interpretation. A descriptive analysis has been established to describe the sample, the Pearson correlation coefficient to measure the relationship between different variables as well as the Chi-Square test to measure the association between some qualitative variables as gender and department on entrepreneurial intention.

Table (2) Sample Characteristics

Demographic characteristic	Frequency	Percentage %
Gender		
Male	82	54.7
Female	99	45.3
Total	181	100
Department		
Tourism Studies	114	63
Hotels Studies	67	37
Total	181	100
university		
Alexandria University	112	61.8
Arab Academy	47	26
Pharos University	22	12.2
Total	181	100

First, a profile of the sample has been established by descriptive statistics (frequency distributions) as shown in Table 2. The results show that the ratio between males and females was close. The number of tourism students was more than double hotel studies dept. This reflects the reality that the tourism studies department have more students within the faculties. Lastly, Alexandria University has the majority of the sample due to the real ratios within the population.

Personality traits	Agreeableness	Extraversion	Openness (innovation)	Openness (Risk taking)	Conscientiousness	Neuroticism (Locus of control)	Neuroticism (ambiguity tolerance)
Mean	2.012	2.021	2.022	2.028	2.095	2.338	2.500
Std. Deviation	.605	.473	.779	.573	.549	.544	.614
Rank	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Table 3 profile shows the personality traits of the sample. As the five-point Likert scale of the study questionnaire was ranging from '1' = totally agree to '5' = totally disagree. Thus, number one trait has the least mean. Agreeableness, which represents courteous, trusting, cooperative, and tolerant has the first rank among students with a mean score of (2.012), followed by extraversion that refers to Sociable, self-confidence, assertive, responsible and active person with a mean score of (2.0210). Openness indicates imaginative, cultured, broad-minded, intelligent in the big five, innovation and risk taking in the entrepreneurial traits occupied the third and fourth rank by means of score (2.022&2.028). In the fifth rank arose conscientiousness**,** the person who is being responsible, organized, hardworking, achievement-oriented, and persevering and their mean scored (2.0953). Finally, the sixth and seventh rank was occupied by neuroticism which means embarrassed, emotional, worried, and insecure person and concerning entrepreneurial traits, it refers to locus of control (Locus of control, which relates to an individual's perceptions of his/her ability to influence events in life (Rotter, 1966) along with ambiguity tolerance with means score of (2.3389 & 2.5000). It can be also noted that the standard deviations range from 0.473 to 0.614 which indicates compatibility between respondents'' opinions.

Table(4) Chi-Square Tests
(gender/ dept. association with entrepreneurial intention)

Gender	*Value*	*df*	*Sig. (2-sided)*
Pearson Chi-Square	***7.810***	*8*	***.452***
Likelihood Ratio	*9.171*	*8*	*.328*
N of Valid Cases	*181*		
Department			
Pearson Chi-Square	***7.454***	*8*	***.489***
Likelihood Ratio	*7.786*	*8*	*.455*
N of Valid Cases	*181*		

A chi square test was conducted to show whether there is an association between students' gender and department, in one hand, and the entrepreneurial intention. For gender Chi squared χ^2 =7.810 p value =.452 and for department, Chi squared χ^2 =7.454 p value =.489. This indicates that there is no association between Gender, department and intention respectively.

This contradicts the result of some researches. Maes et al., (2014) that indicated how gender affects drivers of entrepreneurial intentions. They presented an insight that entrepreneurship is valued by women for reasons not found in a managerial career path (such as finding more work-life balance. Santos et al., (2016) showed that men consistently exhibit more favourable intentions than women do. This also challenges the results of Arasteh et al. (2012) that exposed some differences existence in students' genders academic levels and educational groups for some aspects of entrepreneurship.

Table (5) Pearson correlation for study variables

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Entrepreneurial Intention 1	Pearson Correlation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Sig. (2-tailed)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Risk taking 2	Pearson Correlation	**.220****	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Sig. (2-tailed)	**.003**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Innovation 3	Pearson Correlation	**.170***	.118	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

	Sig. (2-tailed)	**.022**	.114	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ambiguity Tolerance 4	Pearson Correlation	.091	.219**	-.136	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.226	.003	.067	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Locus of Control 5	Pearson Correlation	**.175***	.046	.342**	.003	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Sig. (2-tailed)	**.019**	.541	.000	.971	-	-	-	-	-	-
Conscientiousness 6	Pearson Correlation	.139	.203**	.245**	.127	.378**	-	-	-	-	-
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.062	.006	.001	.087	.000	-	-	-	-	-
Extraversion 7	Pearson Correlation	.102	.270**	.395**	.052	.383**	.409**	-	-	-	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.172	.000	.000	.491	.000	.000	-	-	-	
Agreeableness 8	Pearson Correlation	**.195****	.236**	.423**	-.037	.426**	.401**	.555**	-	-	-
	Sig. (2-tailed)	**.009**	.001	.000	.618	.000	.000	.000	-	-	-
Socio-cultural 9	Pearson Correlation	**.277****	**.243****	**.184***	-.033	**.231****	.094	.124	**.299****	-	-
	Sig. (2-tailed)	**.000**	**.001**	**.013**	.662	**.002**	.210	.097	**.000**	-	-
Education 10	Pearson Correlation	**.146***	**.235****	.088	.083	.081	.101	.079	**.259****	**.268****	-
	Sig. (2-tailed)	**.049**	**.001**	.240	.267	.277	.178	.292	**.000**	**.000**	-

As shown in table (5) Pearson correlation analysis designated significance relation among a number of study variables. Firstly, personality traits were significantly related to entrepreneurial intention. Risk taking scored the strongest relation Pearson correlation coefficient r= **220**** sig.

(2-tailed) = .003, followed by Agreeableness r= **.195**** sig (2-tailed) = .009, Locus of control with r=**.175*** sig (2- tailed) = .019. Finally innovation r= **.170*** sig. (2-tailed) = .022.

These results are in line with the results of Gurel et al. (2010) who also found that risk-taking propensity is an influential factor of entrepreneurial intention. Their study also asserted that innovation lead to higher levels of entrepreneurial intention. Locus of control has been found to be positively related to the entrepreneurial intentions of students by Sesen et al. (2013). For them, internal locus of control emphasizes the belief that events are under the control of a person’s behaviour or characteristics, therefore, it motivated risks and innovation. The current study results also confirm that as shown in table (5), there is strong correlation between locus of control and innovation r= .342** sig. (2-tailed = .000). Agreeableness was found to have significant relation with risk taking r=**.236**** sig. (2-tailed) = .001, locus of control r=.**426**** sig. (2-tailed) = .000 and innovation r=.**423**** sig. (2-tailed) = .000.

