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TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Role of Emotional Intelligence in the Working Groups and the Empowerment of Human Resources in Business

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Abstract

Nowadays, companies recognize the fact that their human resources, should be efficient and should have social skills. Businesses are looking for working groups that are characterized by cohesion, efficiency and a high level of social intelligence. The harmony between its members and their interpersonal skills is very important for the team of a company as then its members can present their talents and use them for the benefit of the company. Emotional intelligence is a skill of the individual that contributes to his superiority, a fact that is also found in working groups. This paper is a review about the functioning of working groups in business and the role of emotional intelligence in this process. Also, the success of a work group is examined if it is related to the team emotional intelligence and its development in the workplace.

Keywords*:* business, human resources, work teams, emotional intelligence, team emotional intelligence

Introduction

An important requirement for any business is finding a high performing team. Man since prehistoric times still lived and acted in groups, a fact that significantly helped the survival of the human species. This particular and complex ability of collaboration is nowadays a topic of intense concern in modern organizations (Goleman, 2011). Some scholars of human evolution believe that when our ancestors began to organize themselves into groups and hunt for survival, social coordination greatly helped to achieve this goal. The basic skills for the survival of the human species were transmitted to children until the age of fifteen, since then the human brain matures anatomically. Surviving in a social environment helped the development of man's skills on a mental level as well (Jolly, 1966).

Human survival is due to the "team", whose members make it up and who cooperate in various daily processes for the purpose of survival, such as searching for food, neutralizing predators,

raising children. Darwin had recognized that those groups of people whose members cooperate with each other, for the purpose of the common good, make their survival easier and with more offspring. On the contrary, people who live outside the group or with groups that are made up of members who only take care of themselves have difficulties in their survival (Goleman, 2011).
The present has been bequeathed from the past the "radar" for friendliness and willingness to cooperate, a characteristic that most people possess. Each person prefers to associate with people who have these characteristics rather than with people who are characterized by selfishness or untrustworthiness (Bower, 1995). Also, another human characteristic that is due to the past is an important anatomical development of the most superficial layers of the brain, specifically the neocortex , which enable humans to think and, by extension, to have the need for communication and coexistence with other people. To be able to function in a coordinated group, whether it is a group of primitive people or a working group of an organization, the person needs a high level of social intelligence, and in particular skills are required in managing relationships and the ability to "read" others (Cummins, 1997).

The cooperation of the Business Working Groups and its advantages

In modern businesses, and especially scientific ones, the achievements they achieve are the result of collective work. Coordinated and team efforts bring positive results for a business and it has been observed that people, a large part of the knowledge they possess about the subject of their work has been learned from others or in the process of working together with others. However, in order to achieve such a result, the person who belongs to a group within a workplace should have the ability to join it, which requires social intelligence and not only subject knowledge. As has been mentioned above in the field of business administration, to be able to perceive and "read" the human environment in which one works is a great advantage. Team dynamics play an important role in the smooth and successful operation of a business. It is important to have the ideal combination of personalities within a group in order to achieve the goal that has been set and to have communication between its members and the creation of shared experiences (Goleman , 2011).
Nowadays, in the workplace, each person possesses the knowledge, information and experience only for the subject of work with which he is engaged. This has led to a reliance on the mind of groups as we look to the group to gain knowledge, information and expertise. Gardener (1993) notes that the individual's intelligence is not limited to himself but extends, specifically in addition to the means that the individual uses in his work such as the computer and databases, he also relies on the network of colleagues, partners inside and outside the company and anyone else he may contact.
The mind of a group can be more intelligent than the mind of an individual, but the presence of emotional intelligence is also particularly important. The idea of group intelligence quotient has been developed from Wendy M. Williams and Robert J. Sternberg in 1988. In a study they carried out on the IQ of a group, it was shown that for the success of a group, two factors play an important role, the compatibility between the members of the group and interpersonal skills. They also

concluded that individuals who lacked social skills and were unable to tune in to the environment and the emotions of other members were a barrier to group success, particularly when those individuals could not successfully communicate or resolve differences. It is important for a team to have at least one member with a high Intelligence Quotient (IQ), but it is not enough, as the team members should also match each other on other levels. In a group, there can be the case of the "worker beaver", which concerns the person who wants to control all the members of the group, with a strong despotic character, not allowing and not giving "space" to the others to contribute (Goleman, 2011).

A factor that plays an important role in the performance of a team, as well as in the performance of an individual, is motivation as if the members of a team were interested in its goals then they would exert more effort resulting in a better result. The performance of a group is safer to be predicted on the basis of its social cohesion and effectiveness than on the individual IQs of its members. When harmony prevails inside a group then the personal talents of each member find the "space" to appear and be used as best as possible and to the maximum extent (Goleman, 2011).

In a study conducted on sixty work groups of a large American company active in the field of financial services, they demonstrated many factors which to some extent influenced the degree of effectiveness of the groups. But the factor that had the greatest weight in relation to the effectiveness of the groups was the human factor, specifically the way the members of a group interacted with each other and with those outside the group (Campion et al., 1996).

Those individuals who show the greatest performance within a working group have abilities that come from the main gifts that man has for harmonizing with his social environment. Table 1 shows three basic human abilities that, in the case of the person who possesses them to a developed degree, also show excellent performance within a group (Goleman, 2011):

Table 1: Human Skills related to individual success in a work group

- CREATE LINKS-
<u>Cultivating functional relationships</u>
People with this ability:
* They cultivate and maintain large, informal networks of relationships
* They seek relationships that are mutually beneficial
* They create bonds and have good and continuous communication with others
* They establish and maintain personal friendships with their colleagues and partners

-COOPERATION AND TEAMWORK-
Working with others toward common goals
People with this ability:

1. They balance a focus on work with attention to relationships
2. They collaborate by sharing plans, information and knowledge sources with others
3. They promote a friendly atmosphere of cooperation
4. They identify and nurture opportunities for collaboration

-TEAM SKILLS-
Cultivating a spirit of cooperation in the team to achieve collective goals

People with this ability

- They have team skills such as respect, willingness to help and cooperation
- All members are encouraged to active, enthusiastic participation
- They cultivate in the team a sense of identity, team spirit and commitment
- They protect the team and its reputation, share the praise with others

Source: Goleman, 2011: 298, 305, 312

Emotional intelligence is the element that contributes to the superiority of the individual and the same happens in groups. Other factors such as experience and intelligence play an important role in a team's success but they are not the factors that will lead a team to distinction. When a group has to make a decision, various issues arise related to the emotional intelligence of the group members. In particular, it has been observed that when a management group is called upon to make a decision and this group consists of people who possess three elements such as expertise, high cognitive abilities and the ability to see from different sides then it is very likely that the results will be very positively. But it is not enough that team members possess these characteristics but they should also be receptive to healthy interaction through open dialogue in the team so that suggestions and opinions of all members are critically examined. It is important to emphasize that in a working group achieving honesty from all team members is a particularly intense emotional issue. That is, if on the one hand all the members of the group quickly come to an agreement then there is a chance that the decision they will make is not the right one, while on the other hand if there are many disagreements then a break in the group can be caused. Having emotional intelligence is the "key" for a management team to be able to disagree, but the outcome of that dialogue is to find the team strongly united. The cohesion of a group and the transformation of a healthy disagreement into aggression are threatened when disagreements are transferred to a personal level, when a member of the group creates an aggressive atmosphere, or when a specific policy of manipulation exists. The conclusion is the handling of a disagreement within the work group depends on the fact, if its members possess emotional skills such as self-awareness, communication and empathy then it will be for the benefit of the group and if not then it will bring about negative results and rift between the members (Goleman, 2011).

High-performing working groups in most cases have at least one member with the ability to promote good cooperation among group members and is valued as a gift. People who possess this skill are especially valuable when the working group has to handle a complex project. Charismatic leaders manage to inspire the members of a group to strive towards a common goal and keep it together even when they experience setbacks. When a leader expresses his opinion first to his team about making a decision, then the rest of the team submits fewer ideas. On the contrary, when the leader of a group does not express his opinion from the beginning in order to impose it and simply helps the group in the process of making a decision and expresses it at the end then the decision that will be made will be better (Anderson & Balzer, 1991). In the case of self-managed teams in a study carried out in a large American company that provided services, it was found that the self-managed teams included in its workforce when they received suggestions or advice from their superiors then the results were not so good (Cohen et al, 1996). In many cases of self-managed groups, it was observed that those who did not have a supervisor performed better in their work than those who did (Beekun, 1989).

The characteristics of a successful Business Team

Daniel Goleman (2011) refers to the dynamics of a team, which when working at a feverish pace, is in a state of creativity to the point of surpassing itself as a "flow state". The characteristics of a working group that is in a state of flux are (Goleman, 2011: 328-329):

- *Strong group loyalty:* When group members have emotional bonds and interest in each other.
- *Trust and unselfish cooperation:* The members of a successful team are dominated by the feeling that they can rely on each other. In this case one person helps the other in his work and there is no self-centeredness.
- *Wide variety of talent:* A team is flexible and produces positive results when it is composed of people who possess a wide range of abilities. These different abilities extend from a technical level to the abilities that require emotional intelligence.
- *Focus and passion:* When a team focuses on a big goal that is demanding, then the rest of its members' lives are put on the sidelines in front of such challenge.
- *View a formidable challenge or a superior mission.* When a group works for an ultimate purpose that promotes its ideals and does not serve materialistic purposes.
- *Really fun and satisfying work.* When team members work with such intensity towards a goal that gives them satisfaction and the belief that they are part of a great success.

For the success of a group, some skills and abilities that may be possessed by its members are important such as persuasion, promoting cooperation, seeking contact, reaching consensus and finally a skill that is an important factor for the successful functioning of a group, empathy. Empathy, also in the case of groups, is a sign of emotional intelligence that promotes understanding and mutual help among members. When someone empathizes others, he can understand their way of acting and thinking and it is easier to cultivate personal relationships with them that lead to a better collaboration (Goleman, 2011).

Vanessa Urch Druskat and Steven B. Wolff developed the theory of Team Emotional Intelligence (TEI, previously called Group Emotional Intelligence – GEI) (Druskat & Wolff, 2001a, 2001b, Wolff, Druskat, Koman, & Messer, 2006). Team intelligence is the result of behavioral patterns or norms created during the performance of the task assigned to the group. Team Emotional Intelligence reflects the group's ability to develop a system of norms on which to frame emotional experience in a constructive way. Team emotional intelligence is structured at the group level and there is a difference with the individual emotional intelligence of the individuals who make up the group. Table 2 shows the nine rules that make up a team's emotional intelligence (the norm names were changed in 2017 and the table represent the old and new names). These rules direct the interaction of members within a group at the individual level, at the group level and finally outside the group. At these three levels there are rules that direct, so that the emotion in the group is perceived as well as the rules that direct its behavior (Vaxevanidou & Rekleitis, 2019; GEI Partners, 2017).

Table 2: Team Emotional Intelligence Norms

3 LEVELS	***6 DIMENSIONS***	***9 NORMS (OLD)***	***9 NORMS (NEW)***
INDIVIDUAL	- Team awareness of members - Team management of members	- Interpersonal understanding - Confronting members who break norms - Caring behavior	• Understand team members • Address unacceptable behavior • Demonstrate Caring
TEAM	- Team self-awareness - Team self-management	- Team self-evaluation - Creating resources for working with emotion - Creating an affirmative environment - Proactive problem solving	- Review the Team - Support Expression - Build Optimism - Solve problems proactively

CROSS-BOUNDARY (EXTERNAL)	[1] Team social awareness [2] Team management of external relationships	- Organizational understanding - Building external relationships	- Understand Team Context - Build External Relations

Source: GEI Partners, 2017:1

The development of Emotional Intelligence in business

Kannaiah and Shanthi (2015) support the fact that the development of emotional intelligence and its abilities can be developed . They do not agree with the opinion of some researchers that emotional intelligence is an ability that a person is born with, otherwise he cannot acquire it in some way. Also, Goleman (2011) supports the fact that emotional abilities can be cultivated by following the right method, unlike IQ, Emotional Intelligence (EI) has the potential to improve as a person grows older. IQ in a person's life usually remains at the same level, unlike Emotional Intelligence it can be acquired and developed as time passes. As far as the two sexes are concerned, they can develop their emotional capacity to the same degree without being affected by the level they start at. However, a person may possess high emotional intelligence without necessarily having trained or mastered the emotional skills that are considered important for the workplace (Goleman 2011).

The development of emotional intelligence is a more complex process than technical training as it is a different case for the person to receive intellectual learning than to change behavior, so the training methods for each case are different. In the case of the person who seeks to acquire mental abilities, the educational process in a classroom is the appropriate way, as the theoretical approach to a subject and studying it once may be enough for one to learn it. Schooling is a process of accumulating knowledge and information. However, in the event that a person wishes to change behavior, then experientially he can achieve it, but it is a process that requires time and practice. In the case of learning an emotional skill, the individual's old habits should be abandoned and feedback from the experiences of the environment should take place, not just adding new information. A prerequisite for the cultivation of emotional intelligence is that the person can perceive and understand the basic rules that apply to behavior change. Otherwise, the effort to cultivate the emotional capacity will fail, which will cost the company time and money (Goleman, 2011). The studies that have been carried out on training for the development of emotional intelligence began to be carried out some years ago and there are examples that this training can be particularly useful and particularly for the development of groups (Vaxevanidou & Rekleitis, 2019).

Conclusion

The teams in a company are its operational base, their orderly and successful operation determines the success of the company itself. A particularly important characteristic of a working group that manages to work and carry out the tasks assigned to it successfully is that the personalities of its members create the ideal combination to achieve the best communication and harmonious cooperation between them. The person who belongs to a working group and has emotional intelligence possesses a set of abilities that contribute to a positive degree for the person himself and for the work group he participates in. The emotional intelligence of each person who is a member of a working group operates at a personal level and differs from team emotional intelligence which is formed at the group level. Emotional Intelligence of a team presents the capacity of self-awareness and self-management possessed by a working group and to what extent. A high level of group emotional intelligence results in a constructive functioning of the group even when there are disagreements among its members.

We therefore conclude from the above, that working group with high emotional intelligence have the ability to manage in a better way the emotional challenges and issues that appear between its members during their collaboration. Also, working teams with high emotional intelligence have the ability for their members to communicate successfully, develop trust among themselves, and manage conflict. Finally, it is very important for the management and human resources management of a company to develop human resources skills in order to strengthen the emotional intelligence of each employee and by extension the group emotional intelligence as this fact creates conditions for improving performance of the members of a group and the achievement of its goals. A working group with team emotional intelligence is able to create an efficient and healthy working environment, a requirement for any business that wants a successful operation lasting over time and the possibility of further growth of its turnover.

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RELIGIOUS TOURISM - PROPOSALS AND PERSPECTIVES

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ABSTRACT

Greece as a place is famous for its tangible and intangible cultural heritage, which is a reason to visit for many of the travelers who choose it as a destination. One of the reasons to organize a visit is also religious tourism in places where there are ancient temples, Byzantine and modern churches, monasteries and wherever similar cultural events are organized. The above are elements that due to their special character possess the attributes of quality and competitiveness that make the tourism product particularly attractive, as important attractions they interest both Greek and foreign visitors. Naturally, religious tourism is also a field for research in the Department of Tourism Management.

The purpose of this study is to investigate firstly if there is interest on behalf of the students of the department to get involved in the field of religious-cultural tourism and secondly to record their views on the subject.

KEY WORDS: Cultural, Religious Tourism, student views

1.1 Tourism and Religion

Travelers today consume more products and invest significantly more money in their trips rendering tourism as an important source of financial inflow into the local economy. The element of religion has been a very strong and integral part of culture and society since antiquity and naturally religious trips generated financial profit for the recipient areas.

According to Rodosthenous (2016) people since the ancient times used to travel for days away from their settlements with the aim of reaching a holy place to practice their worship and offer gifts to the temples in the hope that this act would provide them health and good fortune, seeking meaning and truth through religion. With the increase in income and the evolution of consumption patterns, in recent years, with the improvement of the tourism climate, there has been a significant increase in the demand for Religious Tourism. This is beneficial for modern Greece, as it is a form of tourism that can effectively help transform the tourism product into a sustainable and attractive one throughout the whole year, while it can also contribute to increasing revenues in periods of low demand, as well as improve the image of the country as a travel destination.

1.2 Greece as a religious destination

All regions of Greece should unveil their religious wealth, in order to increase tourist arrivals and generate additional income for their society and economy. The number of religious monuments per region as reported by Polyzos & Niavis (2013) does not necessarily offer significant competitive advantage as other than the numbers there are many factors that influence the choice of destination, such as the history and timeline of the monuments.

In ancient times travelers navigated to a holy place almost exclusively to worship, but today they also visit monuments to participate in events and educational tours, to get involved in charity projects, to learn about new customs, traditions and more. Religious faith used to have a decisive role in the exercise of Religious Tourism, today according to Manola & Tsatalbassoglou (2021) many are the travelers that visit them purely for reasons of spiritual and historical value.

Religious Tourism today represents a complex and developed part of the tourism industry (Tala et al, 2008).

Religious trips apart from travel agencies are often organized at the suggestion of some parishes which in order to meet the religious sentiment of the faithful, organize trips to other temples, monuments and holy places. There are also travel agencies that specialize exclusively in Religious Tourism, providing a more refined and competitive product compared to the common travel agencies (Rejman et al, 2016)

The development of this specific form of tourism at an international level attracted the interest of tourism organizations and agencies, which organized numerous conferences[1] to research and discuss the position of this type of tourism in the wider tourism market and the strategies to follow.

1.3 DEVELOPMENT FACTORS

Important factors that help to upgrade and develop the religious tourism product are the promotion of the product and the creation of a positive destination image through visual media, as well as the establishment of monuments in cultural routes (Manola & Teliopoulou, 2021).

In more detail it is noted that:

- There are many tools that a tourism business can use to achieve this goal. The most effective one is the internet, as many people use it often, when they want to plan a trip, looking for information about the destinations and tour packages they desire (Terzidou et al, 2008).
- Visual media also have an important role in forming the traveler's destination image. They offer visual information about the condition and appearance of monuments and sacred sites, which can lead to the formation of a negative or positive opinion by the travelers before visiting them. As mentioned by Tsatalbassoglou (2020), a digital representation during the tour or an interactive virtual description from important moments of the monuments enabled tourists to visualize events and make an attractive transition to the past by multiplying their senses.
- The power of the small and big screen should not be underestimated. Numerous films and documentaries have been shot in Greece, such as "Athos", which offers information about the sacred sites of Mount Athos and the life of the Monks, contributing to the increase of Tourism in the area (Terzidou et al, 2018).

2.1 RESEARCH

In the context of this article, a targeted research was carried out on Religious Tourism and the factors that can push its further development in Greece in order to investigate the opinions of a representative sample of students in the Tourism Management Department. The method of quantitative analysis through systematic sampling was used, which according to Babbie (2011) is appropriate for this case, as the sharing of the questionnaire was carried out by sending an academic electronic message to all students of the department attending the course "Case Study -

[1] Religious Tourism Conferences 2023-2025 is an indexed listing of upcoming meetings, seminars, congresses, workshops, programs, more info at htpp://conferenceindex.org/conferences/religious-tourism

Laboratory". The total number of students who chose this course was 450, of which 390 were active and 317 responses were received. The questionnaire was created using Google Forms, it consisted of 15 close-ended and 2 open-ended questions. The first three questions were related to gender, age and year of study. The next four were about the characteristics of Religious Tourism and eight questions of the third part were about the students' opinion regarding the possibility of their involvement in the field and their suggestions for improving this specific type of tourism. In the questionnaire there were also 2 open-ended questions for possible suggestions.

A. Demographic characteristics

By studying the demographic characteristics, we find out that 69,2% of the research participants are women, with only 30,8% being men. Regarding age, the majority of the sample is 21-23 years old with a percentage of 59,8%, while 25,6 and 14,5 percent respectively belong to the age group of 18-20 and 24+. Regarding to the year of study, the vast majority with 70,9% stated that they are in their 4th or higher year of studies.

B. Interest regarding Religious Tourism

The first Table showcases the answers to questions b1 and b2, in particular «How often do you take part in trips and excursions» and «How often do you visit religious temples and monuments as part of your travels».

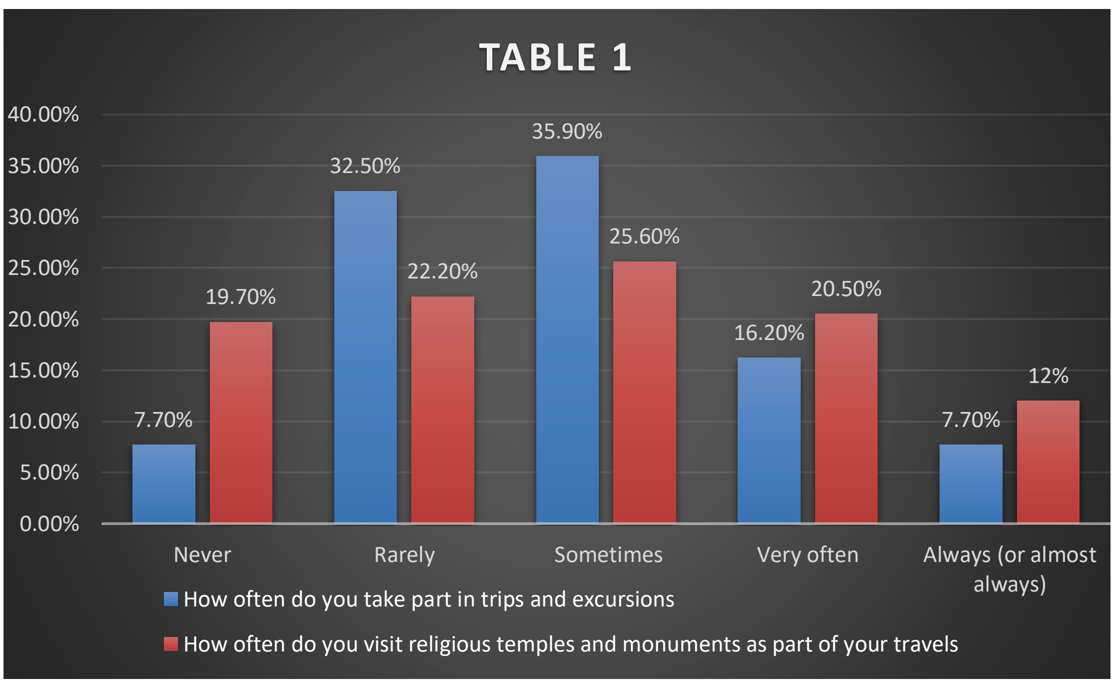

TABLE 1: Participation in trips and visits to monuments as part of the trips

As we see from the graph, respondents tend to participate in travels whenever given the opportunity, while also keeping in touch with the religious element as 58,1% state that they sometimes up to always visit religious monuments during their trips. […]

In question b3 «How do you usually travel» the answers are concentrated

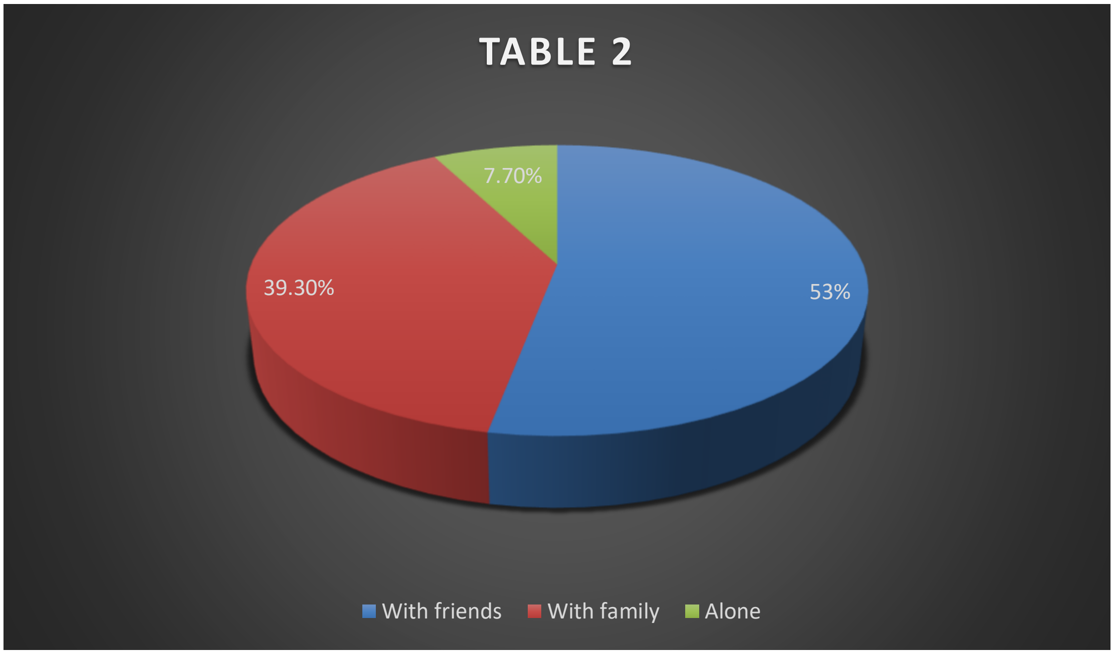

Table 2: Travelling preference

As shown in the second table, the majority of the respondents travel with friends (53%) or with their family (39,3%) while only 7,7% travel alone.

Question b4: « How often do you read historical or religious texts? »

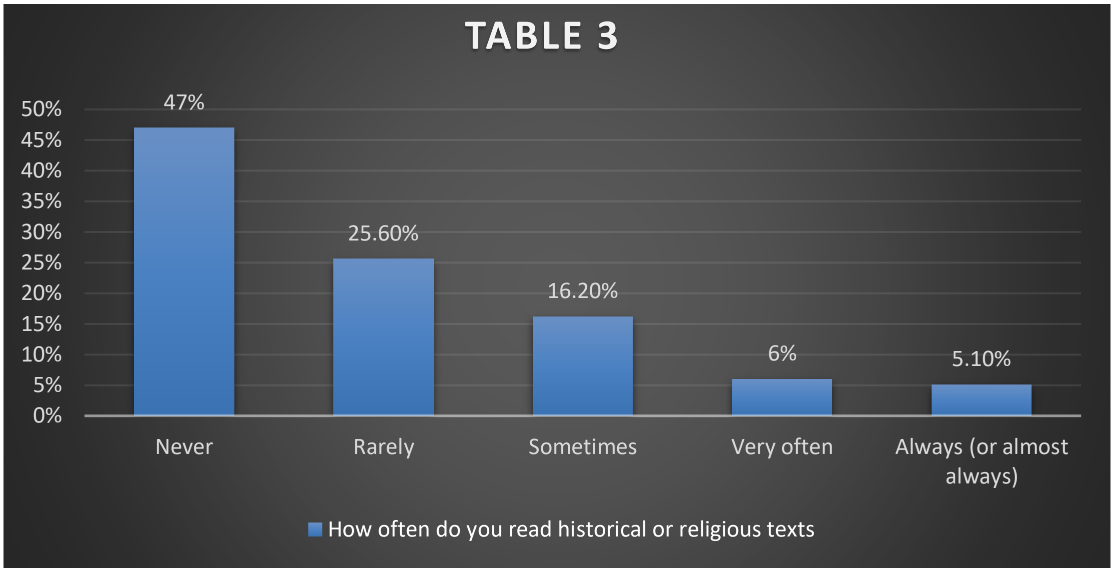

TABLE 3: Reading of historical or religious texts

The respondents answered that they do not usually read religious or historical texts, with an average score of 1.95, while 47% stated that they never read them. It seems that they prefer to use other mediums for their information such as the internet, which does not always offer the best quality of information.

C. Improvement factors – pursuit interest

In order to implement the appropriate policies and actions to continue the development of Religious Tourism, it is important to understand the main motivations for visiting religious destinations and monuments.

Question c1: « What is your main reason for visiting a monument »

As shown in Table 4, respondents were given the option to choose their main motivation for visiting monuments. The main options are six but the possibility to fill the “other” case with additional motivations which are not in the list is provided. As we can see, most students visit religious monuments for cultural reasons, with a total of 57,3% visiting them for their history or architecture, while at the same time a significant percentage of 30,8% of respondents visit them for religious reasons such as participating in religious festivals or for practicing their faith. At this point, a percentage (6,8%) should be taken into account which organizes trips and visits to monuments for reasons of popularity.

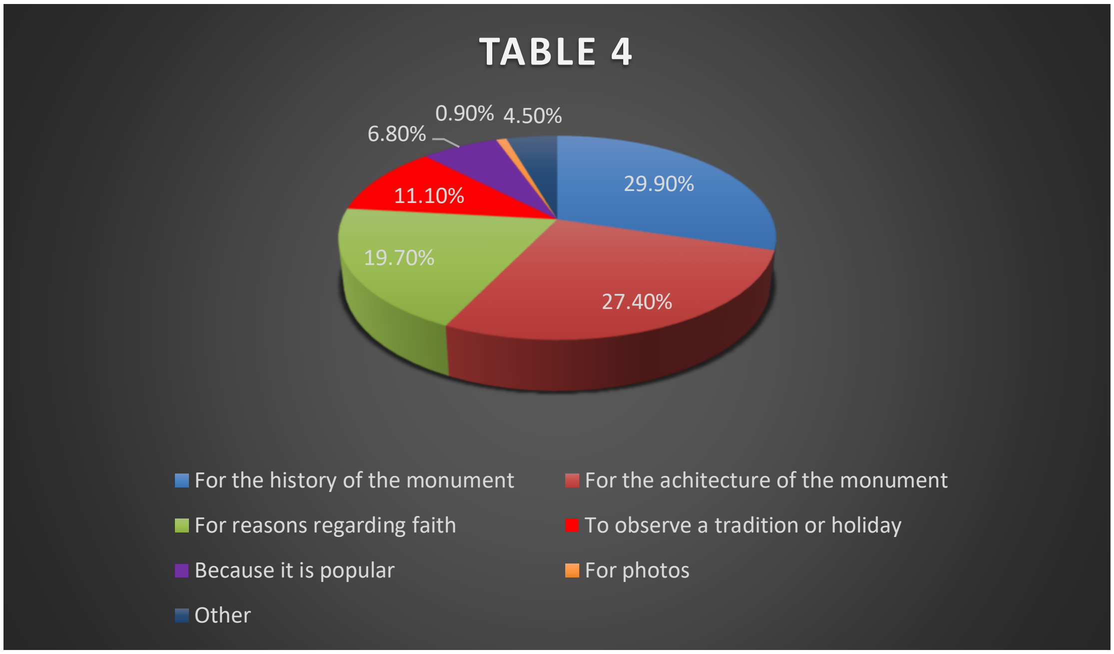

TABLE 4: The main reason for visiting a monument

Question c2: « Do you think that the effects of Religious Tourism on the local economy are positive? »

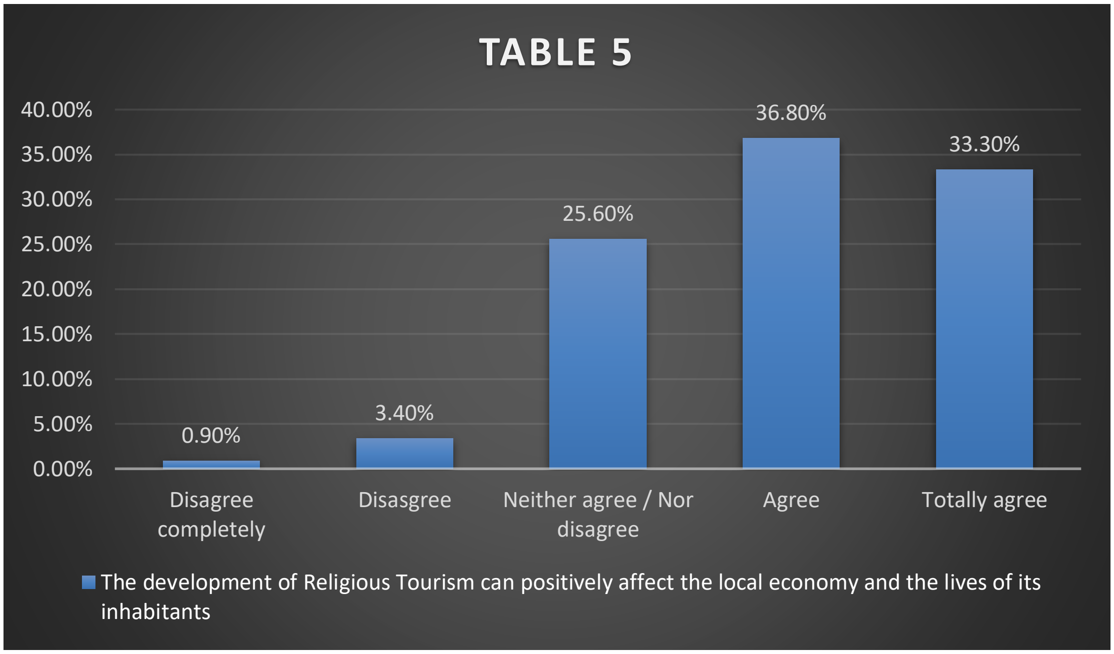

TABLE 5: Positive influence of the local economy and residents' quality of life from Religious Tourism

The answers of the respondents conclude in a positive assessment of the results obtained from Religious Tourism regarding the growth of the economy and the living conditions of the recipient area. They agree that this type of development can bring positive results, with a mean number of 3.98

As seen in table 6 the majority of respondents, with a percentage of 79,5%, are interested in being informed and learning more about the religious traditions of the place they are visiting. However, the percentage that participates in celebrations and events appears reduced. It makes sense, to an extent, due to the fact that events and festivals usually only take place on certain days within the calendar year. It is difficult for most travelers and of course for the students, who our research sample consists of, to have the free time and the possibility to partake in religious activities that are limited to certain days.

Questions c3-c4: « During your visit to a destination you show interest in the religious customs and traditions of the local community » and « During your visit to a destination you show interest in participating in religious festivals and events »

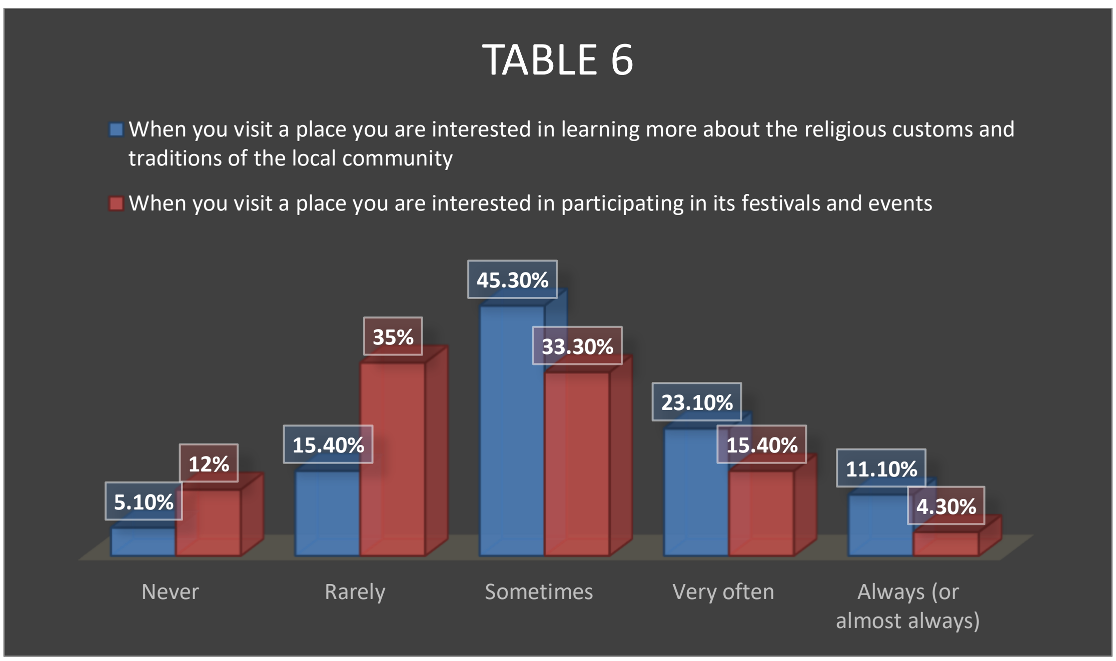

TABLE 6: Interest and participation in religious customs, celebrations, events

Question c5: « Do you consider faith to be a factor in choosing a tourist destination »

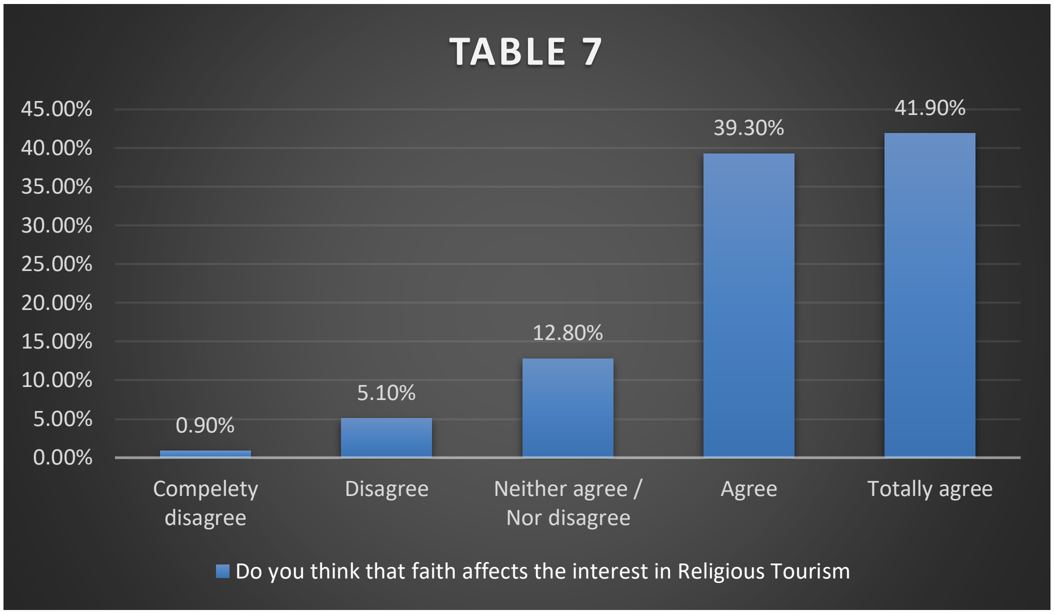

TABLE 7: Faith as an influence factor

In this question, the debate rises, whether they consider faith in religion to be an important factor influencing the interest in participating in trips with religious elements. With a mean number of 4.16, it is believed that religion can positively affect interest.