Socio-cultural background relates very strongly to entrepreneurial intention (correlation coefficient=277, sig. (2- tailed) = .000. Data reflected that family business tradition influences the entrepreneurial behaviours of students. Students who have been grown in families working in business and have a social-business network are more likely to start a new business. This opposes the findings of Türker and Selçuk (2009) who proved that entrepreneurial intention of respondents was not affected by the support of their family and friends. The current study supports those of Altinay et al. (2012) and Yurtkoru et al. (2014)

Finally concerning education, results found a significant but a slight correlation between education and entrepreneurial intentions r= .146, sig. (2-tailed) = .049. This result is compatible with the previous studies displayed within the literature and the result of Bae et al. (2014) concerning the relation between business education and entrepreneurial intention. Current study also reveals strong relation between education and some entrepreneurial traits such as (agreeableness) r=**.259**** sig. (2-tailed = .000 and risk taking r= **.235**** sig. (2-tailed) = .001.

Table (6) Mean and standard deviation of education effect on Entrepreneurial intention

	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Mean	Standard Deviation
	FF	&%	FF	&%	FF	%%	FF	%%	FF	&%		
The nature of Faculty’s curriculums are theoretical	228	115.5	444	324.3	556	331	339	221.5	114	77.7	2.81	1.16
Faculty’s curriculums are	325	113.8	447	226	553	229.2	940	222	116	99	2.87	1.16

applicable and vocational enough												
Faculty's curriculums qualifies me to start my own business in Tourism and hospitality industry	118	110	551	228	668	337.5	227	115	117	99.5	2.84	1.08

Table (6) illustrates that the nature of education provided by Tourism faculties considered as referred to by Gurel et al. (2010) a combination between professional education that develop students' ability to interpret, evaluate and analyze by providing theoretical concepts and vocational education, on the other hand which communicate skills through highly practical content. Entrepreneurial developments curriculums seem to be specify good relation with Entrepreneurial intention.

Table (7) Mean and standard deviation for students' entrepreneurial intention

	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Mean	Standard Deviation
	FF	&%	FF	&%	FF	%%	FF	%%	FF	&%		
I prefer to work in a well-known tourist establishment rather than starting my own business	335	119.5	56	31	558	32	22	112	110	55.5	22.53	1.08
I prefer to start my own business in tourism field rather than	226	114	446	225	555	330.3	443	223.7	111	66	2.81	1.12

accepting a job even in well-known tourist establishment												
I intent to be an entrepreneur	229	227	550	227	447	226	223	112.4	112	76.6	2.44	1.20

It must be considered that measuring entrepreneurial traits are mainly built on descriptions of how people think, feel, and act in a variety of situations. These indicators of internal causes are interacting with the external factors of a person's experiences and actions. Thus, the intention of establishing a person own business is an effect of this trait with other factors (Brandstätter, 2011)

Table (7) displays a higher entrepreneurial intention within the students throughout the three universities. 45% of the sample is intending to have private business. Some other variables need to be considered such as the structural support of the government, the resource availability such as the capital. However, for the purpose of the current study entrepreneurial intention is presented among tourism students.

5 Conclusions

Previous researches suggested the need for more researches in the field of graduate entrepreneurship especially in the developing world to support more understanding of issues evolving around graduate entrepreneurial intentions and its determinants (Nabi and Linan, 2011).

This study contributes to the slim body of research on the area of tourism entrepreneurial intention. It focused on tourism students, who are regarded as the probable driving force of entrepreneurship (Gruel et al., 2010). It demonstrated the entrepreneurial intention profile of tourism students within three faculties of three different universities in Egypt.

The study objectives have been supported through the empirical study. A strong correlation has been found between entrepreneurial intention and its antecedents such as traits. Among these traits closely associated with entrepreneurial potential are agreeableness, risk taking prosperity, locus of control and innovation. Socio-cultural background of having an entrepreneurial family and social network of entrepreneurs appears to be an important predictor in the entrepreneurial intention of tourism students. Thus it could be argued that a Combination of psychological traits in interaction with socio-cultural background features creates individuals who are more probable contenders to start a business.

The study findings also indicate that education have a slight statistically significant role in affecting entrepreneurial intention of tourism students. While, it exposes strong relation between education and some entrepreneurial traits such as agreeableness r=**.259**** sig. (2-tailed= .000) and risk taking r=**.235****sig. (2-tailed= .001). Thus, it confirms the need to more focus within the Tourism and hospitality education, in Egypt, on entrepreneurial developmental curriculums that encourage students to think and behave more entrepreneurially, at the same time equipping them with the skills to start their own projects after graduation. Although there is no agreement on criteria of entrepreneurship education "universities should, at least, encourage the development of creative ideas for being an entrepreneur provide the necessary knowledge about entrepreneurship and develop the entrepreneurial skills" (Türker and Selçuk, 2009p. 155). Similarly to Gurel et al. (2010), it is agreed that there are many other variables that may influence students' inclination towards setting up their own business. Thus, some explanatory and exploratory studies should be considered what could be done in universities to encourage the entrepreneurial spirit of students.

The results of the study also supports the claim of Sesen (2013) that the relation between personality traits and entrepreneurial intentions is not linear and the findings about the significance of the effects those traits have on entrepreneurial intentions often are contradictory. This has been reflected through the difference found between some of the study results and those of the prior studies.

A number of limitations can be identified throughout the study. First, longitude data could have giving more valid explanation for some variables such as education. Secondly, larger sample including other universities would make the investigation more comparative and generalizable. Lastly, qualitative data in addition to the survey could help providing some more detailed explanation through exploring views and opinions regarding the contextual factors. More researches in the future can overcome the current study limitation.

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THE TOURIST EXPERIENCE OF THE EGYPTIAN SOLO WOMAN TRAVELER: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Lately, many demographic changes have been occurred in the tourism market. Due to these changes various trends in tourism activity have been emerged. One of the most significant trends is the increasing of women travel all around the world for different reasons such as business, leisure, study, shopping and adventure. Recently, in the context of changes which have been occurred in the economic and educational level of women from one hand, the social and cultural changes in the communities from another hand, solo women travelers become an important market segment in the tourism industry.

Presently, there is a growing trend of solo women travelers not only in the western countries but also in the Arabic and Islamic countries .Egypt is an example of Middle East countries that witnesses an increasing number of solo women travelers domestically or internationally. Despite all the demographic changes which create a new profile of the Egyptian women travelers but still, there are various constraints which could impact their decisions to travel and have influence on their tourist experience.

Accordingly, the study is structured as follows; first, it presents the theoretical background; followed by the empirical study. A quantitative approach is adopted in this research, based on questionnairesconducted with the Egyptian solo women travelers who had previous experience in traveling solo .The questionnaire aims to identify the trip characteristics and preferences for the Egyptian solo women travelers. Then the study focuses on exploring their motivations for travelling solo. Besides, it aims to identify the different types of constraints that can impact their decisions to travel and on their tourist experience during the trip.Finally, the study ends with some implications for the marketers, (DMOs), travel agencies and accommodation sector to take them into consideration.

***Key words*: solo women, motivations, tourist experience, constraints, Egyptian solo woman traveler.

INTRODUCTION

Before the Second World War, women's participation in leisure activities was so limited. Since 1945, many changes have been occurred, women have become an effective segment in the labor market, the increasing tendency to reduce the number of children they get, and the impendency of women which motivated them to participate in travel and tourism activities. Consequently, women used to travel and stay outside their homes alone without their children, their partners and away from their daily responsibilities towards their families (Scott, 2002;Marzuki et al., 2012) Since 1980s, tourism literature started to address several researches and topics related to women travel. In the mid of 80s, few companies offered some tourism programs and holidays for women only. Since then,female travel has gained an increasingly importance and many companies and tour operators have paid attention to this segment especially in Canada and US. They started to serve this market segment and provide it with the tourism products they are searching for (Junek et al., 2006).

Solo women segment is a flourishing market in European countries.This trend is growing vastly due to several reasons. ***Firstly,*** the demographic changes, particularly the social and economic aspects around the world which lead to constant growth of solo women market. For example, the shift of family's traditional ideologies such as the increasing trend of late marriage, growing number of singles, controlling the number of children or not having children at all and the noticeable increase in the divorce rate. In addition, the growing participation of women in labor force which improves the financial situation of those women and gives them the power to be more independent. All these circumstances give women various opportunities to travel and enjoy their life. It is obvious, that tourism is considered one of different aspects where women can exercise their social and financial autonomy (Marzuki et al., 2012; Lin and Lehto, 2006)***.Secondly,*** the psychological shift in women expectations which derived from their self esteem, self accomplishment and satisfaction from work and having holidays rather than from having a partner and getting married.(Wilson and Little, 2005).

Although there are many studies that addressed the profile and the travel motivations of solo women travelers (Mehmetoglu, Dann, and Larsen, 2001; Laesser et al., 2009; Fendtand Wilson, 2012; Kulwick, 2014; Bianchi; 2016; Khan et al., 2017) till now there is a lack of studies about the tourist experience of solo women and the travel constraints which may prevent this segment from traveling alone (Yang and Tung 2017). In the case of Egypt, it's obvious that despite the growing trend of outbound tourism - particularly solo women segment- it remains a neglected area of research which should be studied from different perspectives especially within a community like Egypt which is still controlled by some dominant cultural and social ideologies.

In this respect, **the research questions can be summarized as follows:**

1. To what extent the changes in the demographic characteristics of the Egyptian women motivate them to travel solo?
2. What are the main constraints which may affect the travel decision and tourist experience of the Egyptian solo women travelers?

These questions will be answered based on a quantitative approach and a descriptive analysis.

Accordingly,this paper seeks to address three objectives; ***firstly,***developing a demographic profile of the Egyptian solo women travelers, ***secondly***, exploring the motivations of the Egyptian women to travel alone,***thirdly,*** identifying and describing the nature and types of travel constraints that may influence the travel decision and experience of the Egyptian solo women travelers.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Independent Traveler and Solo Traveler

It is important to distinguish between the terms "solo" and "independent" travelers. Independent travelers describes individuals "*who neither travel on a fully inclusive package nor in a group*" (Wilson, 2004, p. 8). They representa growing market segment which has special profile and motivations differentiating them from mass tourist. Independent travelers don't travel in group or on inclusive tours(Gomes and Montenegro, 2016). They have flexibility in planning for the destinations they like to visit, as well as, they have freedom in organizing their tourism program. Thus, they prefer to personalize their tourist experience and book all tourist facilities before trip such as transportation, accommodation and activities(Hyde and Lawson, 2003).

On the other hand, the tourism literature clarifies that "solo travelers" refers to the person who arrives alone to the destination (Yang and Tung 2017). In other words, "solo" refers to the individual status of arrival not the status of traveling (Laesser et al., 2009).Despite solo travelers arrivealone; this doesn't suppose that they will stay alone during their whole trip as it's not possible to prevent them from contacting with local community, persons who provide the services in the tourism industry and other tourists (Wilson, 2004; Yang and Tung 2017). They can contact and build relations with many tourists, so there is a possibility to continue their trip with others. Solo travelers practice freedom and autonomy, flexibility like independent travelers; as a result, they take charge of their programs and activities (Hyde and Lawson, 2003).

Thus,solo travelers can be classified according to two criteria; status of travel and solo preferences. Laesser et al. (2009) stated that there are two main groups of solo travelers; single solo and single group .***Single solo*** is a person whostaysand travels alone, while ***single group*** represents individuals who stay alone, but they can travel in group with others. Furthermore, Yang and Tung (2017) mentioned that solo travelers can be solo by default or by choice. ***Default solo travelers*** don't choose to travel solo; they travel alone as they don't have opportunity to travel with others. On the other hand, ***solo travelers by choice*** represent tourists who decide to travel on their own without any partner.