Question c6: « Would you be interested in working in the field of Religious Tourism? »

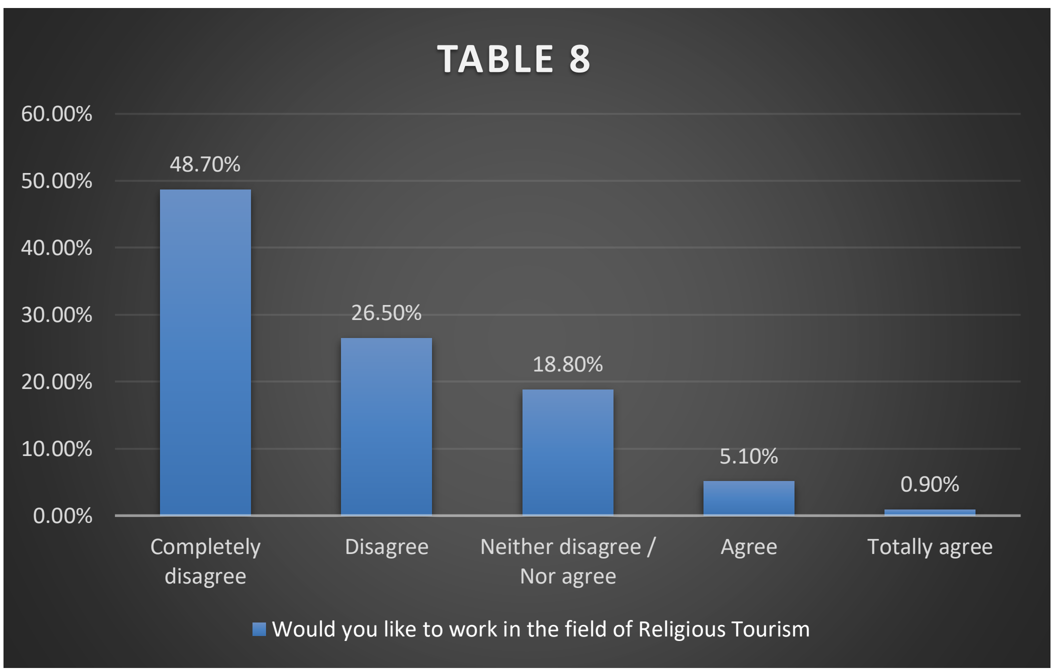

TABLE 8: Employment in the field of Religious Tourism

The answers of the students are of particular interest since, as shown in graph 8, the largest percentage reaching 48,7% does not wish to work in the field of Religious Tourism.

Question c7: « The Greek state shows interest in supporting Religious Tourism by dedicating to support and upgrade it »

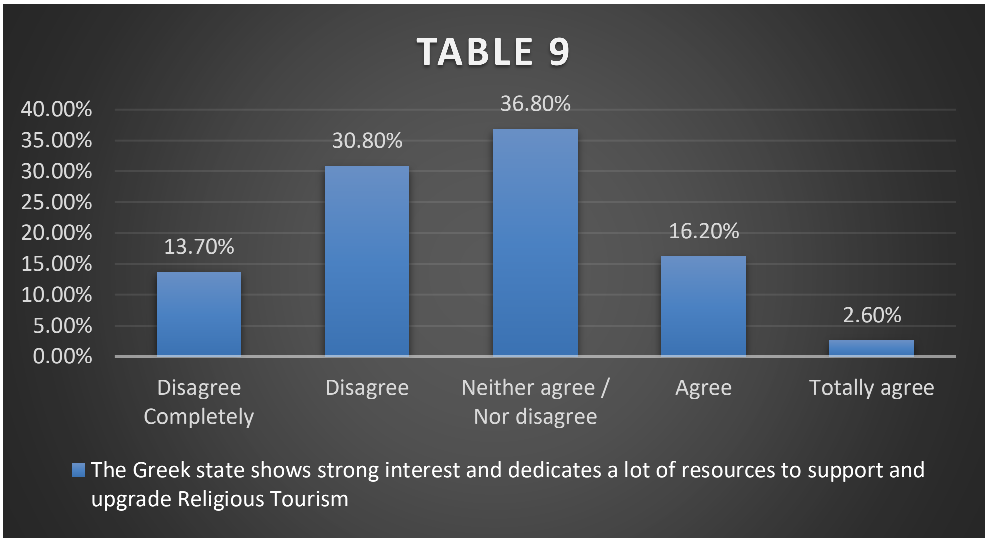

TABLE 9: Interest of the Greek state and support of Religious Tourism

With only 18.8% answering "agree" or "totally agree" the respondents concur that the state does not effectively support the development of Religious Tourism.

Question c10: « In which areas do you think the state should focus in order to develop Religious Tourism in Greece? »

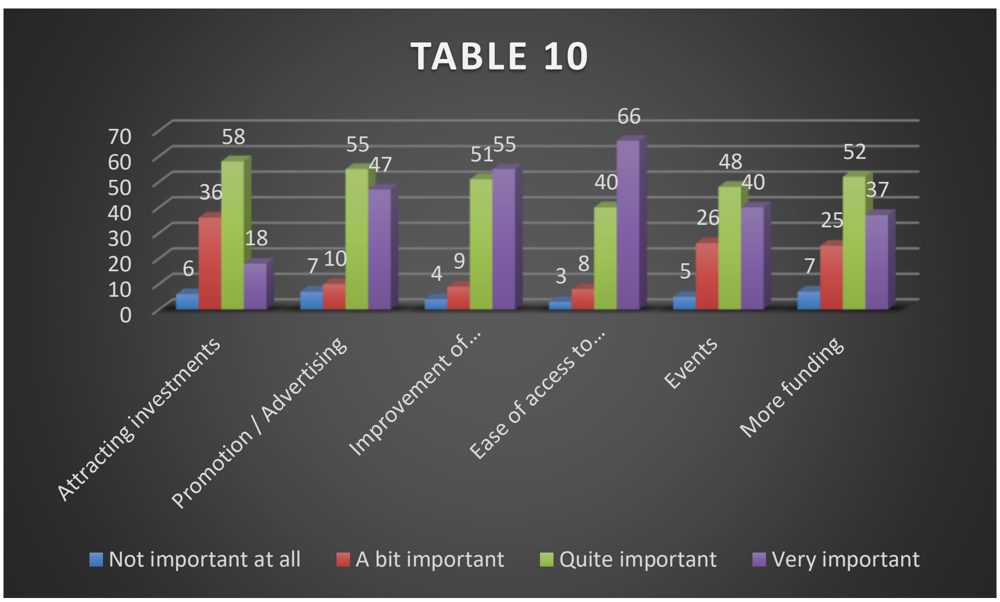

TABLE 10: Areas of focus of the state for the development of Religious Tourism

Important factors that can intensify development are the increase in funding from the state, the attraction of foreign and private investments, the strengthening of advertising and the organization of new and more religious events. It is an interesting fact that the respondents consider it very important to improve infrastructure and facilitate access to monuments located in remote areas. Many religious monuments are located in mountainous areas, where access and transportation is limited, expensive or tedious, especially for elderly people. For this reason, the state must invest in the upgrading of road networks, the installation of lifts for people with special needs, the expansion of public transport networks and the maintenance of monuments.

At the end of the questionnaire, there was an open-ended optional question regarding what steps should be taken to develop the tourism product and the answers converged on: «improving infrastructure», «facilitating access to monuments located in remote areas» and «easier access for the elderly and disabled» as many religious monuments are located in mountainous areas where access and transport is limited, expensive or tiring especially for the elderly or people with limited mobility.

Conclusions

In succession, the conclusions obtained from the above research are presented.

- At a time when Religious Tourism does not receive the proper promotion and exposure it deserves, it is positive that students wish to participate in such activities.
- As a large percentage of visitors are families the recepient areas should take advantage of this fact by promoting their religious tourism product as family friendly but also by organizing religious events with a social character to attract groups of younger travelers.
- In order to organize a visit to a religious destination, it is necessary for the potential traveler to be well informed as the medium used to obtain information is important. A medium of poor quality such as a website with inaccurate information could create a false or negative image of the destination and its history. Quality means include, among others, religious and historical texts as through them the interested party can learn about the rich history of the monuments, the religious traditions and holy places as well as their importance over time with accuracy (Manola, 2020). Historical texts can also provide a motivation to visit for a reader, as through the texts they can discover monuments and temples that will make them interested in visiting them. (Manola & Trikalitis ,2020).
- Popularity is an interesting reason to promote a tourism product, perhaps because certain monuments receive a lot of publicity and thus a visit to them becomes a topic of discussion on the internet, which covers a feeling of "participation" in the current travel trends. Of the additional motivations that belong to the "Other" category, the respondents mainly

answered that all the aforementioned activities are for them an equally strong motivation to visit giving "open-ended" answers such as social media.

- Perhaps the university does not inspire students enough to study more about Religious Tourism because it prioritizes other larger sectors of the tourism industry, still the improvement of the product requires trained staff and executives who can upgrade the policies and invest in the right steps therefore it becomes necessary to cultivate the interest of students in this direction.
- We realize that the cultural promotion of the monuments combined with the appropriate information of the history and condition of the monuments is important to maintain and increase the number of culturally motivated visitors, a category that constitutes the majority of the sample. Equally important is the organization of quality events and the correct ritual of religious festivals in order to maintain the attendance of religious people at the monuments, a category of visitors with significant influence on the local culture of the recipient area.
- The development of religious tourism can bring positive results to the economy of a region, provided that there is appropriate planning by the relevant bodies and respect by the visitors.
- Without proper support from the Greek state, Religious Tourism will not be able to develop. In a competitive market such as tourism, appropriate investments and interest from the state are required.
- A business can easily display advertisements withing websites and promote the price of the trip and its name to its potential customers. It is also important to display the monument so that the advertisement attracts religious people but to represent it with neutrality so as to also attract potential customers who are faithful in other religions (Rejman et al, 2016). There are not a few travelers who wish for example to travel to India in order to admire Taj Mahal while not being Muslim.
- The relevant bodies, such as the EOT, aim to promote the destinations in the visual media in order to create a positive and attractive image. There are many ways to accomplish this goal, such as showcasing the destination on shows, documentaries, digital presentations, advertising campaigns and magazines that will offer useful information and display the beauty of the monuments in order to create a sense of familiarity and trust.
- The state must invest in the improvement of road networks, the installation of lifts for people with special needs, the expansion of public transport networks and the maintenance of the monuments.

Greece is a country that relies on tourism and Religious tourism is a form which despite its immense tradition is considered an unexploited wealth limited to specific places. As the objective is improvement, it should start from the base, from the future professionals of the field who with the appropriate knowledge will be able to chart a path guided by the economic prosperity of the place where the monuments are located but always keeping in mind their protection.

In conclusion, Religious Tourism is a field with enormous potential for our country and an opportunity for diversification with the aim of sustainability and improvement.

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The importance of strategic planning for the survival of hotel entrepreneurships

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ABSTRACT

The importance of strategic management in modern society, where organizations need to adapt to uncertain environments to survive has been intensely discussed. The development of a strategic plan through strategic management is crucial for the survival of businesses in today's competitive environment. We are examining the suitable process under the scope of understanding, recording and functioning of the inner and outer environment of the business.

The stages are presented clearly following data that has been collected through bibliography stating the survival of the business itself as representative of a defined project. The mission and the vision of the entrepreneurship is analyzed through the operational functions as well as culture and dominant system of beliefs and values.

The evaluation of strategic planning is presented through reviewing and assessing the defined goals and factors that may appear.

Determination of qualitative and quantitative standards, analysis of the potential deviations and identification of corrective actions are named as the crucial stages of the evaluation

KEY WORDS: Strategy, administration, vision, planning, profitability, market share

Introduction

Strategic Planning

The importance of strategic management in modern society, where organizations need to adapt to uncertain environments to survive has been intensely discussed. (Stylianides&Pashiardis, 2007). The development of a strategic plan through strategic management is crucial for the survival of businesses in today's competitive environment. (Tsiakkiros&Pashiardis, 2002).

The concepts of strategic management and strategic planning, highlight the importance of strategic foresight and the formulation of alternative scenarios for the future. Strategic management is a set of processes, concepts, and tools that leaders use to think, act, and learn strategically.

The terms strategic management and strategic planning are used interchangeably, even though strategic planning focuses on future goals and decision-making in a constantly changing environment. (UNESCO, 2010)

The survival of the organizations is highly depended on strategic planning (Pashiardis, 1996) which has been a accumulation of procedures, meanings and tools in order strategic thinking to be achieved (Bryson 2004).

Important factors for success of an organization has been strategic foresight and alternatives for the future as important factors for dealing with successful decision making procedures (Tsiakkiros,2015α).

According to Olsen και Eadie (1982), a basic factor of strategic planning has been the definition of vision for the organization, a means of predicting future situations through objectives vision.

Definitions

Several definitions have been presented in the international and Greek literature and articles to articulate the concept of strategy. For the first time, the term strategy was mentioned in Newman's book (1951) when business management researchers realized that companies that compete in the same industry and use the same technology present different levels of performance.

According to Chandler (1962), strategy is the determination of the company's long-term goals and objectives, the adoption of a series of actions, as well as the identification and allocation of necessary resources and means to achieve the defined goals.

Similarly, according to Hofer and Schendel (1978), strategy is the alignment that an organization makes between its internal resources, capabilities, opportunities, and the risks created in the external environment.

According to Quin, "Strategy is the plan that integrates the basic objectives of a business, policies, and actions into a unified whole. A properly defined strategy helps manage and allocate the resources of a business based on its internal capabilities and advantages, expected changes in the environment, and relevant competitive moves" (Quin, 1980).

Kenneth (1981) argues that strategy involves the identification of goals, the formulation of policies and plans to achieve these goals, and the allocation of resources to implement the plans.

Ansoff (1985) thinks that strategy is a common line among procedures of the organization and its products or its markets that are responsible for the nature of the organization itself during the past, present and future.

"Finally, one of the most prominent academics in the field of business strategy, Harvard professor Porter (1996), defines strategy as the process of producing different products from competitors or doing the same things differently.

From the above, it becomes clear that strategy is not a set of programmed rules and instructions. Strategy coordinates and directs the independent decisions of an organization, with the primary purpose of successful navigation through the guidance of administrative decisions for the acquisition and maintenance of competitive advantage. It is, therefore, integrated actions that aim to balance the strengths and weaknesses of the organization, taking into account the opportunities and threats presented by the environment, in order to achieve the purpose of the enterprise according to the values, ambitions, and beliefs of its executives. (Mintzberg, 1987)

The characteristics of the strategy that contribute to success are as follows:

• Simple, consistent, and long-term goals

• Clear understanding of the competitive environment of the entrepreneurship

• Objective assessment of the resources of the enterprise

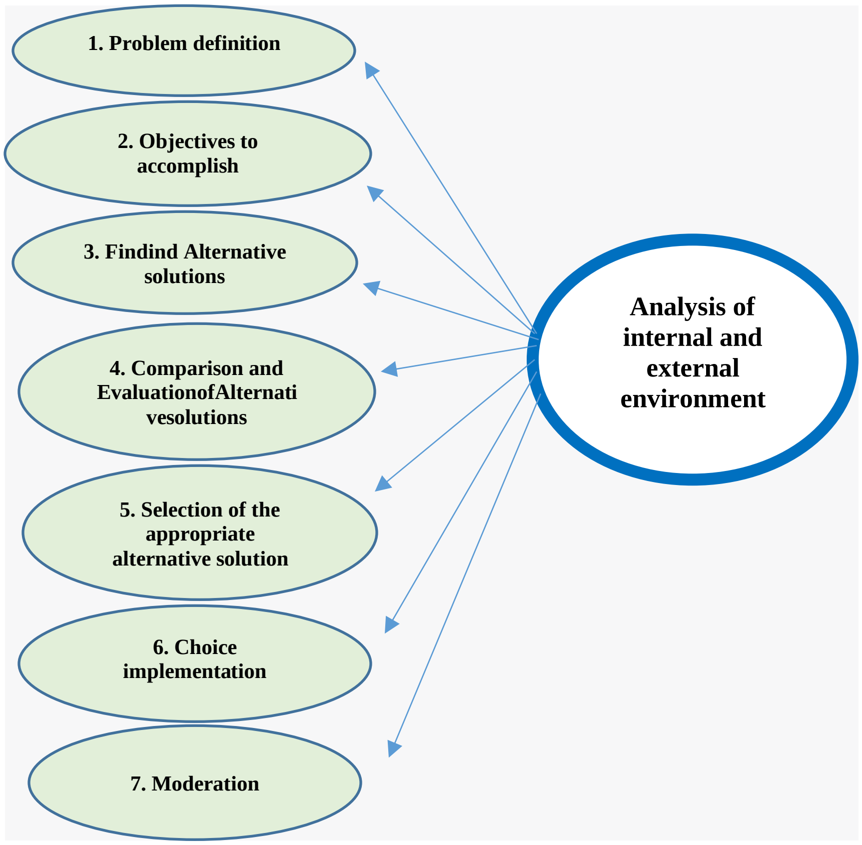
• Effective implementation of the evolving strategy

The process of strategic planning involves understanding, identifying, and analytically recording the internal organization and functioning, as well as the conditions of the external environment of the business. During the stages of the process, the direction of the strategic development of the business is defined and applied with the aim of fully satisfying its needs.

The first stage for shaping the strategic direction involves analyzing the potential strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the overall environment of the business (SWOT analysis, PESTEL Analysis), followed by the design and organizational plans of the strategy, which are evaluated in the end. (Enz, 2011).

The stages of strategic planning include: a) strategic analysis, where an attempt is made to understand the existing situation of the business, b) strategy selection, where the possible actions are processed and the future directions of the business are chosen, and c) implementation of the selected strategy (Therios, 2002).

Chart1:Rational Programming of Strategic Business Planning



Strategic Design - Process The process of strategy

Goal setting

Through defining their vision, businesses have the ability to determine their future direction and desired endpoint (Figure 3). The effectiveness of the operational vision requires the following characteristics (Papadakis, 2016; Schermerhorn, 2012):

• Clarity

• Realism

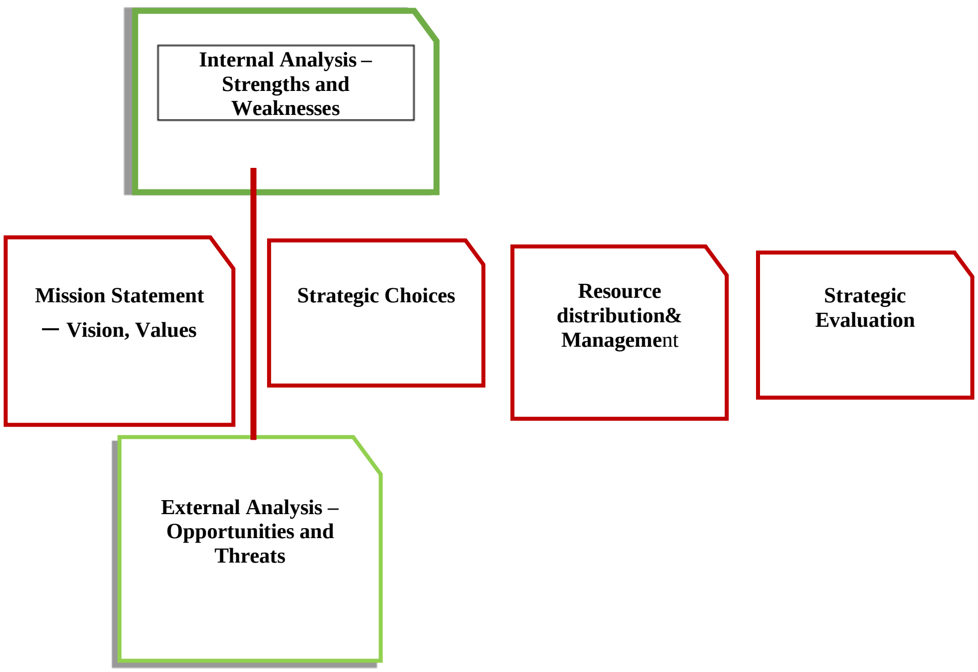
• Alignment with the business culture and values

• Brevity for easy recall by personnel

• Understanding and spirit of collaboration from all parties involved in the business.

The mission of a business reflects simultaneously its presence in the market, the distribution of its operational resources and the development of certain required skills for stabilization and expansion. The mission is a representative characteristic of the overall project for the effective achievement of strategic planning and a defined business model (Kourtis, 2004). The existence of a clear mission, based on the operational functions of a business, can contribute to the stable course and inspire confidence in all involved groups, such as customers, employees, suppliers, shareholders, executives, etc.

Chart 2: The Process of Strategic Planning for a Business



The mission and vision of the business are usually intertwined with the culture and dominant system of values and beliefs, and consequently functional objectives, directions, strategies, and performance of business activities are created (Papadakis, 2016; Schermerhorn, 2012).