Overview of Solo Women Travelers

Nowadays, one of the most growing trends in travel and tourism industry is women who travel solo and independently. This trend has been investigated by many researchers (Woodward and Green, 1988;Pain, 1991; Whyte and Shaw, 1994; Bond, 1997; Matthews-Sawyer et al., 2002; Junek,2006; Khoo and Prayag,2015)

Accordingly, tour operators and destination marketing organization realized the importance of this market segment and they started to design tourism products that meet their needs and preferences (Rosenbloom, 2012; Yang and Tung 2017).

Consequently, understanding this segment and its importance becomes an urgent need for tour companies and (DMOs) for two reasons.***Firstly***, many travel reports confirmed that women are responsible for taking 80% of travel decisions (Bond, 2011 cited in Khoo and Prayag, 2015)., this means that they have impressive power than men in thetravel industry whether they are single, married or divorced. ***Secondly,*** the increasing share of women in labor force means that the economic power of women is growing rapidly. Now, they have free time and stable financial resources (Ahokas, 2017), which can motivate them to travel and achieve their goals, which means that there is a possibility to spend money on tourism and their expenses during travel can be an important source of profit and income for the tourism industry (Markuzi et al., 2012;Gomes and Montenegro, 2016).

Many social, economic and political changes have been occurred all around the world. These changes shaped the distinguished characteristics of solo women travelers which created a special profile for this market segment. Laesseret al., (2009) referred that women who are young and well-educated prefer to travel alone compared to other market segments. Thismatches with the results of McNamara and Bruce Prideaux(2010) which confirmed that women who travel solo are mostly young and large part of them either occupy good positions or they are students. Furthermore, they are in the middle or high income category.

Regarding the main source of information they seek, Junek, Binney, and Winn (2006) clarified that the internet is considered the main source of information for solo women travelers as they search for many details while planning for their trips. Also they referred that they are depending mainly on social media in order to gather information such as; TripAdvisor, Facebook, Instagram, Google and YouTube. Recently, they use several apps to plan their trips and meet other travelers or local community (Sengupta, 2012; Kulwicki, 2014)

In terms of accommodation preferences, generally, solo women travelers focus on security and safety, cheap prices and good services while they are searching for accommodation. Therefore, the hotel is the common choice for solo women travelers (Marzukiet al., 2012). Also, they prefer staying in hostels for two reasons; they give them a good opportunity to meet people from different cultures, as well as, they offer shared females rooms with low prices (McNamara and Prideaux2010). Besides, in recent years many western solo females' travelers find that couchsurfing is a good mean of accommodation to save money, meet up with local community and make new friends (Gomes and Montenegro,2016).

Concerning the most visited destinations, solo women travelers are interested in visiting new and exotic destinations (Park, 2014; Sathyanarayanan, 2014).Their choices depend mainly on their marital status.Married solo travelers often prefer traveling to domestic destinations, while single, widow and divorced solo travelers usually select international trips (Kulwicki, 2014).Towns and small cities are the favorite destinations for solo women travelers. They prefer to visit mountains and coastal areas to feel relaxed and get adventure experiences (Ahokas,2017).According to booking.com survey(2014) European countries and Australia are the first destination for international trips for solo women travelers, while Sri Lanka,Costa Rica, Nepal and Laos are the most popular destinations for them in developing countries (Burkhard,2016). On the other hand, the biggest outbound tourism destinations are Europe, UK, Australia, North America, New Zealand , Asia especially south and southeast , China, Singapore and Hong Kong (Bond, 1997; Marzukiet al., 2012).

The Solo Women Travelers' Experience

According to the profile of solo women travelers, it's obvious that they are bold, brave, adventure seekers, and have self- confidence (Ahokas, 2017).

Initially, it's very important to shed light the reasons for traveling solo. Depending on the results of previous researches which addressed the travel purposes for solo women, it's clearly shown that the main reasonsfor travel is pleasure, leisure, relaxation, and doing something for themselves (Wilson and Harris, 2006; Kulwicki, 2014).For example, AARP survey (2014) found that in the last two years, most leisure trips have been taken among the respondents who have more than 45 yearswere solo trips. Due to socio-cultural and economic changes, many solo women travel for educational reasons (Gray and Kerstetter, 2001). As a result of growing contribution of women in labor force, there is an increasing trend of traveling for business, attending conferences, meetings and workshops (Khoo and Prayag, 2015).

A number of studies (McNamara and Prideaux 2010;Ahokas, 2017) have pointed out that the most popular motivations for solo women travel are escape, novelty, fulfilling many things related to one's self and esteem or putting themselves in challenge. Furthermore, Wilson and Little (2005) mentioned that women travel solo as a result of not finding the suitable one to travel with such as a partner or a family member. On the other hand, women can feel enjoyable when they are traveling solo as they have opportunities to meet new people either local residents or other travelers and to plan for their program with sense of freedom and autonomy (Heimtun and Abelsen, 2014).

Tourist experience for solo women travelers is a distinguished experience as they seek meaningful travel. Wilson and Harris (2006) stated that solo women experience depends mainly on exploring and building relationship with new people, independence and self confidence. They have time and money to fulfill their needs and interests. Additionally, their social circumstances give them the power and freedom to take decisions and travel (Brown and Osman, 2017).

Although, the positive impacts of solo travel as mentioned above, it has also some negative impacts as women can feel lonely and afraid from unexpected situations during their travel (Wilson and Little 2005). Heimtun and Abelsen (2014) pointed out that issues related to security and safety is the key challenge for solo women. For example, sexual harassments, attacks of personal safety during trip can influence the destination choices and eliminate them from feeling enjoyable.

Constraints Affecting Solo Women Travelers

The theory of constraints focused on the concept that individuals have needs and free time to participate in leisure and tourism activities but they have specific constraints or obstacles which control their desire and avoid them from participation (Raymore, 2002; Wilson, 2004).Constraints are defined as *"factors thatinhibit people's ability to participate in leisure activities, to spend more time doing so, to take advantage of leisure services, or to achieve a desired level of satisfaction"* (Jackson, 1988, p. 203).

Since 1980s and 1990s most of theresearches have adopted the constraints as obstacles or barriers which can stand between the traveler's desire to travel and the ability to participate and take the action itself (Wilson, 2004).

It is evidently, that constraints are playing an effective role in the tourist experience particularly for women who travel solo (Wilson and Little, 2005).These constraints are mainly related to the gender issue (Wilson, 2004). Several studies revealed that solo women can face many constraints in seeking travel than solo men do (Henderson, 1991; Jackson and Henderson, 1995; Ahokas, 2017).