• Profitability

• Increase and positive performance of financial capital

• Efficiency of expenses and resource allocation with the goal of operating at a lower cost

• Prompt response to customer needs and continuous service

• Maintenance of product and service quality

• Acquisition of a specific market share

• Acquisition and continuous training of capable human resources

• Development of innovative and pioneering products and processes

Understanding and undertaking of social responsibility

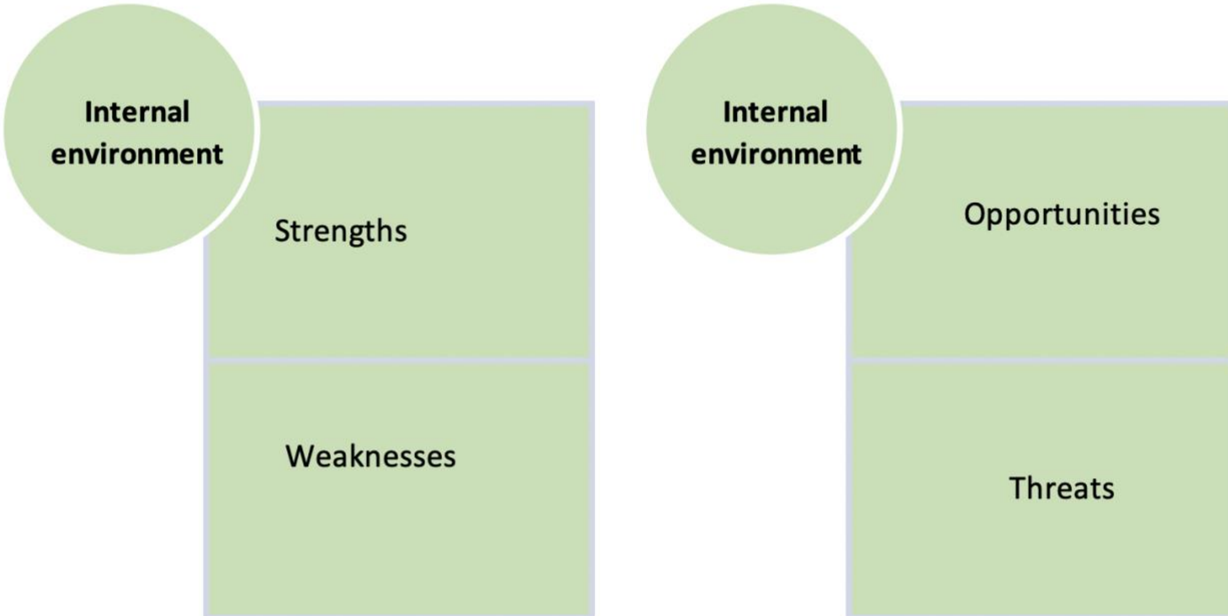
Chart3. Strategic Planning Pyramid

Strategic analysis of the internal and external environment

To determine and define the appropriate strategy for a business, an analysis of its internal and external operating environment (SWOT Analysis) is required. The information gained through clarification and analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the environment can contribute to the success of the mission and defined goals of the business (Figure 4).

The internal environment of the business concerns the analysis of its resources and systems, such as technological knowledge and human capabilities, organization, profile, and characteristics of the business, as well as its financial ability. The analysis of the external environment involves identifying variables such as competition, legal environment, market and investments, technological progress, consumer trends and preferences, economic conditions, and adapting the business to them (Kourtis, 2004, Papadakis, 2016, Thompson & Stickland, 2005).

Chart4.SWOTAnalysis

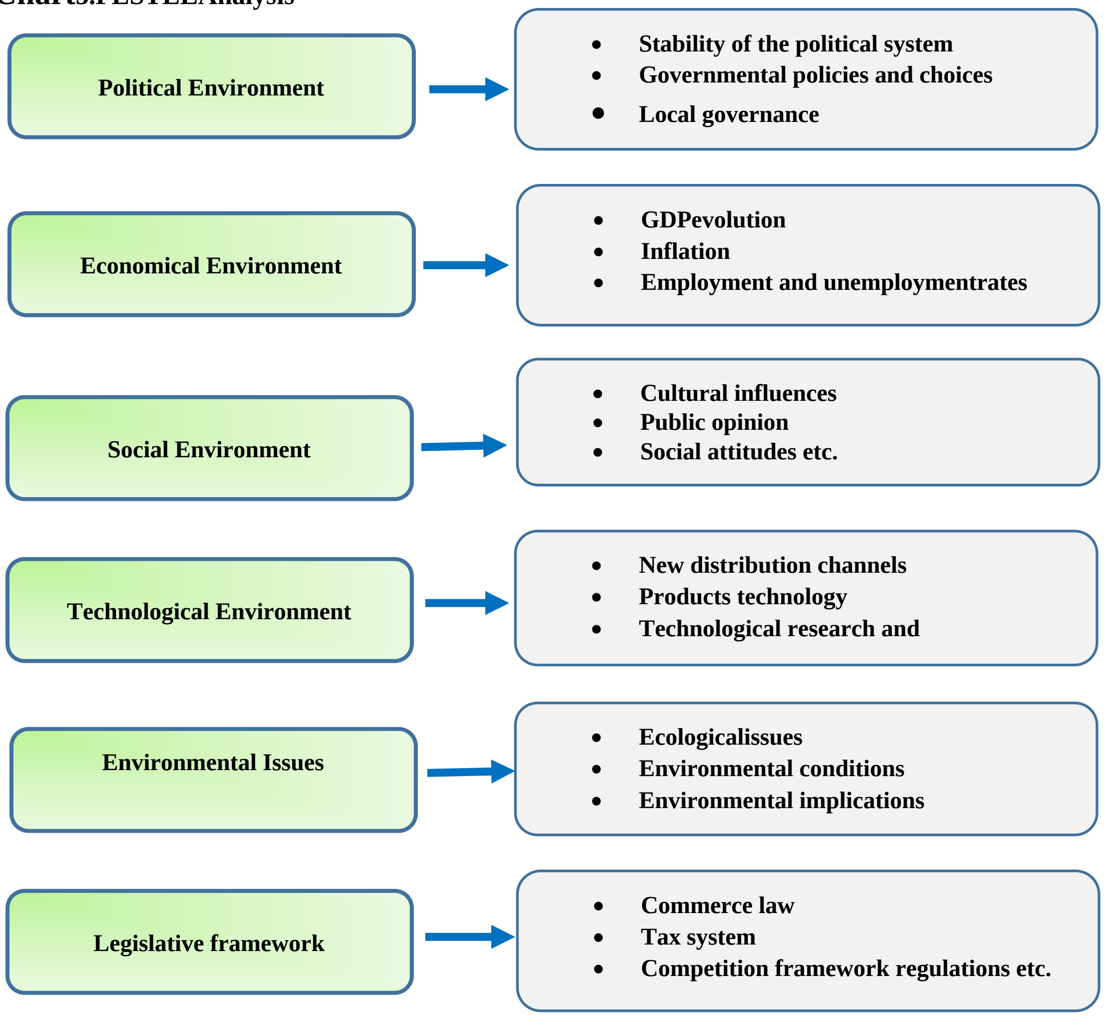


Source: Thompson&Stickland,2005

The complexity and variability of a business's external environment affects its perception and adaptability. In order to explore the strategically significant opportunities and threats to a business's operations, the external environment is taken into account, including the level of the immediate market environment and the level of the broader macro-environment (PESTEL analysis). At that specific stage of the strategic planning process, the business can evaluate its competitive position within the industry, identify the positions of its competitors, and identify and understand the stage of market development, potential changes, and their impact. In this process, an analysis is conducted of a series of systems and structures that affect the operation of a business and are crucial in shaping strategic decisions. These systems relate to the business's external environment and include the social, political, geographic, cultural, environmental, legal, demographic, and technological environments (Papadakis, 2016).

For the development of competitive advantages of the business, the analysis of the internal environment is equally important. This includes the identification of the business's resources, capabilities, and competencies, which can be a source of sustainable competitive advantage (Barney, 1991).

Chart5.PESTELAnalysis



Source: Papadakis, 2016

The analysis of material, financial, and human resources for identification and determination of their quality, quantity, and availability will guide the design of the company's strategy, regarding the production of products or the provision of services, as well as the degree of influence and modernization of the changes and existing and expected opportunities of the external environment. At the same time, the analysis and evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the internal environment will help identify deficiencies and apply the necessary actions and investments to correct them (Kourtis, 2004).

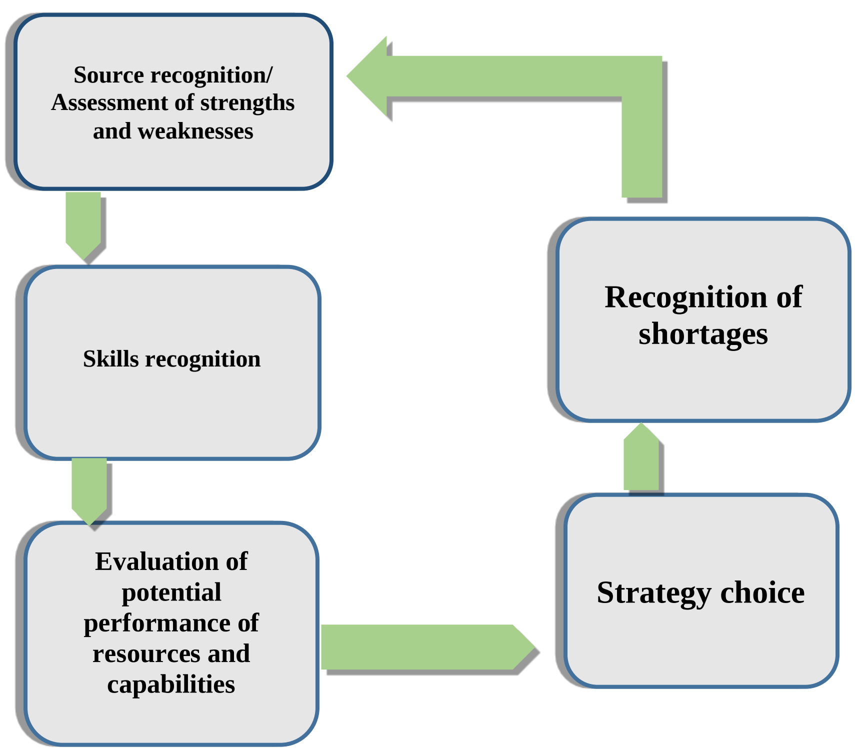
Formulation of Strategy

The next step for a company after analyzing the environment is the selection and formulation of its strategic function and development, aiming to achieve its goals and vision. In order for the company to coordinate the actions and directions of the strategy, a process of consistent, sequential, and ongoing strategic planning is followed. The formulation of the company's strategy is based on the results of the analysis of the internal and external environment and focuses on identifying its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to determine the course of action that will help it achieve its goals.

The choice of strategy is reflected in the selection of suitable business actions and activities to achieve functional objectives. At a practical level, effective implementation of the strategy requires the mobilization of resources and the management system of the enterprise, while at the same time, the existence and contribution of support structures are required, as well as the correct distribution of tasks and work flows, as well as the inspiration of capable and appropriate human resources (Schermerhorn, 2012, Enz,2011· Papadakis, 2016).

In many cases, operational objectives and objectives are not clearly defined, internal resources are limited, the possibility of alternative options is unstable, information about the external and macroeconomic environment is insufficient, while the abilities or behavioral parameters (e.g. selfishness, willingness, etc.) of human resources affect the shaping of the strategy. The result of this is that the shaping of the strategy escapes the rational planning process, and the enterprise is led to a dead end and the need for readjustment.

Chart6.Achieving strategic resource allocation



Source:Papadakis, 2016

In order to create conditions for long-term sustainability, the planning model works more efficiently in businesses characterized by a stable environment, clear objectives, and available resources. The effectiveness of the strategy also depends on the ability to adapt to changes in the external environment and to the needs of the market. The success of the strategy is not only measured by achieving short-term objectives, but also by creating a long-term competitive advantage for the enterprise.

Strategic Evaluation

Strategic evaluation is the final stage of the strategic planning process and involves the strategic review and assessment of the initial plans to fulfill the defined functional goals, which includes the following points (Papadakis, 2016; Schermerhorn, 2012):

• Determining standards, such as qualitative and quantitative criteria

• Measuring performance against predetermined standards

• Analyzing potential deviations and defining acceptable variations

• Identifying and taking corrective actions, which may involve redefining the initial goals or reformulating the strategy through the initiation of the process.

The measurement of results needs to be carried out at predetermined and regular intervals to identify and address potential problems in a timely manner. Specific control stages are followed for measuring results, such as behavior control, measurable results control, and resource control at the quality level (Papadakis, 2016).

The stage of evaluating a business's strategy aims to answer whether the predetermined goals have been achieved.

Specifically, it is evaluated whether the objectives, direction plan, policies, and results of the strategy have been achieved satisfactorily. The criteria for evaluating the strategy, according to which the agreement of the applied strategy with the existing situation and the performance of the business is examined, are as follows: consistency with operational objectives, agreement with changes in the external environment, creation and maintenance of a competitive advantage, feasibility of implementation.

For the feasibility criterion, the business examines the relationship between the strategy and its compatibility with its resources (financial resources, human resources capabilities and skills, natural resources). The suitability of the strategy is checked in relation to the fundamental capabilities and resources of the business, in order to verify the principles and alternative options of the applied strategy.

The strategy followed, as well as the performance of the business, needs to be in line with the standards set by the administration. In many cases, the suitability of the applied strategy at that time, is the primary variable that determines the failure or success of the results of the strategy (Johnson et al., 2008, Papadakis, 2016).

Efficiency of control and evaluation of the applied strategy depends on the understanding and degree of trust towards it by management and human resources, as well as on the reciprocity and common sense of cooperation development among the executives of the administration and stakeholders. Proper resource utilization results in less burden on the economic performance of the enterprise and its human resources (Papadakis, 2016).

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Building employee loyalty through trust: The Internal CSR role in Hospitality and Tourism context

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Abstract

Purpose: This paper critically investigates how Internal Corporate Social Responsibility (I-CSR) influences the Employee-Employer Relationship (EER), employee trust, and loyalty in hospitality and tourism (H&T) context.

Design/Methodology/Approach: Extensive secondary research was conducted in generic Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Social Sustainability studies from a Human Resources Management perspective, as well as studies focused on CSR, EER, Trust and Loyalty applied in H&T industry context.

Findings: The paper provides insights into the mechanism through which employee trust is created and maintained in H&T organisations. It is suggested that the adoption of I-CSR practices in H&T organisations has a profound impact on the EER. It is argued that a strong EER is built on trust, viewed as a key component of creating an inclusive and positive work environment. This, in turn, increases job satisfaction and contributes to employee loyalty and eventually retention.

Originality of the research: This in-depth literature review is the first of its kind in the context of the Hospitality and Tourism industry, providing valuable insights into the importance of I-CSR on the EER and the creation of employee loyalty through trust.

Keywords: Internal Corporate Social Responsibility; Employee-Employer Relationship; Employee Trust; Employee Loyalty; Hospitality and Tourism Industry.

Paper type: Review Article

INTRODUCTION

Due to increasing awareness within modern society about the devastating impact of human behaviour on the planet, there has been a continuously growing demand for people to create a sustainable society and for organisations to act socially responsible (Carroll, 2016). Consequently, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Sustainability are now considered by many to be key contemporary issues, growing in importance and significance among stakeholders (Rodriguez et al., 2021). Responding to this growth, an increasing volume of CSR literature has been produced. However, as a concept, CSR is not new and has been widely researched from a variety of perspectives across multiple disciplines, resulting in a wealth of available literature (Liu et al., 2020). Within this, a significant portion has focused on identifying the positive effects of adopting and implementing CSR in organisations (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2021). Several scholars (i.e., Bohdanowicz & Zientara, 2008; Kim & Kim, 2016; Lee, 2022; Okumus et al., 2020; Stojanovic et al., 2020) suggest that CSR enables organisations to create competitive advantage, add value to the value chain and improve financial stability by reducing expenses, maximising productivity and generating increased appeal among stakeholders. However, it is difficult to define and conceptualise CSR due to its complex and "multifaceted" nature (Sheehy, 2015, p.626). As a result of this uncertainty, there is evidence of a growing belief that, to better understand CSR, it first needs to be deconstructed and conceptualised across four dimensions individually (Cultural, Economic, Environmental and Social) whilst exploring both Internal and External elements (Rhou & Singha, 2020). Therefore, it can be proposed that further research should be undertaken despite the abundance of current CSR literature.

Within Hospitality and Tourism (H&T) Industries specifically, CSR has grown in importance, with many organisations incorporating it into their business model to generate value and reduce the negative effects of their operations in society (Okumus et al., 2020). Despite its popularity in the industry (Kim & Kim, 2016), CSR has only recently drawn the attention of scholars and researchers (Rhou & Singha, 2020). To date, the majority of CSR literature refers to *External* CSR (Rhou & Singha, 2020), resulting in the *Internal* element being overlooked until recently (Sanchez-Hernandez et al., 2021). Moreover, among the four CSR dimensions, the majority of recent H&T

literature appears to focus on the Environmental dimension. Therefore, in comparison, the other dimensions are arguably under-conceptualised. Thus, any further research would be beneficial.

In an effort to contribute and expand the current knowledge of CSR in H&T context, this paper focuses on its *Social* dimension. More specifically, it explores the Internal CSR (I-CSR) element, which is less conceptually developed with little research conducted in any context (Lee, 2022). An overview of the of CSR in H&T context is followed by the investigation of the relationship between social sustainability and Internal CSR. Within the internal Social dimension, this paper focuses specifically on exploring the Employee-Employer Relationship (EER), as relationships are argued to be the foundations of Social Sustainability (Roca-Puig, 2019). The paper also investigates the creation of employee Trust within H&T organisations, as a means to achieve loyalty and from a wider perspective contribute to social sustainability and the I-CSR function.

1. CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN HOSPITALITY & TOURISM

CSR has become an integral component of Hospitality and Tourism (H&T) operations and is therefore expected by both internal and external stakeholders (Islam et al., 2015). The H&T industry, and particularly the international hotel and restaurant chains, integrate CSR into their core business model and openly promote their CSR programmes and activities to balance giving back and adding value whilst reducing the negative impacts (Gentinetta, 2020; Gürlek & Tuna, 2019; Rodriguez et al., 2021). Consequently, research undertaken in H&T context continues to be popular; surprisingly despite its growth predictions, fewer research efforts appear to be conducted in the luxury sector (Fortune Business Insights, 2021; Harmer, 2019).

As the foundation of any H&T business is built around meeting and exceeding its stakeholders' needs, they adopt both External and Internal CSR as a management tool to maintain financial stability and growth whilst operating sustainably (Okumus et al., 2020). Kim et al. (2021) argue that External and Internal CSR operate through different mediating mechanisms. External CSR (E-CSR) can be defined as the "*social and environmental activities that are performed outside the organisation to satisfy the social and environmental interests of external stakeholders*" (Sanusi & Johl, 2020, p.2441) and is often perceived as the core of CSR operations. In addition, the Environmental dimension of E-CSR has received significant attention, predominantly due to society's growing awareness regarding the ever-increasing risks of climate change and global warming (Islam et al., 2015; UNWTO, 2021). As such, many H&T organisations, irrespective of sector or business type, are investing in green practices to reduce their environmental footprint (Abdou et al., 2020), while scholars continue to research topics including food waste, water and waste management, biodiversity, renewable power and air and noise pollution (i.e., Gürlek & Tuna, 2019; Roco-Puig, 2019; Rhou & Singal, 2020) and the impact of these on service quality, loyalty and business reputation. Contrastingly, Internal Corporate Social Responsibility (I-CSR) comprises the "*CSR activities which are directly related to the physical and psychological working* *environment of employees*" (Turker, 2009 cited in Low, 2016, p.67). A number of scholars (i.e., Mory et al., 2016; Sanchez-Hernandez et al., 2021; Sanusi and Johl, 2020) argue that I-CSR as a concept and research area lacks definition and conceptualisation. On the other hand, it is argued that the growing interest in this concept in industries like the H&T, contributes to the body of knowledge that will eventually lead to a commonly accepted I-CSR typology.