Constraints that have been addressed in the context of several tourism studies are; constraints of participation in leisure activity, constraints within tourist experience, constraints for niche markets such as tourists with disabilities, seniors , constraints in practicing insome tourist activities such as skiing, tourist activities related to nature , and constraints of visiting museums (Wilson and Little, 2005).

Some other researchers focused on classifying constraints according to their nature and types (Jackson, 1988; Wilson, 2004).Thus, there are various classification models of constraints. One of the most basic and initial model is the model which differentiates between "internal" and "external" constraints. Internal constraints relate to the personal characteristics which focus on knowledge, interests, and attitudes. External constraints involve the surrounding environmental characteristics of people such as; lack of facilities, money and time (Yang and Tung, 2017).

Crawford and Godbey (1987) proposed another model which is considered as the most common classification of constraints. It distinguishes between three types of constraints; "Interpersonal", "Intrapersonal" and "Structural". Interpersonal constraints focus on the relations between theperson and society such as impacts of family, partner or friends. Intrapersonal constraints relate to the person's attitudes and psychological attributes that could prevent individual's participation in thetourism activity such as fears, worries concerning safety and lack of self-confidence. Structural constraints stem from demographic and physical determinants which eliminate theperson from participation in leisure and tourism activities such as; age, life stage, transportation, weather, as well as, insufficient of time and money.Yang and Tung (2017) referred that structural constraints are the most popular constraints which affect the tourist behavior.

With regard to the constraints which prevent solo women from traveling, some previous studies (Wilson, 2004; Wilson and Little, 2005) referred that the constraints are changing according to the stage of travel. This means that constraints have impacts on the women's travel decision (pre- trip); these constraints relate to women's daily lives. Furthermore, there is another set of constraints (in-situ constraints) which affect the women's tourist experience (during trip) at tourism destinations. In other words, solo women travelers experience different constraints according to their age or their social condition(Wilson, 2004). In this context, this study adopts a model of constraints which depends on four main grouped themes; "socio-cultural," "personal", “practical," and "spatial". These constraints are aligned to the previous model which proposed by Crawford and Godbey (1987).

"Socio-cultural" constraints derive from the social environment and cultural norms that women live. For example, the constraints which relate to women's responsibilities and their roles within the family, as well as, expectations of society have effects before travel, while the perceptions of others towards their solo travel, unwanted attention and the attitudes of host community towards solo females during trip have an influence on tourist experience. The second theme is "personal constraints", which are mainly related to socio-cultural constraints.Theyfocus on women's feelings, emotions, values, perceptions and attitudes. For example, sense of weakness, self doubts and fears can impact women's travel decision, as well as,can avoid women from participation in some activities during the trip. Besides, the feeling of isolation and loneliness represents a constraint for solo women at destinations. The third theme is "practical constraints", which include the challenges, and obstacles that can face solo women before trip such as insufficient of financial resources and lack of time to travel, as well as, feeling tired and stressful from traveling alone and shortage of knowledge and language barrier during trip. The last theme is "spatial constraints", which are strongly associated with practical constraints. These geographical constraints can limit the solo women's choice of their destinations before trip. In addition, they can control women's movements and freedom at destinations (Wilson, 2004; Wilson and Little 2005;McNamara and Prideaux 2010; Heimtun and Abelsen 2014; Ahokas,2017).

Egyptian Solo Women Travelers as an Emerging Outbound Market

Several researches addressed the inbound tourism which is representing the backbone of the Egyptian economy. Till now, there is a noticeable shortage in studies which haveaddressed the trends, motivations and preferences of outbound tourism market in Egypt. Thus, this paper focused on this market especially the females who travel solo.

Sengupta (2012) gave an overview about the Middle East outbound tourism.He confirmed that the most visited destinations of theMiddle East outbound tourism as a whole are; Saudi Arabia, AUE, Jordan, Kuwait, Tunisia, Turkey, European countries such as, Greece, France, Italy, Spain, as well as,theUnited Kingdom, Asian countries such as Thailand, Malaysia and China. He added that theMiddle East market is distinguished by thelong stay holiday and customized itinerary. In addition, this market depends mainly on the internet particularly social media websites for example, Facebook and Youtube in planning their trips. Also, the Middle East outbound tourists prefer city tourism, leisure tourism, especially beaches and theme parks, shopping trips, as well as, there is a growing trend of adventure and health tourism.

In fact, the trend of outbound tourism market in Egypt is not much different from the trend of the Middle East outbound tourism as a whole. Indeed, the political circumstances and the unrest situation in Egypt lead to continuous growth in outbound in tourism (Timetric, 2014). According to (UNWTO), the number of outbound tourists from Egypt is expected to increase in 2020. For instances; the total number of Egyptian outbound tourists is estimated at about 1.1 million in 2000 and 1 .854 million in 2013 (OECD, 2016). Furthermore, the Egyptian tourism expenditure in other countries increased from 1,382 million US dollars in 1996 to 3,636 million US dollars in 2015(UNWTO).This means there is an increasing trend of this market.

The main purposes of outbound tourists from Egypt are leisure, business, visiting friends and relatives, religious, medical tourism as well as other purposes (Timetric, 2014).As a result of the unique geographical location of Egypt, as well as, Egypt's proximity, it can be said that the other Middle East, North African and Mediterranean destinations are the most visited destinations by theEgyptian travelers. They can arrive easily to theEuropean and Mediterranean destinations through short-haul and low cost flights. There is an increasing proportion of Egyptian travelers who are visiting France (Market Vision, 2002), Italy, Spain, Germany, Greece, and Turkey for holiday and for other purposes. Additionally, there is an emerging trend of the Egyptian travelers who visit Eastern European and south East Asian countries (OECD, 2016).

Although, the shortage of statistics about outbound tourism in Egypt, their demographic characteristics, their preferences and attitudes in travel, the previous overall view can be an evident of the growing trend of this market which needs further researches.

With regards to the Egyptian cultural customs and traditions, it's so clear that the Egyptian society gives special advantages and rights to men rather than women (Gadami, 2012; Brown and Osman, 2017).This may create lack of equality based on gender in thedaily life. In theEgyptian society, women have less value than men (Goldschmidt, 2004); as a result, Egyptian female tourists are facing many challenges and obstacles related to the attitudes and the behaviors in the Egyptian social system which is dominated by men (Brown and Osman, 2017).

On the other hand, recently many socio-cultural demographic changes have occurred in the world and in Egypt specifically. These changes have various influences on the Egyptian women; Firstly, the increasing number of females in Egypt 48,366,813 million which represents (49.8%) of the total population of Egypt (Country meters, 2018). Secondly, the improving of the educational level of the Egyptian women.In 2016 around 16 million (37%) of the total females are graduates and post-graduates. For example in 2015 (47%) of the total population are females who are holding Master's and PhD(CAPMAS, 2015).Thirdly, there is an improvement of the proportion of Egyptian women in the labor market. In 2015, (26%) of the total workforce who are between(16-46 years old) in Egypt are women(UNFPA and National population Council,2016).Fourthly , rise in the average age of marriage in Egypt 2015(24 years) while in the world the average age at of marriage is 30 years(World Bank,2015).According to CAMPAS (2015) there is a growing rate of unmarried females in Egypt for example; in 2017 approximately 4.7 million female who areparticularly between 35-40 years old are unmarried. Additionally, in 2017 the divorce rate increased by 15% in Egypt compared to 2016(CAMPAS, 2017).Finally, there is a noticeable shift in traditional ideologies of the family concerning marriage and having children. It can be said that all these changes together create more opportunities to the Egyptian women to take their decision to travel independently.

METHODOLOGY

A quantitative approach was employed in this research to collect data as it is the most appropriate approach to the research subject. A questionnaire was conducted to realize the study objectives and to answer the research questions. A total of 559 questionnaires were carried out with Egyptian solo women travelers who had had solo travel experience either domestic or international. The questionnaire was sent online through Egyptian travel groups and pages on social media. 35 questionnaires were excluded as the respondents had no previous solo travel experience so; the total research sample was 524 valid questionnairesfor analysis. The response rate is 93.7%.

Initially, the questionnaire was divided into four main sections in order to explore the tourist experience of the Egyptian solo women travelers. The first section is about trip characteristics. It consisted of 11 questions about previous solo travel experience, the kind of solo travel, the type of trips, the destinations they visited before, the way of planning their trips, the main sources of information especially the internet sources, the type of accommodation and airlines which they prefer.

The second section involved three questions related to travel motivations. It included the main reason to travel in general, the reasons for choosing to travel solo and the motivations for that.
The third section consisted of two questions about the travel constraints which had impacts on the travel decision before and during the trip. These constraints were classified into four main groups the socio-cultural constraints, personal constraints, practical and spatial constraints.

Finally, the last section is socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents which compromised of five questions including age, occupation, marital status, educational level and income.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Regarding the demographic characteristics: the results revealed that the majority of the respondents' age ranged between 18-30 years,representing (80.2%) of the sample, then (19.8%) covered a wide range of ages between 31- 60 years.Aapproximately (61.8%) were university graduates, while (35.3%) obtained PhD or master degrees, and only (2.9%) of the respondents were high school graduates. With regard to the marital status, the majority of respondents were single (69.7%), while (32.9%) were married and the remaining percentage of(6%) was divorced.

Regarding the occupation of the respondents,(61.5%) were employed and holding good positions in different fields including (medical field, engineering, banking, administration, media, marketing, teaching and tourism), while (30.7%) were students and the remaining percentages of (4.8%) and (3.1%) were unemployed and retired respectively. Also, the results showed that the majority of the respondents (77.1%) get a moderate monthly income that ranges between 1000 -6000 EGP, while (22.9%) get more than 6000 EGP per month.

These results are aligned with what was presented previously in Laesser, Beritelli, and Bieger (2009);McNamara and Prideaux (2010) studies indicated that solo women travelers are young, well-educated, occupied good positions and they get medium or high monthly income.

With regard to the trip characteristics of the Egyptian solo women travelers, the results showed that the majority of the respondents (93.7%) had previous solo travel experience, while (6.3%) hadn't any experience of traveling solo before. As a result, the study excluded those questionnaires from the study sample in order to continue the next sections and get accurate results. The majority of the sample (51.7%) preferred to travel as single solo travelers, while (48.3%) preferred to travel as asingle group.

This result is supported by Laesser et al., (2009) who mentioned that there are two main types of solo travelers (single solo and single group).

Furthermore, the results mentioned that (82.3%) of the Egyptian solo women travelers preferred to travel to international destinations and few of them (17.7%) preferred to visit domestic destinations inside Egypt. This proves the growing trend of the Egyptian outbound tourism.

This result is in line with the study of Kulwicki(2014) that indicated that the international destinations are the most favorite destinations for single and divorced women and the domestic destinations are the most popular destinations for married women.

The findings revealed that the Egyptian solo women travelers who filled out the questionnaire traveled to many cities and countries domestically or internationally. (48.7%) of the study sample visited cities inside Egypt such as; Sharm El Sheikh , Hurghada, Dahab Luxor , Aswan , Nubia , the Oases , the North Coast , Matrouh , Fayoum , El Sokhna and Rashid, while the majority of the respondents (69.7%) visited western and eastern European countries such as; Spain, France, Italy , Netherland, Germany, Belgium, Romania, Turkey, Greece, Georgia, Russia and Poland . Furthermore (20%) of the women visited USA, as well as, (13%) of the respondents traveled to Arab and North African countries such as Morocco, Tunis, Algeria, Dubai, Saudi Arabia, and Lebanon.Finally, there is an emerging trend among the Egyptian solo women travelers to visit Asian and African countries (9%) and (2%) respectively.

This result matches with OECD (2016) which showed the overall trends of the Egyptian outbound tourism and stated the most visited destinations which are European countries and the Mediterranean destinations due to the geographical location .Besides; there is a considerable demand to visit south East Asian countries.

Concerning the favorable time of the year to travel; most of the study sample (68.3%) mentioned that their trips depend mainly on their vacation as most of them are working, while (24.8%) of the respondents plan usually to travel in low season to get low prices and only few of them (6.9%) preferto travel in high season.

In terms of the way of planning the trip, the majority of respondents (76%) confirmed that they plan their owntrips, whereas (24%) mentioned that they dependon travel agencies to plan their trips.