Based on the existing literature in H&T context (i.e., Bibi et al., 2021; Gürlek & Tuna, 2019; Islam et al., 2015, Stojanovic et al., 2020), the following areas can be suggested to fall within the I-CSR (Figure 1): quality of working life; stakeholders' commitment; citizenship for employees, customers and businesses; trust among stakeholders; organisation and employee performance; stakeholder satisfaction; employee intention to leave; business and employee identity; workplace culture, recruitment and retention; and business attractiveness. Moreover, I-CSR appears to be heavily reliant on the *Social* dimension. Therefore, it can be suggested that I-CSR has a more immediate and direct influence on organisations than the E-CSR. It is also argued that I-CSR directly affects employees who control the quality of service delivered and significantly influences customer satisfaction (Kurdi et al., 2020), yet employees are costly and time-consuming for organisations to replace (Hall, 2019).

Despite the use of mainstream definitions not specific to H&T (Rhou & Singha, 2020), adopting both forms of CSR (internal and external) helps H&T organisations to achieve the following: add value to the value chain (Okumus et al., 2020); create competitive advantage (Bohdanowicz & Zientara, 2008; Kim & Kim, 2016); increases appeal and profits through performance (Islam et al., 2015); create a more diverse, equal and inclusive workplace culture (Okumus et al., 2020) and increase organisational productivity, efficiency and thereby attractiveness and brand image (Lee, 2022; Stojanovic et al., 2020).

As an area of H&T research, CSR has recently grown significantly (Font & Lynes, 2018). It is argued, nevertheless, that the majority of CSR studies in H&T context appears to focus on exploring perceived benefits and prospective outcomes from the customers', managers' and, in some cases government's perspective (Hu et al., 2019; Islam et al., 2015; Lee et al., 2013b). Although in keeping with findings from literature outside of H&T, due to the apparent lack of studies exploring the effects of not adopting CSR (Islam et al., 2015), together with minimal research based on the collective Stakeholder Theory (Gürlek & Tuna, 2019; Ko et al., 2019) there are still gaps to explore, particularly from the perspectives of suppliers and employees. Franco et al. (2020) found that organisations can improve their overall performance and economic outcome by investing in strengthening stakeholder relations. Therefore, it is important to understand who controls this process and its influence on employees. The critical discussion section explores the employment of I-CSR at work and its close relation to social sustainability, EER, employee loyalty and trust.

Figure 1: **I-CSR areas in Hospitality and Tourism industry**

2. INTERNAL CSR AND SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

The Human Resource Management (HRM) function controls the internal social element and is responsible for managing an organisation's human resources (CIPD, 2021a). Therefore, the responsibility to create a socially sustainable and responsible work environment falls on the HRM function.

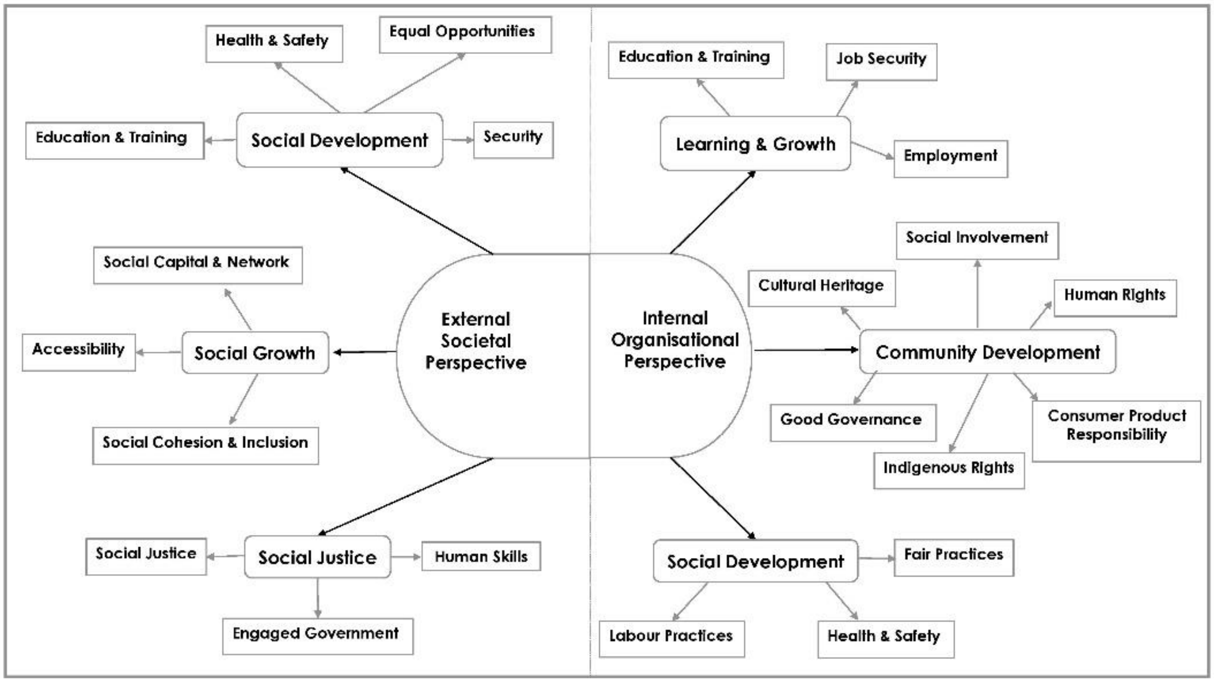
As an integral component of everyday operations, the interdependent relationship between HRM and Social Sustainability has been widely accepted, acknowledged and researched from both conceptual and empirical perspectives in literature (Aggerholm, 2011; Ehnert et al., 2016; Kramer, 2014; Roca-Puig, 2019). Social Sustainability is often viewed as a set of intangible ethical standards or principles used by the HRM function—in addition to legislation—to assist in making decisions, evaluating development, aiding interconnectivity and fostering strong relationships with stakeholders (Ajmal et al., 2018; Arciniega et al., 2017; Gürlek & Tuna, 2019). As a concept, Social Sustainability is entrenched in human behaviour and influenced by ever-changing social needs, values, beliefs and expectations (Boström, 2012). Roca-Puig (2019), for example, suggests the guiding principles of Social Sustainability include equality, commitment, trust and loyalty. On the other hand, it is argued that the role of Social Sustainability within an organisation is widely debated, mainly due to the lack of a universally accepted definition (Ajmal et al., 2018; Gürlek & Tuna, 2019; Roca-Puig, 2019).

Boström (2012) suggests Social Sustainability is centred around supporting basic human needs (i.e., nourishment, health, shelter and employment) along with extended needs (i.e., fair treatment, equality, diversity and self-realisation). Therefore, to evaluate Social Sustainability, these elements should be assessed. Kramer's (2014) model of Sustainable HRM reinforces the relationship between HRM and sustainability, partially supporting both Boström (2012) and Roca-Puig (2019). Kramer (2014) argues, however, that in order to accurately assess Sustainable HRM, the organisational, social, individual and ecological outcomes should be assessed independently. Alternatively, Ajmal et al. (2018) suggest that there are two perspectives Social Sustainability should be measured from; Societal and Organisational. The Societal Perspective encompasses the external environment, whereas the Organisational Perspective encompasses the internal aspects of any organisation (Ajmal et al., 2018). Therefore, each of the factors/areas highlighted in Figure 2 are key indicators influencing Social Sustainability and impact Internal and External Social Stability. Although authors such as Boström (2012), Kramer (2014), Ajmal et al. (2018) and Roca-Puig (2019) followed a different approach when investigating the role of Social Sustainability in organisations, they highlight shared commonalities including: Accessibility, Accountability, Culture and Diversity, Education and Training, Employment/Labour Rights, Equality, Health and Safety, Human Rights, Identity, Improving Social and Community Capital, Inclusion/Involvement, Responsibility, Security, Social Legitimacy and Justice, Quality of Life, Quality of Working Life and Wellbeing. These can be viewed as the main HR activities and/or practices, organisations use to build Social Sustainability among internal stakeholders.

More recent CSR literature suggests that HR's Socially Sustainable activities, particularly towards its employees, can be perceived as part of the I-CSR approach (Low, 2016; Sanchez-Hernandez et al., 2021; Sanusi & Johl, 2020). Lee (2022) supports these findings and argues the main five I-CSR elements are (although they have not been empirically proven): diversity within employees; enhancing employee skills through training; creating a balance between personal and work life; ensuring stability, security and fostering a positive, safe work environment. Nonetheless, these commonalities reinforce the overlap between CSR, Social Sustainability and HRM (Roca-Puig, 2019). In addition, it can be suggested that the above-described factors play a strategic role in any organisation based on their contribution to the creation of strong and stable relations, and, consequently, employee satisfaction.

Irrespective of approach and perspective, most studies exploring Social Sustainability or I-CSR acknowledge that social interactions and, consequently, relationships are a direct result of mutually beneficial exchanges between individuals, a theory known as Social Exchange and founded on the social concept of reciprocity (Glaveli 2021; Gonzalez et al. 2020; Roca-Puig 2019). Yu et al. (2018) support this but also suggest that the quality of the EER is a direct reflection of the quality of interaction or social exchange between a business and its employees, a view supported by Lee (2022). Therefore, to maintain an organisation's internal Social Sustainability, HR departments must foster strong relationships with its employees, which might suggest why HRM predominantly focuses on I-CSR rather than E-CSR (Lee 2022). To do this effectively, it is important to understand how the EER is constructed, including its basic foundations and employee expectations.

Figure 2: **Internal and External Social Sustainability Indicators**



Source: adapted from Ajmal et al. (2018), p.333

3. INTERNAL CSR AND THE EMPLOYEE-EMPLOYER RELATIONSHIP

Current literature has long emphasised the importance of the mutual relationship between an organisation and its stakeholders, particularly the relationship with their customers in maintaining long-term customer loyalty (Ma & Qu, 2011), as relationships are believed to be the foundations on which every society is built (Roca-Puig, 2019). However, establishing and maintaining a strong EER is equally important, as poor EER directly impacts business profits, reputation, and overall development (Bohdanowicz & Zientara, 2008; Rodriguez et al., 2021). Therefore, maintaining a strong EER is vital to ensuring business success. In 2021, maintaining EER is arguably more important than ever as the global H&T industry is facing unprecedented levels of unemployment, redundancies and changes to working hours because of Covid-19 (Big Hospitality, 2021; Thomas, 2020). However, investing in I-CSR activities could reduce this impact, as CSR activities have been found to directly impact intention to leave and employee turnover (Kim et al., 2021; Rodriguez et al., 2021; Stojanovic et al., 2020).

Yu et al. (2018) claim EER is a longstanding relationship, which can be both casual and formal, and is centred around reciprocal commitment and emotional investment; this view is also supported by Gill (2008) and Rodriguez et al. (2021), although the latter further suggest EER has a psychological connection too. Lee (2022) argues that the EER does not have to be one or the other, but instead, a combination of both emotional and psychological commitment. The existing literature (i.e., Gill, 2008; Lee, 2022; Stojanovic et al., 2020; Yu et al., 2018) suggests that, employees expect to be rewarded in exchange for their time, energy, innovative contribution, loyalty and commitment. It is also argued that employee satisfaction and EER varies, depending on their position within an organisation along with the type of relationship an organisation wants to build (Kim et al., 2020; Rodriguez et al., 2021). This implies permanent, or full-time employees may have access to more opportunities (i.e., training and development) than temporary employees, including those undertaking an internship or placement. In addition, an employee's seniority can also affect loyalty, due to increased dedication over the years within the organisation. Yu et al. (2018) further suggest that the type of role directly affects the quality of EER provided and, thereby on, the outcomes of the reciprocal relationship. For example, organisations desiring short-term relationships tend to provide little to no rewards or investment (low-quality EER), resulting in minimal employee engagement, trust and loyalty, whereas businesses desiring long-term relations often provide a wide variety of rewards and incentives (high-quality EER) helping generate strong, stable relations and thereby consistent beneficial returns for both the business and its employees. This demonstrates a direct correlation between the Social and Economic elements of business operations and supports Roca-Puig (2019), who suggests HRM policies and procedures are focused on employee support and participation; this also suggests that organisations are reliant on employee support and participation, implying it is the employees who hold power in Social EER.

It is important to note that the EER and the exchange between employees/employers is a continuous process, not a one-stop solution (Lee, 2022). Therefore, organisations should constantly be aiming to meet the needs and expectations of current and prospective employees. Given people spend most of their life at work, selecting an organisation to work for is just as much of a strategic choice for the employee as it is for the employer. Employees today, particularly millennials, are no longer driven solely by monetary rewards; instead, they feel greater self-fulfilment when working for a socially and/or environmentally responsible organisation (Filimonau and Mika, 2019). The younger generations' different work ethics and approach require a fresh perspective on research exploring the link between CSR and EER. To fully understand this link, businesses need to understand employees' expectations and how these influence businesses to ensure they gain a strategic competitive advantage (Kim & Kim, 2016). Lin & Lui (2017) found that being treated and managed in an ethically responsible manner paired with CSR activities can influence employee motivation, and engagement and reduce employee burnout. More specifically, the existing research (i.e., Glaveli, 2021; Gonzalez et al., 2020; Kim & Kim, 2016; Rodriguez et al., 2021; Yu et al., 2018) suggests that employees want to be treated with respect, integrity, honesty and transparency, and expect to receive equal and fair treatment in all aspects of their work life. Roca-Puig's (2019) study found that in an equal society, employees are more likely to trust while inequality reduces stability and security, leading to increased anxiety among stakeholders creating negative attitudes, relations and reduced profits (Zhang et al., 2018). This suggests that employees expect organisations with a moral obligation to behave responsibly (Lin & Liu, 2017). However, as a consequence of witnessing/experiencing unethical behaviour, employees mistrust organisations resulting in doubt, lack of legitimacy and reduction in loyalty, causing a domino effect of disengagement and lack of motivation (Lin & Liu, 2017; Liu et al., 2020). Nevertheless, it is argued that, given that most of these studies were conducted in the Western context, the employee expectations stated above cannot be considered representative for other parts of the world or in different cultural contexts.

Current literature also suggests that employees want safe and decent working conditions (i.e., Kim et al., 2020; Rodriguez et al., 2021; Tsourvakas & Yfantidou, 2017), and enjoy job security and want to be protected at work (Yu et al., 2018). These studies were also conducted in the Western context, meaning they may not be applicable in different cultural contexts. Despite the above arguments, the specific requirements to achieve the aforementioned have not yet been identified or agreed upon universally. On the other hand, the existing literature suggests that employees want organisations to demonstrate accountability and legitimacy (Rodriguez et al., 2021); show cooperation and flexibility (Tsourvakas & Yfantidou, 2017); demonstrate they care about employee welfare (Yu et al., 2018) and trust employees who are loyal to them (Roca-Puig, 2019). This reinforces the ethical values of honesty, integrity and transparency, suggesting that to achieve strong and high-quality EER, employees desire an empathetic, emotional relationship, not one driven solely by financial reward. This theory is reinforced by all the above, which have been found to have a direct influence on making employees feel more supported, trusting and satisfied (Kim & Kim, 2016) and demonstrate a clear desire by employees to be acknowledged, recognised and rewarded for their own loyalty and dedication. This desire has been acknowledged by the H&T industry, particularly the hotel sector, as demonstrated by the incentives currently offered to employees, including pension contributions and career progression (Yu et al., 2018). There is, however, a lack of research exploring which is the most important, what employees expect and what they desire. Furthermore, a number of studies (i.e., Gonzalez et al., 2020; Parish et al., 2008; Stojanovic et al., 2020) found that when employees are treated fairly, and their efforts are recognised, they are more willing to commit, contribute and help the business in times of crisis. This suggests employees could be more willing to engage, thereby helping the organisation improve performance and grow.

As a result of investing in and developing a strong and stable EER by using I-CSR and Social Sustainability, businesses should start seeing a return on investment. Satisfied employees lead to desirable employee behaviour, including decreasing absences and intention to resign, a rise in employee creativity and innovative behaviour, improved communication both internally and externally, helping to enhance business attractiveness, a more positive organisational identity and a greater level of employee empowerment (Barczak et al., 2010; Bibi et al., 2021; Bohdanowicz & Zientara, 2008; Glaveli, 2021; Gonzalez et al., 2020; Lee, 2022; Liu et al., 2020; Rodriguez et al., 2021; Tsourvakas & Yfantidou, 2017). Generating positive employee attitudes and behaviour fosters an atmosphere of trust, increasing employee loyalty, engagement and motivation (Gill, 2008; Glaveli, 2021; Lee et al., 2013b; Liu et al., 2020; Yu et al., 2018). The creation of a positive work environment results in multiple benefits from both the employees' and employers' perspectives: it reduces employees' resistance to change and enables businesses to be more flexible (Gonzalez et al., 2020; Yu et al., 2018); helps increase performance (Yu et al., 2018); aid in sustainable development (Kim & Kim, 2016) and improve overall employee and employer citizenship (Yu et al., 2018).

Moreover, when it is known I-CSR activities are being addressed, employees are more likely to engage in voluntary E-CSR activities as they feel proud, motivated, engaged and involved in continuing the cycle of reciprocity (Bohdanowicz & Zientara, 2008; Kang & Sung, 2017; Lee, 2022). It can therefore be suggested that creating employee job satisfaction is a key part of developing the EER and should be the main business objective because reduced satisfaction only has negative implications, including rising expenses and damaging the business's reputation, both of which have a direct correlation with profit (Gill, 2008). It is important to note that each employee reacts differently depending on whether I-CSR activities are intrinsic (truthful effort to encourage value) or extrinsic (effort to benefit personally from exchange) (Stojanovic et al., 2020). Understanding and catering to all employees' individual needs is impossible; therefore, understanding the main activities, values and beliefs accepted by most employees would be a viable approach. However, given that most of these outcomes rely on a foundation of trust between the Employee and Employer, it can be argued that trust is the most important value businesses should aim to achieve. This is supported by Fatma et al. (2016) and Glaveli (2021), who argue that employee-organisation trust directly links to establishing credible relations that last.

4. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTERNAL CSR, EMPLOYEE TRUST AND LOYALTY

Previous literature has highlighted the importance of employee trust and loyalty for business success, including reducing expenses and increasing profits; however, like CSR and Social Sustainability, no universal definition of trust has been developed yet. Trust is people's willingness to rely on another person (Liu et al., 2020), which can be formed by building 'reliability and integrity' (Glaveli, 2021, p.371) and is therefore integral to social exchange (Kim & Kim, 2016). Given CSR, like many other relationships, is built on trust between stakeholders, CSR related activities have a direct, positive impact on trust for customers and employees (Choi & La, 2013; Glaveli, 2021; Gonzalez et al., 2020; Martinez & Bosque, 2013).

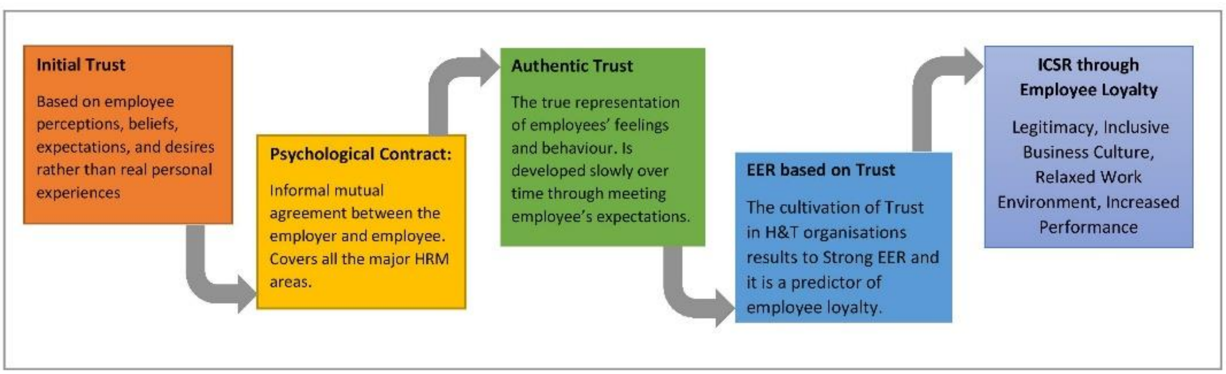
The importance and influence of trust is widely acknowledged in the literature as the principal factor influencing social exchange (Investors in People, n.d.); it is the glue that binds together social interactions, and without a form of trust, social interaction would not be possible (Molm et al., 2007). Yu et al. (2018) support this and argue that trust is an integral component in fostering strong, high-quality EER and individual relationships both directly and indirectly, which, in business, aids interpersonal activities such as negotiation. Stojanovic et al. (2020) further suggest that once employees' trust has been gained, their perceptions surrounding the external and internal environment change. They become bolder and are less driven by perceived threats. This supports the argument that trust helps reduce hostility among employees (i.e., Gill, 2008; Gonzalez et al., 2020; Yu et al., 2018). Furthermore, trust fosters a more inclusive business culture (Jabbour & Santos, 2008) which in turn creates a more comfortable and relaxed work environment, with employees being more willing to engage, contribute and interact (Gonzalez et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2020; Roca-Puig, 2019; Stojanovic et al., 2020). As a result, trust is a mediating mechanism between EER and multiple performance outcomes (Hom et al., 2009; Yu et al., 2018). Glaveli (2021) supports this argument but further suggests it is a key variable in securing employee loyalty.