Regarding the main source on which they depend to get information, approximately (80.2%) of the study sample depends mainly on the internet as a source to get information while planning their trips. Furthermore (13.9%) mentioned that their friends and families are their main source of information. Additionally, the majority of the sample stated that they depend mainly onGoogle and Booking (61.1%) (57.4%) respectively, followed by Facebook (46.0%),Tripadvisor (39.3%), Youtube (32.1%) and Airbnb (28.2%).

This is consistent with the study of Junek et al., (2006) and Kulwicki (2014) which clarified that the internet is considered the main source of information for solo women travelers, especially through social media such as TripAdvisor, Facebook, Instagram, Google and YouTube.

Concerning the accommodation that Egyptian solo women travelers prefer, the majority of them mentioned that the type of accommodation depends mainly on the destination that will visit (domestically or internationally).

The results revealed that (39.1%) of the respondents usually stay at hotels, while (31.5%) mentioned that they prefer to stay at hostels, (27.1%)and (18.7%) stated that they prefer to stay at bed and breakfast hotels and pension respectively. In addition, (15.6%) of the respondents like to stay with local community through couch surfing, especially in foreign countries, while (12.8%) of the women stated that they prefer to stay at friends/family home.

This is in line with the study of McNamara and Prideaux (2010) and Marzuki et al, (2012) which indicate that hotels, hostels are the most favorable means of accommodation for solo women travelers. Additionally, there is an emerging trend to use couchsurfing form Egyptian solo women travelers and this is aligned with Gomes and Montenegro (2016) study who mentioned that there is an increasing trend to use couschsurfing especially among western women.

Regarding the Airlines preferences, a large proportion of Egyptian solo women travelers(53.6%) declared that they prefer low cost carriers according to their prices , while (27.1%) of them mentioned that they usually book their tickets through international airlines whereas(19.3%) of the respondents prefer the national airlines.

Concerning the travel motivations, the results revealed that the main reason for travel, (67.7%) of the study sample confirmed that leisure is the main reason fortravel, while (29.4%) mentioned that they travel in order to study abroad or to getscholarship. Moreover, (18.1%) of the respondents travel for business or in order to attend a meeting or aconference. Finally, (15.3%) and(5.7%) stated that they travel to visit friends and relatives and for shopping respectively.

This is aligned with the opinion of McNamara and Prideaux (2010) and Brown and Osman (2017)who emphasized that the most important reasons of women travelers are taking rest, self development, business, studying, visiting friends and relatives and shopping.

Furthermore, (61.3%) of Egyptian solo women travelers stated that getting away from pressures and responsibilities is the primary motivation to travel solo, while (57.3%) of them clarified that meeting new people and experience different cultures and ways of life are their motivations for travel solo. Additionally, (51.1%) of the respondents confirmed that fulfilling a dream of visiting a place they have always wanted to visit is the motivation to travel solo. Additionally, (46%) of the study sample indicated that taking rest form daily life routine and relaxing is their motivation for solo travel, while (45%) mentioned that they travel solo to learn something new, followed by (42.7%) mentioned that they travel alone to develop a feeling of autonomy and independence.This is consistent with the studies of Wilson and Little (2008) and Kulwicki (2014) which addressed the different motivations which push women to travel solo.

Also, the results revealed that (53.2%) of the Egyptian solo women travel solo to try and live this experience from thevarious aspects, while (32.1%) of thewomen confirmed that they chose to travel solo as they don’t find anyone (friend, partner, or family member) to travel with , so they decideto travel solo. Additionally, (15.6%) of the respondents mentioned that they feel enjoyable when they travel alone, while (11.8%) clarified that sometimes they feel uncomfortable with those who accompany them ,thus, its better from their point of view to travel solo.These findings are parallel to those identified by Wilson and Little (2008);Heimtun and Abelsen (2014).

Regarding the constraints , the results clarified that among all the constraints which have impacts on Egyptian solo women travelers before trip, the practical constraints especially the financial limitations (46.8%) have the strongest influence on their travel choices.Furthermore,(42.9%) stated that finding compatible travel companions is the socio-cultural constraint which has influence on them. Besides, (40.1%) of the respondents identified doubts and fears as personal constraints have impact on their travel choices. On the other hand, the results showed that negotiating travel plans with family and partner as well as, refusing traveling in mixed groups as personal constraints (18.7%),have the lowest influence on the travel choices of the Egyptian solo women travelers' A recent study of Wilson and Little (2005) supports this finding

With regard to the constraints that have influence on the Egyptian solo women travelers during trip, the results identified that the personal constraint particularly the feeling of loneliness and isolation (61.1%) proved to be the most dominant personal constraint during the trip. Whereas, (58.2%) of the respondents mentioned the lack of knowledge of the destination foreign language, as the second practical constraint which has an influence on their tourist experience. Also, (40.8%) of the study sample reported that the spatial constraint could restrict their movement in tourist destinations and their feeling of freedom and safety which has aneffect on their tourist experience. On the other hand, the results indicated that difficulties to communicate with others during the trip (17.9%) as a practical constraint, has the lowest influence on the tourist experience of Egyptian solo women travelers during trip.

Generally, it can be said that socio- cultural and practical constraints are the most dominant on the women's travel decision. This means that the ideologies related to the family, the women responsibilities and the social attitudes towards solo women travelers are still playing a significant role in the Egyptian society despite the shifts which happened lately. In addition, the lack of money as a practical constraint has a strong impact on women's travel decision (Figure 1).