Although there is uncertainty if trust is developed sequentially (Glaveli, 2021), trust appears to materialise in many forms, the main two being *Authentic* and *Initial*. Although both require more research and further conceptualisation, Solomon & Flores (2003) argue that Authentic Trust is the true representation of employees' feelings and behaviour and is the key form of trust in relationships. This form appears to be built up slowly over time through meeting expectations and is a key component of social exchange (Yu et al., 2018). It is also argued that this is a more reliable form of trust, built on actual personal experiences. On the other hand, the Initial Trust concept is formed during the first stages of an interaction when information has been exchanged or received from an employer or external environment (McKnight et al., 1998). However, because it is based on information received before employees begin their employment, it relies heavily on employee perceptions, beliefs, expectations and desires rather than real personal experiences and can therefore be biased and manipulated (CIPD, 2021b).

A key factor contributing to the creation and maintenance of the Initial Trust is the concept of Psychological Contract; this can be briefly described as the mutual agreement between employers and employees, unsupported by any legal foundation (Armstrong and Taylor, 2020). The Psychological Contract covers the following HRM related areas: job security; training, development and career opportunities; value and contribution to society; fair pay and organisational support. CIPD (2021b) suggests the Psychological Contract is more influential than a legally binding (written) one, despite being intangible and unenforceable. As a concept, it can be applied to both employers and employees. However, most research has been conducted from the employees' perspective. Denise et al. (2016) found that the Psychological Contract has been identified as a vital tool managers use to control EER and gain employee trust. As it assumes the employers' side will honour agreements made, the Psychological Contract is heavily influenced by trust, equality and justice (Atkinson, 2007), reinforcing the importance and influence of employee values. More recent studies (i.e., Glaveli, 2021; Lee, 2022; Liu et al., 2020) further support this argument, but they also suggest that perceptions and trust are influenced by an organisation's sensitivity to empathy, honesty regarding ethics, values and morals and the ability to follow through. Nevertheless, irrespective of the form, trust is perceived as a direct indication of strong EER (Yu et al., 2018). This, in turn, supports the argument that understanding how trust influences the EER and employee loyalty is pivotal, and the use of Psychological Contracts plays a vital role in this process.

Furthermore, Martinez & Bosque (2013) have acknowledged the importance and influence of trust in predicting employee loyalty. However, it is often described as a direct outcome of an emotional response (Rodriguez et al., 2021). As such, it can be suggested that trust is the predictor of loyalty, and loyalty is the result. Therefore, to build loyalty, organisations need to connect with employees' emotions alongside meeting basic needs. For example, when organisations and employees share values, they inadvertently defend each other's interests, rewarding one another with goodwill and loyalty (Rodriguez et al., 2021). This view is also supported by Kim & Kim (2016), who further suggest that perceived values, legitimacy, social versatility, and transparency significantly influence loyalty. This approach is key to increasing both employee retention and loyalty (Gill, 2008; Lee et al., 2013a). Stojanovic et al. (2020) support this but also suggest that greater awareness will eventually lead to stronger employee loyalty. Figure 3 below describes how employee loyalty is built through the cultivation of employee trust in H&T organisations; at the same time employee trust is contributing to the achievement of key I-CSR outcomes.

Figure 3: **Building Employee Loyalty through Trust**



Adhering to beliefs, needs and expectations, particularly of those directly related to employee Social Responsibility, helps create legitimacy (Deephouse & Suchman, 2008); this, in turn, enriches social relations and thereby influences EER, loyalty and support from internal and external stakeholders (Gonzalez et al., 2020). Achieving legitimacy is vital as people cannot fully commit to an organisation if this is surrounded by negativity and doubt. Similarly, Rodriguez et al. (2021) suggest that employees trust and support organisations and their sustainable actions, only when they act legitimately. On the other hand, if undertaken illegitimately, employees lose interest, and the organisation's credibility drops. This indicates an interdependency between trust and legitimacy, directly impacting employee loyalty (Kim & Kim, 2016). In addition, scholars such as Gill (2008), Roca-Puig (2019) and Rodriguez et al. (2021) argue that employees are more loyal to organisations committed to the betterment of society as a whole. This suggests CSR (and, to a great extent, I-CSR) is a mediating mechanism through which personal and organisational outcomes can be achieved (Lee, 2022). It acts as a conduit enabling employees to find meaning and achieve value, reinforcing Glaveli's (2021) argument that the link between employee loyalty and CSR is indirect.

6. CONCLUSION

This paper has critically reviewed the importance of I-CSR in relation to the EER and creating employee loyalty through trust. According to the extant literature the cultivation of employee Trust in H&T organisations can contribute to the employee loyalty and commitment, enhance social sustainability, and help the I-CSR function achieve higher levels of employee satisfaction and eventually employee retention. The following sub-sections summarise the theoretical implications through the identification of the research gaps, the managerial implications as well as recommendations for future research.

6.1. Theoretical Implications and the Research Gaps

Although the concept of CSR has been widely researched across multiple disciplines and industries, we identified a number of gaps in this topic area that need further investigation. Firstly, scholars argue that CSR research in hospitality and tourism is new, with areas such as the luxury sector being overlooked (Harmer, 2019). There is, therefore, scope for additional research in these areas. Secondly, in CSR literature, the Social Dimension is argued to be less conceptually developed (Lee, 2022; Roca-Puig, 2019), with most literature focusing on Social Sustainability. This is reflected in the lack of conceptualisation surrounding I-CSR and how this influences organisational success. Therefore, research into I-CSR would be beneficial as an emerging field of study. Thirdly, despite the significant range and diversity in employees' expectations and desires, it is currently unclear which factors are the most important and why. It is therefore hard to determine which I-CSR values, attitudes, practices, policies and rewards organisations should adopt as current literature fails to differentiate between what employees expect and what they desire. Due to this gap, there is a lack of understanding about how these ICSR attitudes, behaviours, benefits and values affect the EER, including Employee Trust and Loyalty, despite the vital role trust and loyalty play in developing Social Sustainability, strong EER and positive organisational outcomes (Glaveli, 2021; Gonzalez et al., 2020). Finally, given that employees are key stakeholders and integral to organisational success, paired with the lack of evidence of I-CSR research from the employees' perspective, further research is required to understand the impact and influence of I-CSR on employees (Gürlek & Tuna, 2019; Islam et al., 2015; Kim et al., 2020; Rhou & Singal, 2020; Rodriguez et al., 2021).

6.2. Managerial Implications

The findings suggest EER, employee trust and loyalty are formed through the actions of meeting H&T employee expectations. The existing studies (i.e. Lee, 2020; Stojanovic et al. 2020; Rodriguez et al., 2021) agree that employees expect something in exchange for their loyalty and good performance, however these expectations clearly vary. This further reinforces the diversity in employee expectations, reemphasising the subjectivity and ambiguity behind employee motivation and infers it is the combination of multiple factors that form employee perceptions of the EER. It is therefore imperative for H&T managers to develop a deeper understanding of their employees' basic and desired expectations. Basic expectations at the "taken for granted assumptions" held by employees regarding the EER; these assumptions are directly linked to the psychological contract. On the other hand, the desired expectations are the "extras" that will lead to employee satisfaction and eventually loyalty and retention.

Given that trust appears to be a psychological construct formulated uniquely by each individual, it can be argued that failure to communicate clearly and follow through on promises during the early stages of the EER (Initial Trust), has a significant psychological impact on the employee's ability to trust the organisation because the prospective employee lacks evidence to substantiate their own theoretical reasoning. This can have a long-term impact on the H&T organisation since Authentic Trust cannot be achieved. Contrastingly, if employee expectations are continuously met, the stronger the EER becomes and the longer it could take for employee trust and loyalty to be eroded.

6.3 Recommendations for future research

Due to the lack of conceptualisation and universal definitions for CSR and I-CSR, it is recommended that further research is needed before its influence on EER can be empirically proven. Furthermore, additional research into the effects of I-CSR on the EER should be undertaken focused in different H&T sub-sectors i.e. luxury hotels, restaurants and cruise-ships. Finally, the importance and influence of I-CSR, attitudes, behaviours and incentives may vary in non-western cultural contexts. Therefore, it is hoped that future empirical and conceptual studies will address the above-mentioned research gaps and provide a more holistic and in-depth understanding of the I-CSR effects on the EER in H&T context.

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"POPE JOAN" OF RHOIDES AS A TOURIST ATTRACTION - SUGGESTIONS AND OPINIONS

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Abstract

The popularity of a literary depiction or an author can make the reader want to visit the place the author wrote about, or he/she is connected to. This thesis studies the literary book "Pope Joanna" by the author Emmanuel Rhoides[2]. It is a classic novel, a milestone in Greek literature, which, although written one hundred and fifty-seven years ago, remains timeless and relevant. The quantitative research that follows aims to capture the possibility of the novel to function as a "tourist product" and to investigate the motivations and knowledge of the Greeks of Athens regarding the author's work.

Keywords: tourist product, Emmanuel Rhoides, "Pope Joan", literary attractions, motivations, literary visitors.

[2] Emmanuel Rhoides, originally from the island of Syros, was born on July 28, 1836. The son of a wealthy family, he spent his childhood and teenage years in Europe, moving to Genoa in 1841. In 1866, the novel "Pope Joan" was published, which led to his excommunication and persecution by the Holy Synod. In 1873, he lost most of his fortune in investments. In 1885, he suffered a serious jaw injury after a collision with a carriage, as a result of which he was unable to speak for a long time. In 1890, he completely lost his hearing. He died in 1904 in Athens. (Rhoides,2017).

1. MILESTONES OF THE BOOK

The story of Pope Joan takes place in a medieval era but teaches lessons of courage and mental strength to this day. The novel has fascinated and continues to fascinate many generations of people because it remains relevant. With this novel, Rhoides delivered a story - an anthem for women with timeless truths and values. (Gerontopoulos, 2014). He connected the protagonist with the life of every educated and powerful woman as a role model but at the same time he narrated all those stages of the female figure in the social arena of a male-dominated society. (Rhoides, 2017). Joan experiences loss; she falls in love, lives in a toxic relationship, has to "choose" between her dreams and loneliness, gets pregnant and dies. The following could be considered as milestones of the novel:

- Her remarkable love and determination, the moment she decides to change her identity and follow her lover.
- The second point and the most catalytic is when Joan leaves Froumentio, in order to follow her dream and finally with courage, stubbornness and persistence she manages to end up on the throne of the Vatican. (Moullas, 1994).

2. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The history of literary tourism goes back quite a long way. Some scholars claim that religious pilgrimages in antiquity were forms of literary tourism, with D. MacCannell stating that the first tours were actually religious pilgrimages. H. Hendrix identified the first cases of literary tourism practices in the ancient Roman world. Cicero (106 BC) paid tribute to writers' graves in De legibus, and after his death, Virgil's tomb near Naples became a tourist attraction.

Literature has been a powerful source of travel inspiration since the Grand Tour of Europe in the 18th and 19th centuries. Nevertheless, although roots of literary tourism can be found in ancient times, it wasn't until the second half of the 20th century, that it gained gain widespread recognition and acceptance (Pocock, 2016).

The study also addresses one of the most important novels of Greek literature, "Pope Joan". Her life is chronicled alongside the life and work of her creator, Emmanuel Rhoides. According to the legend, Joan was a woman who conquered the Vatican throne in the period 855 – 858 pretending to be a man. The work divided public opinion and it was condemned by the Church of Greece, characterizing it as "anti-Christian and immoral".

Both literary and film tourism are included in the cultural tourism industry, as it refers to any journey inspired by literature.

Literary tourism occurs when authors or their literature become so popular, that people are drawn to, either those locations associated with the author (e.g. birthplace, home, graveside), or those featured in his/her work (Busby & Klug, 2001). Access to these places gives lovers of literature the chance to interact with the creators of the works they admire, to the point where they can see and touch objects associated with the author or his/ her work.

In a nutshell, literary tourism is about visiting places that are famous for their association with books and authors.

3. TYPES OF LITERARY ATTRACTIONS

Smith identifies two types of literary attractions: places from "author's real life" and "imaginary" places related to writings.

In the first type, he explains that these places are related to the author and associated with different stages in his life (e.g. places of birth, chosen residences, graves). Many times, a point of interest for visitors is the artist's birthplace, as it offers insight into his past and suggests his social class before he became famous. For example, the city of Stanford-upon-Avon in the United Kingdom, is an attraction for hundreds of tourists from all over the world, as it is the birthplace of the famous playwright William Shakespeare. Writers' birthplaces are, in one sense, the houses of writers – however, they are rarely the houses, which the written works have been created in. (Tsatalbasoglou,2020)

Smith identifies one more difference between places that became famous for their literature and those which had already been famous before the literature works. The last case concerns the buildings, which are considered important in themselves, because of their history and architecture. Nevertheless, there are some cases where several buildings and places would not have "lasted", if they were not related to authors and literary works. Without the person and/or literature, the aforementioned places would not have survived. In this case, it is the person and not the place and its architecture. (Vardopoulos& Als 2023)

Herbert claims that when literary places connect the real with the imaginary, readers' interest is stimulated. When someone reads a book, they penetrate into it, making the place described seem real. Watson & Saunders indicate reader's desire to travel to the real place. This hazy boundary between fiction and reality is fundamental to the decision-making regarding visiting a destination represented within fiction. (Andersen & Robinson, 2002). The visitor related to the fiction travels, either to answer his/her questions regarding the story of the work, or to change the "sense of place".

MOTIVATIONS FOR LITERARY VISITORS

Literary tourists' motivations are influenced by various criteria. First, the author's use of a specific location, which the work takes place in, can create a specific image for the reader. For example, the small and abandoned island of Spinalonga - the former leper colony was a source of inspiration for Victoria Hislop in the book of the same name, "The Island".

Many of the works of literature and of the places described in them gain great readability, when their stories are shown on television or in the cinema. One such case is the book by the author De Bremieres "The Mandolin of Captain Corelli" and its presentation in the cinema. The film was shot in Kefalonia, and the island soon became widely known. (Manola & Koufadakis ,2022)

Another influence that has been presented earlier concerns the creators and the places where they lived, were inspired by, and died.

- Most visitors are motivated to learn about the author's life and the place where he/ she lived and, to a lesser extent, to get to know his characters. Literary tourists focus on the author. This is because the author has the unique ideas that highlight the place. Many visitors also associate the trip with memories from their childhood and youth. (Manola, 2019)
- Another motivation is that many people go to literary places, not because they know or admire the author or his/her books, but to accompany friends or relatives, who are the actual fans of the author. (Squire, 1994).
- For some years now, a new trend has appeared in the tourism industry, which can be included in literary tourism. These tourists, known as bibliophiles, choose hotels with large – well-stocked libraries. The motivation of these people is obviously to read books in a very special atmosphere. (Macleod, 2018)
- If we look at the characteristics of literate tourists, which also includes literary tourists, it seems that they prefer to travel independently rather than with organized travel agencies. They are also people who do not consider tourism products to be commercialized and mass-produced, and they place great value on authentic experiences (Appadurai, 1986).
- Literary tourists want to get away from their everyday life for a while. At the same time, they have a rich imagination, as their goal is to travel to the places where the characters of the works or the authors themselves lived, to find out if the images in their minds are real and/or to create new ones.
- Summarizing the motivations of literary tourists, we could add as a characteristic that they are quite educated, with a love for literature. As such, these are middle- and high-income visitors seeking art and philosophy, as well as continuing their education and training. They can also be characterized as people with a strong sense of romance and nostalgia (Hudson and Richie, 2006).

5. LITERARY ROUTES AND THEIR IMPORTANCE IN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

The tourism industry is an integral part of the local economy since it contributes to the creation of new jobs. These jobs cover a wide range of professions: from maintenance, construction and repairs to the establishment of businesses. Consequently, the unemployment rate decreases and the national income increases. (Sarantakou, 2019)

The demand for destinations of literary interest strengthens the competitiveness of tourism.

According to Throsby (2006), literary tourism promotes communication between individuals, as well as between different nationalities. This condition has certain effects, such as mental development, reduction of political-social conflicts.

The external economy refers to the cases where an individual's activities affect the well-being of others in ways that are not promoted through the market. Therefore, literary tourism can act as the connecting link that will bridge the age gap, the old with the new residents, people of different nationalities and religious beliefs, being an important factor in building a strong social capital.(Manola &Mouchimoglou,2022)

Literary texts help readers connect and interact with other generations. Literary tourism can also contribute to the quality of life of local residents, by giving a "romantic" atmosphere to neighborhoods and cities, making them popular places to live and work.

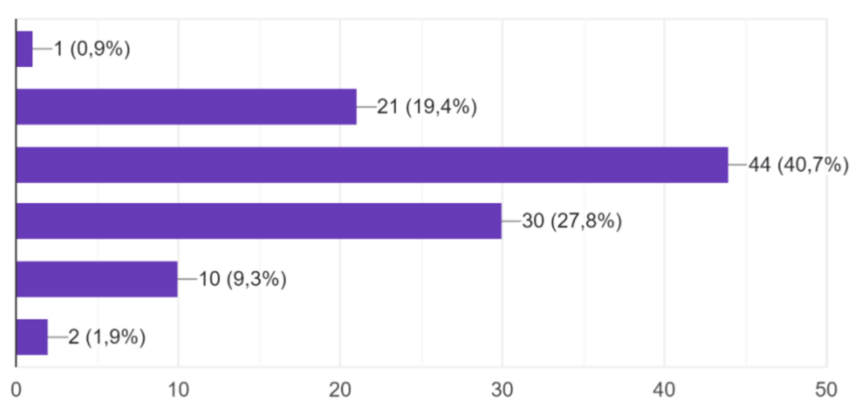
According to Brown et al (2014), literary tourism could provide solutions to the country's challenges related to climate change, including the protection and regeneration of the great internal energy of old buildings (e.g., writers' houses that function as museums). It is a fact that the energy efficiency of buildings built before 1980 is higher compared to modern ones, while it has been reported that their reuse and renovation has significant environmental benefits. So, as the domestic sector represents 23% of energy consumption internationally, the necessity for new policies to reduce energy consumption and improve energy efficiency becomes even greater. Therefore, the preservation and reuse of structures can reduce urban sprawl.

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The survey was conducted among Greek citizens. A questionnaire was created according to Greek and foreign literature. The questionnaire was based on the self-completion method, with closed type questions (multiple choice method). 108 people participated in the survey. The collection of the questionnaires lasted from January 10th to January 13th.

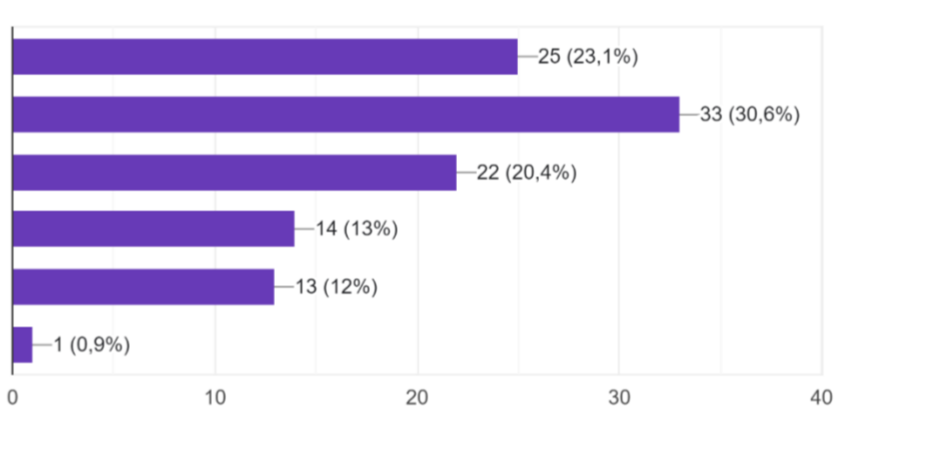
1. Do you travel often?

Not at all
A little
Moderately
Enough
A lot
A Great Deal



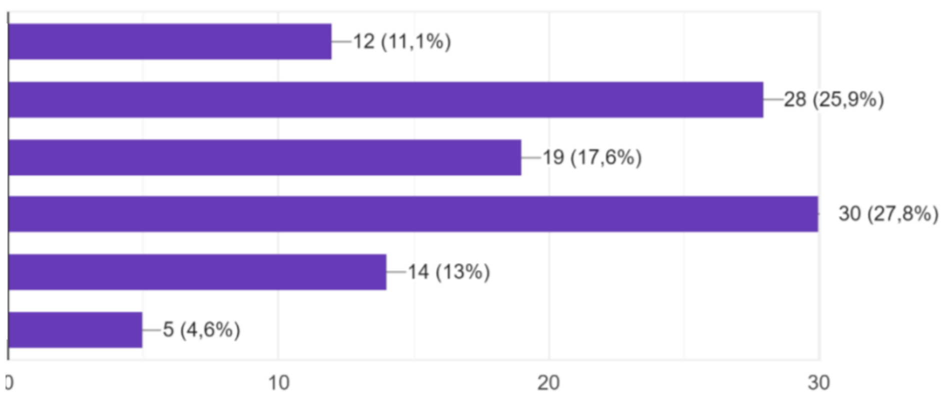
2. Have you traveled to places related to books you've read?

Not at all
A little
Moderately
Enough
A lot
A Great Deal



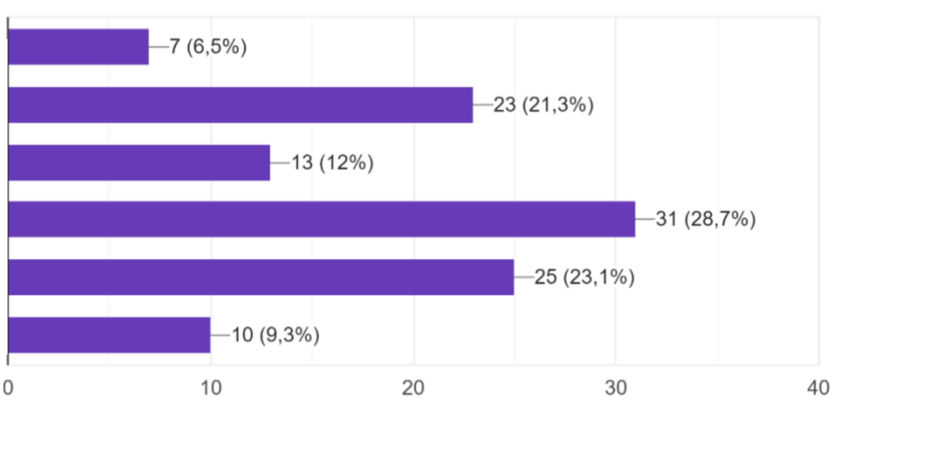
3. How likely would it be for you to visit a place related to the life of a writer?

Not at all
A little
Moderately
Enough
A lot
A Great Deal

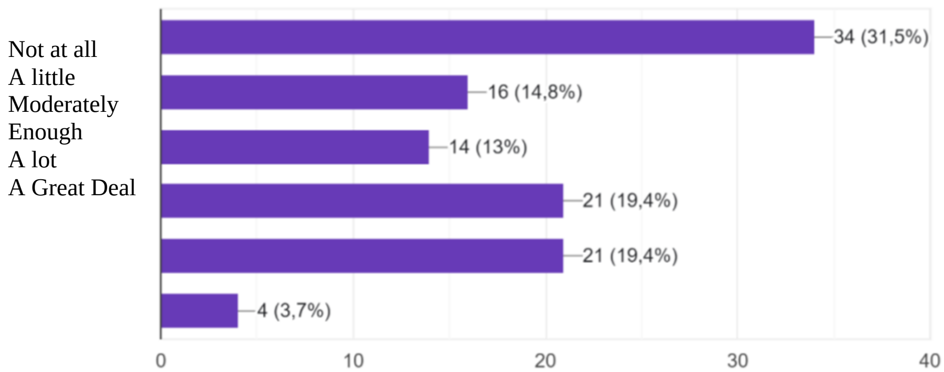


4. Would you be interested in visiting museums, that are based on the life and work of authors?

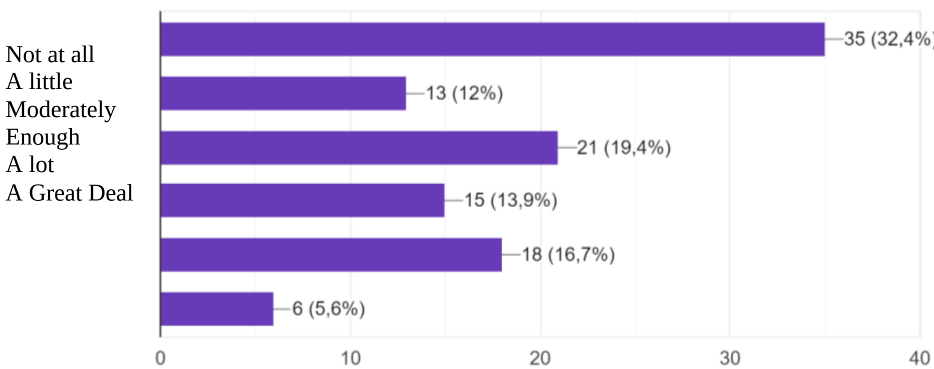
Not at all
A little
Moderately
Enough
A lot
A Great Deal



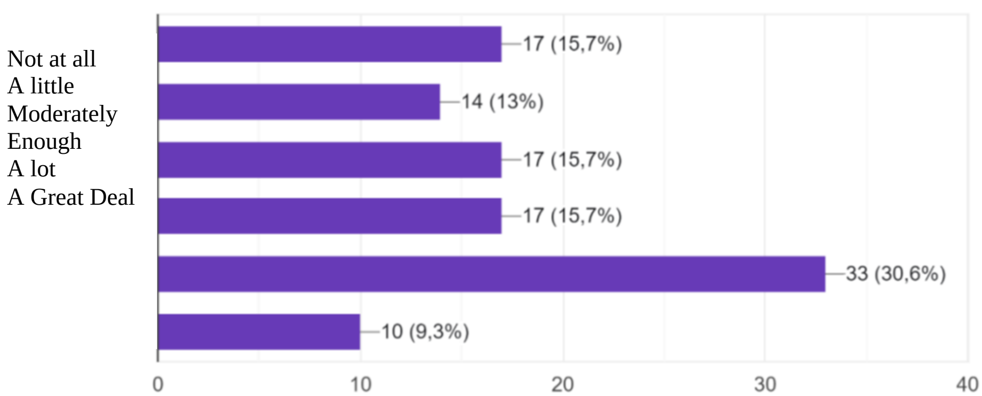
5. The novel "Pope Joan" by the author Emmanuel Rhoides is a book-landmark in Greek literature. How well do you know it?



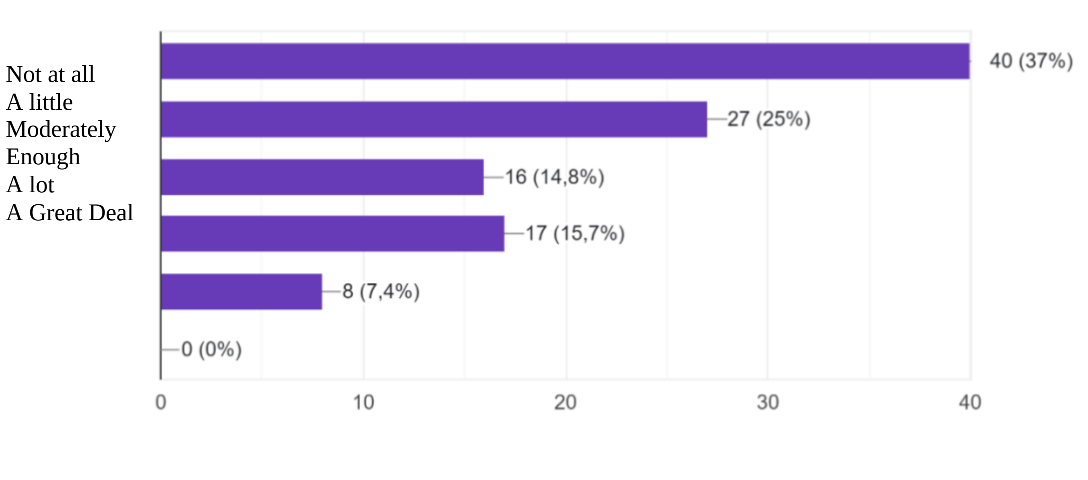
6. How likely would it be for you to read the book in the future?



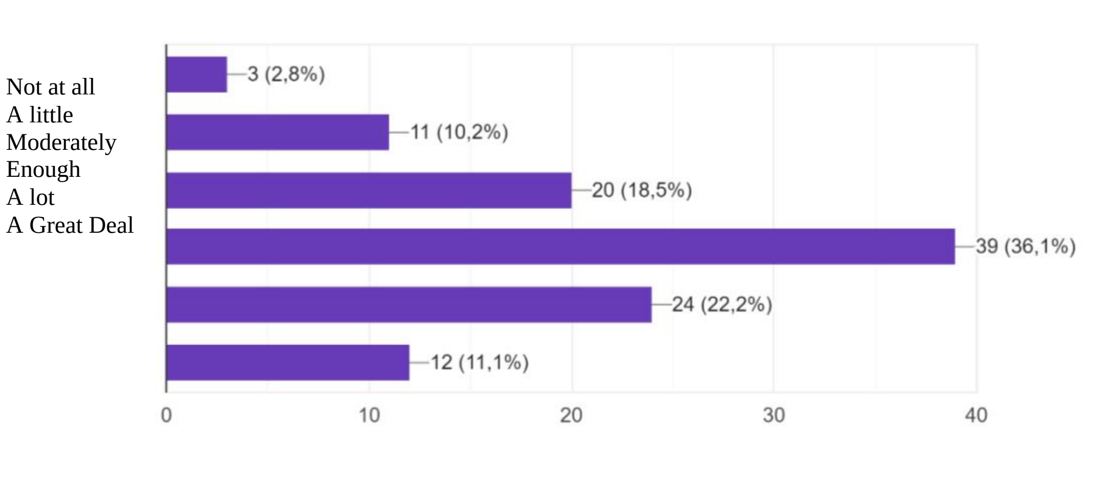
7. Has the Pope's experiment left an indelible mark on the life and work of Rhoides?



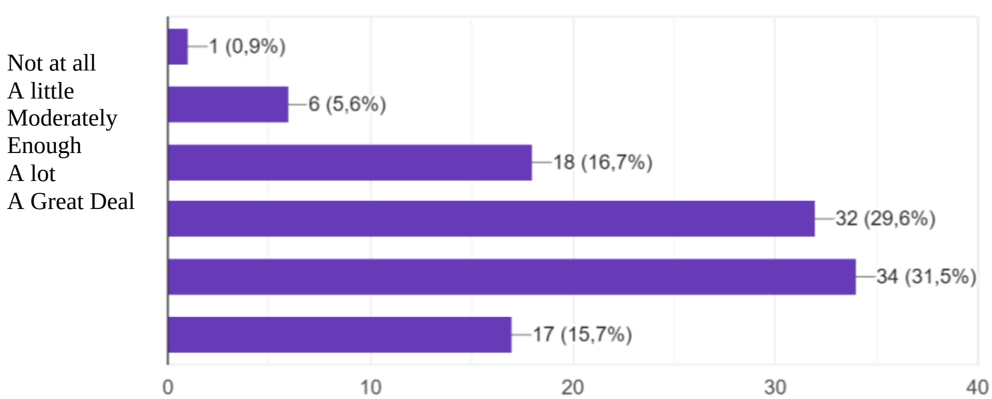
8. How much do you think our country has invested in the development of this particular type of tourism?



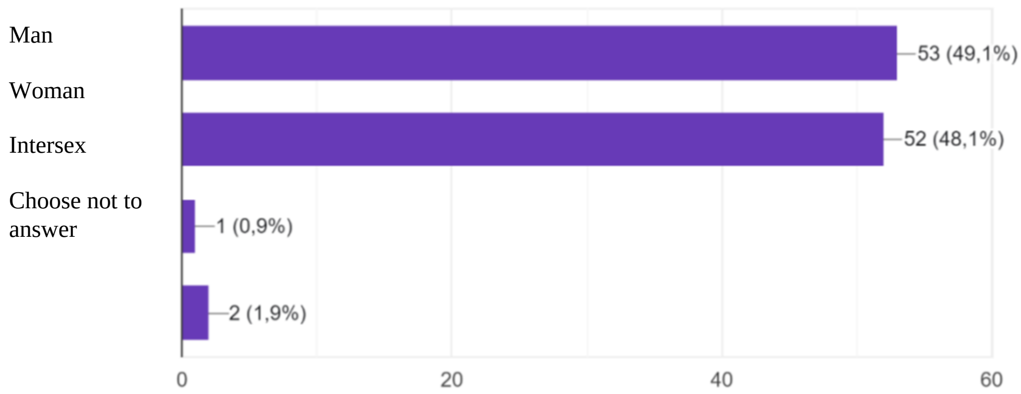
9. Are there any development prospects in Greece?



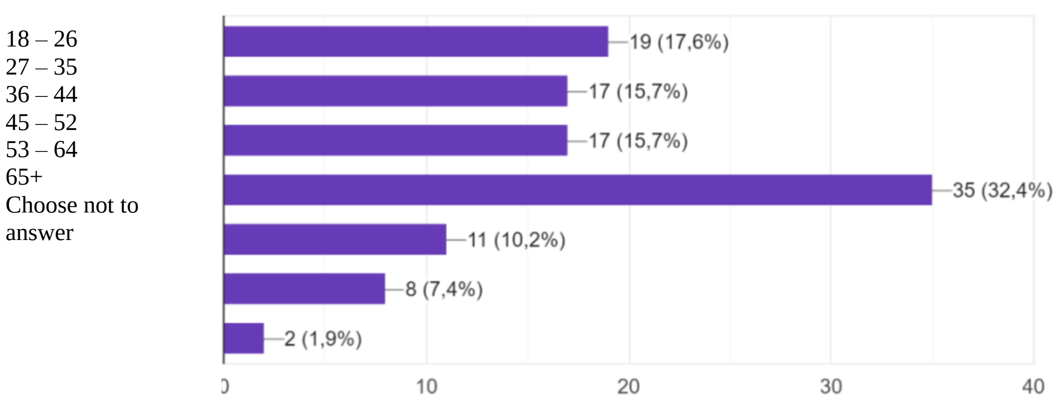
10. Could literary tourism contribute to local development?



11. Please indicate your gender



12. Please indicate your age



According to the results of the survey, literary tourism is not particularly widespread in our country, since the percentages listed above are at least discouraging. Greek citizens are not yet familiar with this type of tourism, while a large percentage did not seem particularly willing to get to know it.

It is also noteworthy that most people are neither aware of the novel "Pope Joan", nor of its author. Also, the greater percentage of people, who participated in the survey, do not wish to read it. As far as the development prospects for our country are concerned, there were quite a few who answered positively, however, not all of them shared the same point of view.

When asked, how much our country has invested in literary tourism, most answered mainly "Not at all" or "A little". Indeed, Greece has not engaged in this type of tourism and perhaps it is one of the main reasons that people are unaware of its existence. Literary tourism could contribute significantly to local development.

13.Survey Demographic Characteristics

GENDER OF PARTICIPANTS	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	PERCENTAGE OF PARTICIPANTS
Man	53	49.1%
Woman	52	48.1%
Intersex	1	0.9%
Choose not to answer	2	1.9%

AGE OF PARTICIPANTS	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	PERCENTAGE OF PARTICIPANTS
18 – 26	19	17.6%
27 – 35	17	15.7%
36 – 44	17	15.7%
45 – 52	35	32.4%
53 – 64	11	10.2%
65+	8	7.4%
Choose not to answer	2	1.9%

7. CONCLUSIONS

The development of literary tourism affects destinations, while at the same time contributes to tourism development and the local economy. Places, whether urban or rural, have the opportunity to develop through literary tourism. Thus, the literary place becomes unique, since visitors cannot create similar experiences in another destination. Today it has become a remarkable phenomenon. It can bring significant benefits to a city, beyond creating jobs and business opportunities for its residents, and give a sense of pride in its heritage and cultural attractions. In our country, literary tourism has a long history and exists, although still in embryonic form, but over the years we believe that it will have an upward trend.

Rhoides' "Pope Joanna" is a work with deep meanings and merits. The path of the protagonist moves away from the classic female ideal of literature, while, at the same time, she is a model of the modern woman, because she presents something so modern in such an old book (157 years ago) and an even older era, as described. Rhoides highlights her value in an era, where women were considered subordinate.

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TOURISTS' PERCEPTION OF *LAFUN* AND *ABULA* FOR CULINARY TOURISM IN IBADAN, OYO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study examined tourists' perception of Lafun and Abula (LA) for culinary tourism (CT) in Ibadan, Oyo state, Nigeria. The specific objectives were to determine; tourists' awareness of CT, tourists' participation in CT, tourists' perception of CT, tourists' awareness of LA as indigenous food of Ibadan, and tourists' opinion on showcasing LA for CU. The study was carried out in popular tourists' destinations in Ibadan. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 250 tourists who participated in the study. Descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation) were used to present data collected. Results showed that; majority of the tourists (63.2%) were aware of CU, few (29.6%) had participated in it, majority had a positive perception of CU, majority (93.2%) were aware of LA as indigenous food Ibadan, and majority (86.8%) agreed that LA is worthy of showcasing for CU. Correlation analysis revealed a positive and significant relationship between; age ($r = 0.205$, $p= 0.010$), household size ($r = 0.142$, $p= 0.025$) and perception of CU. Correlation analysis also showed a positive and significant relationship between age ($r = 0.191$, $p= 0.002$), participation in social organization ($r = 0.163$, $p= 0.010$) and awareness of LA. It was therefore concluded that tourists were aware of LA and CU, had a good perception of CU and were of the opinion that LA should be showcased for CU. Hence, Oyo State Tourism Board should formulate policy that will bring local food vendors, tour

operators, and management of destinations together in an attempt to position and promote LA for CU.