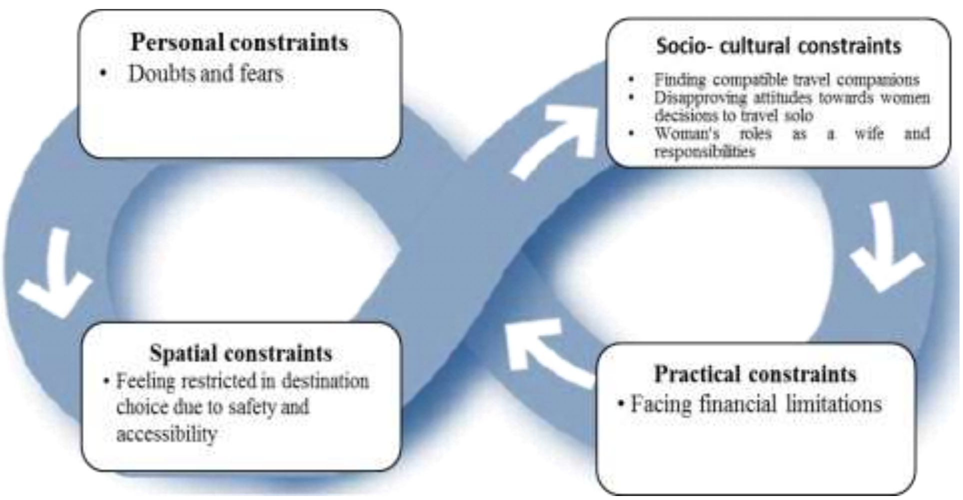

Figure (1): Constraints facing the Egyptian solo women travelers pre-trip
Source: The Researcher

On the other hand, the personal and practical constraints have the strongest impacts on the tourist experience of the Egyptian solo women travelers at the destinations. Mostly, these constraints are associated with the women's feelings of loneliness and isolation, as well as, fears and sense of safety during trip (Figure 2).

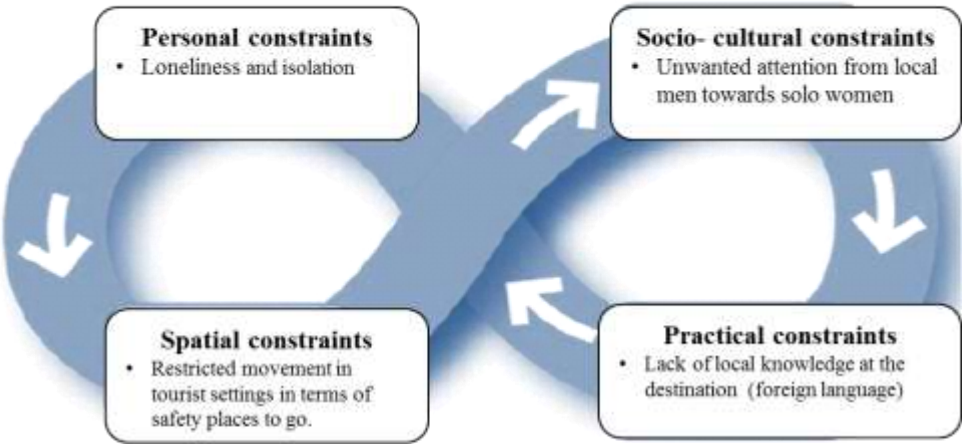

Figure (2): Constraints facing Egyptian solo women travelers during-trip
Source: The Researcher

Finally, according to the previous findings, it is evidently clear that the four categories of constraints are interacting together and in fact, it's not easy to identify one constraint as the only influencer on the travel decision or tourist experience of the Egyptian solo women.

Ultimately,from previous results and discussion it is obvious that the research questions have been answered and proven. The demographic shifts in the Egyptian women profile have a significant effect on their travel behavior,and their travel decisions. Although these noticeable changes, some constraints - particularly the socio- cultural constraints as well as,thepractical constraints- still exist and could limit their ability to take the travel decision and also can impact their tourist experiences during travel.

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CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper is can be considered the first contribution to the literature exploring the tourist experience of the Egyptian solo women from the motivation and constraints aspects.

The literature review section clarified the differences between independent and solo travelers, and then identified the solo traveler's types .Furthermore; it presented an overview of solo women travelers; including their demographic characteristics, preferences, and motivations to travel solo. Finally, the study addressed the different models of travel constrains.

Additionally, the literature review confirmed that some of study results have been justified in previous researches. For example, the demographic characteristics of the Egyptian solo women travelers match with those identified by previous studies.

Accordingly, the results of this study strengthened the emerging trend of the Egyptian outbound tourism market particularly solo women travelers. In addition, the results showed that although the Egyptian solo women travelers are challenged by a wide range of constraints prior to travel and during their tourist experience at destinations this didn’t prevent them from traveling solo.

The most prevalent constraints which have effect on the travel decision of the Egyptian solo women are the practical and socio- cultural constraints which are related to the Egyptian women's roles and responsibilities in the family and the shortage in the financial resources to travel. On the other hand, the personal and practical constraints have the strongest influence during the trip itself. The feelings of loneliness, fears and lack of security are still the crucial issues for the Egyptian women at tourism destinations.

This paper can be considered a starting point for further researches on travel's constraints specifically family constraints which can affect the Egyptian women travel's decision. Further research should take these findings in considerations and conduct a comparative study of this market in Egypt and other Middle East destinations. Moreover, the study can be found useful for marketers,destination management organizations,tour operators, travel agencies and accommodation sector. Based on the results obtained, the study raises the following recommendations.

Firstly recommendations for marketers and destination management organizations: they should benefit from the research findings to adopt and implement effective marketing strategies in order to attract them especially to domestic destinations instead of international destinations. This will reduce the leakages of hard currency from Egypt through outbound tourism, as well as,promote domestic tourism. Furthermore, they should emphasize the role of social media in marketing campaigns and sharing photos, video and blogs about the Egyptian tourist destinations as safe destinations to encourage domestic tourism particularly the Egyptian solo women travelers. Also, they should organize interactive programs between Egyptian solo women travelers and foreign solo women travelers to exchange positive tourist experiences about their solo trips and to learn more about other cultures. This can improve the confidence of women who travel solo for first time and minimize the constraints that can face them.

Secondly recommendations for tour operators and travel agencies: they should organize suitable programs and activities for solo women that will improve their tourist experience to promote domestic tourism in Egypt. So, it's very important to enhance the concept of tourist experience instead of tourism products. In this context, the travel agencies should create themed itineraries such as soft adventure trips and culinary trips. In addition, the airlines should encourage domestic tourism by reducing the prices of domestic flight and providing real competitive prices. They can benefit from the results of this study to understand the preferences and needs of the Egyptian solo women travelers and their needs. There is a necessity to issue a guidebook of solo travel trips, tourist experiences, activities, travel tales advices for the females traveling solo. This can mitigate the women's fears and constraints.

Finally recommendations for accommodation sector: it is important to specify separate floors inside hotels for women only and providing them with all tourist facilities needed especially for women such as private beaches and swimming pools.Also, there is an urgent need to improve the quality of service and facilities in hostels in Egypt to be able to host the solo women travelers and provide them with females' rooms.

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