Key words: Culture, Tourism, Culinary, Cuisines, Perception

Introduction

Culinary tourism (CU) is also referred to as gastronomic tourism or food tourism. It involves travelling from one place to another to taste delicious cuisines and drinks. Traditional food has its importance from a social, cultural and economic point of view. It preserves the tradition of a region as well as attracts tourists to the destination. CU is interconnected with destination marketing and management. In fact, there are tourists who love to travel to various destinations to taste different cuisines (Sangeeta, 2021). It is about food as a subject and medium, destination and vehicle for tourism. It is about individuals exploring foods new to them as well as using food to sell their histories and to construct marketable and publicly attractive identities and it is about individuals satisfying curiosity. It is about experiencing food in a mode that is out of ordinary that steps outside the normal routine (Lucy, 2013). CU is one of the most important tourism industries. It tells stories about a region's history, inhabitants, and landscape (Sotiriadis, 2015). It enriches tourists' experiences, and can be a useful tool for boosting economic, social, and community growth. According to Sidali *et. al.* (2013), it has the potential to inspire and draw prospective tourists. It refers to trips to destinations where the key driving factors are local food and beverages. Food is an undeniable necessity for vacationers, as well as a daily basic requirement for all humans. CU has tremendous potential to make the tourism industry a valuable component of most countries' growth and development plans. During their journeys, a large percentage of travelers consider dining and food to be important activities. However, the importance of food in destination marketing has received little attention until recently, both globally and locally (Bokunewicz and Shulman, 2017). CU is the pursuit of one-of-a-kind and unforgettable dining and drinking experiences. In other words, it is made up of tourists' perceptions and satisfaction with the tastes of food and beverages (Björk and Kauppinen-Räisänen, 2016). Culinary tourists go beyond just tasting different local foods, its benefits are more for the local community than for the tourists, such as; improving sales of produce by the local farmers, ensuring visitors' acknowledgement of cultural and natural landscape, protection of old traditions in relation to food and wine products as well as prepared dishes, imparting marketable skills among the locals when they sell their local cuisines to the tourists, creating new restaurants or dining experiences, multiplier effects of overnight stay in local hotels, educating visitors about the local cultures, and most importantly, the development or expansion of local businesses. Even though CU is a significant part of the tourism industry, it is still a field where many researchers have not done extensive research (Lee *et. al.*., 2015). It is in line with the afore listed benefits of CU that this study was designed to assess tourists' perception of positioning a special local cuisine; *Lafun* and *Abula* (LA) indigenous to

Ibadan people of Oyo State, Nigeria for culinary tourism. Cassava flour is used for making *Lafun*. To get the flour, cassava is processed, dried and blended to powdery form. T make *Lafun,* sieve the cassava flour, put in a boiling water, stir till the flour is totally incorporated, add water and steam for about 2 minutes, stirring continues until *Lafun* is smooth and lump free (K's Cuisine, 2022). To make *Abula,* cook peeled beans over average heat for about an hour, mash the cooked beans, add ingredients such as; smoked fish, salt, pepper, crayfish, and palm oil and cooked for about 5 minutes. Stir continuously until the oil changes from red to yellow (Thomas, 2017).

Plate 1: *Lafun and Abula* Source: Oyelere, 2021

Research Questions

The research questions formulated to guide this study include;

1. Are the respondents aware of culinary tourism?
2. Have they ever participated in culinary tourism?
3. How do the respondents perceive culinary tourism?
4. Are the tourists aware of *LA* as indigenous food of Ibadan?
5. What is the opinion of the tourists on showcasing *LA* for *CU?*

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study include the following;

i. To determine respondents' awareness of culinary tourism
ii. To determine respondents' participation in culinary tourism
iii. To determine respondents' perception of culinary tourism
iv. To determine tourists' awareness of *LA* as indigenous food of Ibadan
v. To determine tourists' opinion on showcasing *LA* for *CU*

Hypotheses of the Study

i. There is no significant relationship between socio-economic characteristics of tourists and perception of culinary tourism.
ii. There is no significant relationship between socio-economic characteristics of tourists and awareness of culinary tourism.

Methodology

Design for the Study: Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study.

Study Area

The research was done in Ibadan. Ibadan is the capital city of Oyo State and it is located in the southwestern part of Nigeria on longitude 7^{0}23'47''N and Latitude 3^{0}55'0'E and the city covers about 3,080 square kilometers. Ibadan was established in 1830 as military base but has transformed into a thriving commercial city. With population of over 1.3 million people, Ibadan is the third most populous city in Nigeria and the largest city by land mass. The region comprises of eleven local government areas. Ibadan is a city of many firsts such as; the first University in Nigeria (University of Ibadan), the first Television station in Africa (NTA Ibadan), the first sky scraper in Nigeria (Cocoa House), the first stadium in Nigeria (liberty stadium), the first teaching hospital in Nigeria (University College Hospital), the first housing estate in Nigeria (Bodija Housing Estate), the first dualized road in Nigeria among others. The Ibadan people are majorly of Yoruba tribe though the nature of its thriving industries has made it a home for many other tribes in the country. The main economic activities engaged in by the populace includes agriculture, factory work, service sector, transportation, handcraft, etc. With its strategic location close to Lagos State, the city is also a home to many industries such as Agro-allied, textile, food processing, health care and cosmetic, tobacco and cigarette manufacturing etc. The study areas comprise of numerous tourism destinations spread across the eleven local government areas of the city including the Zoological Garden in the University of Ibadan, Cocoa House in Dugbe, Mapo Hall, National Museum, Bowers' Memorial Tower in Oke Aare, Trans Amusement Park, Ace Mall, Jericho Mall, Ventura Mall and Oke Ibadan Hill among others. Egungun and Oke Ibadan festival are also part of tourism generating activities of Ibadan.

Population for the Study

The population for this study consist of tourists who were on tour to Ibadan. Notable tourists' attractions like; National Museum Ibadan, Agodi Gardens, Mapo Hall, Bower's Memorial Tower, Ventura Mall, University of Ibadan and Trans Amusement Park were purposively selected because they attract a high number of tourists.

Sample for the Study

The sample population was selected by simple random technique across the selected attractions. In all, a total of two hundred and fifty respondents participated in the study.

Instrument for Data Collection

Questionnaire consisting of open and close ended questions was used for data collection. The research questions guided the design of the instrument. The instrument gathered data on; respondents' awareness, perception, and participation in culinary tourism. Cronbach Alpha reliability method was used to establish the reliability of the instrument. Reliability coefficient of 0.82 was obtained. The research instrument was validated in order to assess its ability to obtain the needed information from the respondents. Face and content validity were carefully conducted by subjecting the research instrument to thorough screening and judgment of experts who are academics that specialized in tourism management.

Data Collection Methods

Two research assistants together with the researcher were involved in the data collection. The research assistants were trained to enable them understand the objectives of the study and the design of the research instrument. All the respondents were literate hence; they were only guided in filling the questionnaire.

Data Analysis

The version 20 of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze data collected. Frequency, percentage, and mean were used to analyze data on research questions while correlation analysis was used to test the hypotheses.

Results

Socio – economic characteristics of respondents

Table 1 shows that majority (64.8%) of the respondents were female. Most of the respondents were single (69.2%), within the age bracket 21 – 30 years (62.8%), had no children (66.4%) and had tertiary education (90.8%). The table also shows that majority of the respondents were self – employed (67.6%) and earned below #250,000 monthly. Finally, majority of the tourists (75.0%) belonged to social organization.

Table 1: Distribution of Personal Characteristics of Respondents

n = 250

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	88	35.2
Female	162	64.8
Marital status		
Single	173	69.2
Married	70	28.0
Widowed	5	2.0
Divorced	2	0.8
Age (years)		

11 – 20	35	14.0
21 – 30	157	62.8
31 – 40	23	9.2
41 – 50	23	9.2
51 and above	12	4.8
Educational information		
No formal education	1	0.4
Primary	11	4.4
Secondary	11	4.4
Tertiary	227	90.8
Occupation		
Student	12	4.8
Civil servant	30	12.0
Self employed	169	67.6
Trader	22	8.8
Farmer	9	3.6
Artisan	8	3.2
Do you belong to any social organization?		
Yes	125	50.0
No	125	50.0
If yes, which of the following do you belong to?		
Descendant association	8	3.2
Community association	26	10.4
Social club	67	26.8
Cooperative Society	11	4.4
Trade Union	13	5.2
Monthly income		
Below #250,001	234	93.6

#250,001 - #500,000	12	4.8
#500,001 - #750,000	1	0.4
#750,001 - #1,000,000	2	0.8
Above #1,000,000	1	0.4
Number of children		
0	166	66.4
1-3	69	27.6
3-6	15	6.0

Source: Field Survey 2021

Respondents' perception of culinary tourism

A 5 points Likert Scale was used to establish the tourists' perception of culinary tourism. A mean ($\bar{x}$) score of 2.5 and above indicates agreement with any of the perception statements while a mean score of 2.49 and below indicates disagreement. Judging from the data in table 2, the tourists perceived that; *CU* will lead to low patronage of other foods ($\bar{x}$ = 2.93), help in preserving local heritage and culture ($\bar{x}$ = 4.31), contribute to long term sustainability of local agriculture ($\bar{x}$ = 4.16), lead to under patronage of other tourist attractions ($\bar{x}$ = 3.10), gives the opportunity to explore other non-regular type of food ($\bar{x}$ = 2.56), provide employment opportunities for locals ($\bar{x}$ = 4.23), provide revenue for government ($\bar{x}$ = 4.06), promote other forms of tourism in a destination ($\bar{x}$ = 4.18), tourists are willing to pay more to try traditional foods ($\bar{x}$ = 4.23), and can be made a component of any tour to Ibadan ($\bar{x}$ = 4.15). Majority ($\bar{x}$ = 2.80) believed it cannot lead to inflation in the city due to increase in tourist traffic and that it has the power to create cooperative marketing opportunities for the restaurants ($\bar{x}$ = 4.35). Most ($\bar{x}$ = 4.21) respondents believed food can serve as attraction for tourists. However, majority ($\bar{x}$ = 3.22) believed that; eating in restaurants can cause food poisoning and associate health issues and that, developing *AL* for *CU* will alter the indigenous way of preparation, packaging and presentation ($\bar{x}$ = 2.55).

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents' Perception of Culinary Tourism

SA = Strongly Agree, **A =** Agree, **U** = Undecided, **D** = Disagree, and **SD** = Strongly Disagree

n = 250

STATEMENT	SA Freq (%)	A Freq (%)	U Freq (%)	D Freq (%)	SD Freq (%)	Mean±SD
It has the power to create cooperative marketing opportunities for restaurants	120 (48.0%)	104 (41.6%)	20 (8.0%)	06 (2.4%)	00 (0.0%)	4.3520±0.7309
It will lead to low patronage of foreign eateries	26 (10.4%)	81 (32.4%)	53 (21.2%)	64 (25.6%)	26 (10.4%)	2.9320±1.1887
It will help in preserving local heritage and culture	118 (47.2%)	104 (41.6%)	18 (7.2%)	07 (2.8%)	03 (1.2%)	4.3080±0.8196
It can lead to inflation in the city due to increase in tourist traffic	35 (14.0%)	79 (31.6%)	53 (21.2%)	68 (27.2%)	15 (6.0%)	2.7960±1.1627
It will contribute to the long-term sustainability of local agriculture	101 (40.4%)	106 (42.4%)	25 (10.0%)	18 (17.2%)	00 (0.0%)	4.1600±0.8772
It can lead to under-patronage of other tourists' attraction	31 (12.4%)	68 (27.2%)	57 (22.8%)	82 (32.8%)	12 (4.8%)	3.0960±1.1331
Food can serve as an attraction for tourists	108 (43.2%)	103 (41.2%)	23 (9.2%)	15 (6.0%)	01 (0.4%)	4.2080±0.8717
Eating in restaurants can cause food poisoning and associate health issues	23 (9.2%)	47 (18.8%)	64 (25.6%)	84 (33.6%)	32 (12.8%)	3.2200±1.1666
It gives the opportunity to explore a non-regular type of food	06 (2.4%)	31 (12.4%)	31 (12.4%)	110 (44.0%)	72 (28.8%)	2.1560±1.0508
It can provide employment opportunities	107 (42.8%)	107 (42.8%)	23 (9.2%)	13 (5.2%)	00 (0.0%)	4.2320±0.8227
It will provide revenue for the government	84 (33.6%)	111 (44.4%)	41 (16.4%)	13 (5.2%)	01 (0.4%)	4.0560±0.8625
It can promote other forms of tourism in Ibadan	98 (39.2%)	109 (43.6%)	34 (13.6%)	07 (2.8%)	02 (0.8%)	4.1760±0.8269
It will alter the indigenous methods of preparation, packaging and presentation	47 (18.8%)	85 (34.0%)	61 (24.4%)	47 (18.8%)	10 (4.0%)	2.5520±1.11547

It can be made a component of any tour to Ibadan	85 (34.0%)	131 (52.4%)	21 (8.4%)	13 (5.2%)		4.1520±0.7819
It can pull many tourists to Ibadan	109 (43.6%)	103 (41.2%)	26 (10.4%)	10 (4.0%)	02 (0.8%)	4.2280±0.8502

Source: Field Survey 2021

Respondents' awareness and participation in culinary tourism

Table 3 shows that majority of the tourists (63.2%) have heard and know about culinary tourism, although few (29.6%) had participated in it. Also, very few (24.0%) had visited a destination solely for culinary tourism.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents' awareness and participation of Culinary Tourism

n = 250

Culinary Tourism Knowledge	Yes	No	Mean±SD
Have you ever heard of culinary tourism before now?	158 (63.2%)	92 (36.8%)	1.6320±0.4832
If yes, have you ever participated in one?	74 (29.6%)	176 (70.4%)	1.2960±0.4571
Have you ever visited a destination solely for culinary tourism?	60 (24.0%)	190 (76.0%)	1.2400±0.4279

Source: Field Survey 2021

Respondents' awareness of *Lafun* and *Abula* as indigenous food of Ibadan and their opinion on showcasing it for culinary tourism

Table 4 shows that majority of respondents (93.2%) were aware of *Lafun* and *Abula* as indigenous Ibadan food. The tourists got to know about the food through friends and families (66.8%), self-experience (57.6%), social media (28.0%), restaurant menu list (27.6%), travel guide book (9.2%), and tour guide (7.6%). Majority (86.8%) agreed that the food is worthy of showcasing for culinary tourism. Majority (65.6%) agreed that people can travel down to Ibadan solely to participate in culinary tourism associated with this food. Also, majority of the tourists either eat *LA* frequently (36.4%) or occasionally (33.3%) any time they are on tour to Ibadan.

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents by Awareness of *Lafun* and *Abula*, and their Frequency of Consumption

n = 250

Awareness of *Lafun* and *Abula*	Frequency	Percentage

Are tourists aware of the food; L*afun* and A*bula*?		
Yes	233	93.2
No	17	6.8
If yes, how did they get to know about it?		
Tourist guide	19	7.6
Self-experience	144	57.6
Restaurant's menu list	69	27.6
Social media	70	28.0
Travel guide books	123	9.2
Friends and families	167	66.8
Others	11	4.4
Is *LA* worthy of showcasing for tourism purposes?		
Yes	217	86.8
No	33	13.2
Can tourists travel down to Ibadan purely for *CU*?		
Yes	164	65.6
No	86	34.4
Consumption of *LA* when on tour to Ibadan?		
Frequently	91	36.4
Occasionally	83	33.3
Rarely	40	16.0
Never	36	14.4

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Relationship between socio – economic characteristics of respondents and perception of culinary tourism

Table 5 shows the correlation analysis showing the relationship between socio-economic characteristics of respondents and perception of culinary tourism. The table reveals that age ($r = 0.205$, $p = 0.010$) and household size ($r = 0.142$, $p = 0.025$) had a positive and significant relationship with perception of culinary tourism. This implies that the older the respondents, the better their perception of culinary tourism. The correlation analysis also shows that; the larger the household size of the respondents, the better the perception of culinary tourism.

Table 5: Correlation Analysis Between Socio-Economic Characteristics of Respondents and Perception of Culinary Tourism.

Variables	Correlation coefficient (r)	Coefficient of determination (r^2)	P – value
Age	0.205	0.042025	0.010
Level of education	0.055	0.003025	0.390
Household size	0.142	0.020164	0.025

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Relationship between socio-economic characteristics of respondents and awareness of *Lafun* and *Abula* as indigenous food of Ibadan

Table 6 shows correlation analysis which reveal the relationship between socio-economic characteristics of respondents and awareness of *Lafun* and *Abula* as indigenous food of Ibadan. The table reveals that age (r = 0.191, p= 0.002) and participation in social organization (r = 0.163, p= 0.010) had a positive and significant relationship with awareness of *Lafun* and *Abula.* This implies that the older tourists have a better awareness of the food than the younger tourists. This analysis also shows that, participation in social organization increases tourists' awareness of the food.

Table 6: Correlation Analysis Between Socio-Economic Characteristics of Respondents and Awareness of *Lafun* and *Abula* Among Respondents

Variables	Correlation coefficient (r)	Coefficient of determination (r^2)	P – value
Age	-0.191	0.036481	0.002
Level of education	0.086	0.007396	0.177
Household size	-0.163	0.026569	0.010

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Discussion

UNCTAD (2013) reported that with increasing globalization and disposable income, tourism has over the last few decades become one of the largest and fastest growing industries. Findings of this study showed that; younger people, female, single and people without children participated more in tourism. It further showed that; people with higher education and higher income participated more in tourism. These findings are in consonance with those of; Mihaela and Cornel (2013), Richard (2004), Sheng (2008) and Silberberg (1995) who concluded from their various studies that; women worldwide have high involvement in tourism whether it is through being visitors, hosts or employees in the tourism destination sector. They also identified single status, income, fashion, education and convenience as other factors influencing participation in tourism. The tourists involved in this study showed a positive perception of culinary tourism in all ramifications. This is in line with the submission of; Sandra and Ana (2015) who concluded from their study that; tourists exhibit greater interest in gastronomy as a travel motivation in the Spain and Slovenia, where they value aspects related to this activity more positively and the willingness to pay more to try traditional food is high and similar in both cities. However, this study established that culinary tourism could result in; food poisoning and associated health issues, low patronage of other foods, and under patronage of other attractions. This study further established that majority of the tourists were aware of culinary tourism. This implies that CU is popular. According to Portland (2020), the global culinary tourism market generated $1,116.7billion in 2019 and is estimated to reach $1,796.5billion by 2027. This study established a positive and significant relationship between tourists' age, household size and perception of CU. This implies that the older the tourist, the better the perception of culinary tourism and the larger the household size of the tourist, the better the perception of CU. This study also established a positive and significant relationship between age; participation in social organization and awareness of LA. This implies that the older tourists have a better awareness of the food than the younger tourists and that, participation in social organization increases tourists' awareness of the food.

Conclusion

The study showed that tourists have a good perception of *CU*. Culinary tourism is popular among the tourists. Participation in *CU* is low among the tourists. Few tourists sampled had visited destinations solely for *CU*. The tourists got to know about *LA* through family and friend, self-experience, social media, restaurant menu list, travel guide book, and tour guides. The tourists were of the opinion that *LA* is worthy of showcasing for culinary tourism. While the factors influencing perception of *CU* include; age and household size, those influencing awareness of *CU* by tourists include; age and participation in social organization.

Recommendations

Taking the findings of this study into consideration, it is recommended that *LA* should be packaged and showcased for *CU* by Oyo State Tourism Board. This could be achieved by coming up with policy that will bring local food vendors, tour operators, and management of destinations together in an attempt to promote this tourism niche. Since majority of the tourists are aware of the food, marketing effort should be focused on stimulating and winning the interest of prospective tourists. However, while promoting the food for *CU*, efforts should be made not to tamper with the authenticity of the food which may result from an attempt to modernize preparation, packaging, and presentation.

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The negative impact of geopolitical crises on tourism flows: the EU tourism policy as a tool for promoting them

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Abstract

The main objective of this study is to analyze the European Union's action to promote tourism where geopolitical risks can limit tourism flows. In particular this study attempts to explore the impact of the geopolitical risks and uncertainty on tourism arrivals in Europe and especially in South-Eastern Mediterranean area using recent official data from World Tourism Organization and at the same time to highlight how the tourism policy of the European Union can promote tourism flows.

More specifically, this study will try to capture the new context of contemporary tourism activity developing within the emergence of geopolitical risks as tourism has become more and more conditioned by geopolitics and, also, will attempt to shed light on the tourism policy of EU and how its "tools" can promote tourism besides the geopolitical risks that undermine it.

Therefore, this study is an exploratory analysis meant to identify the impact of geopolitical risks on tourism activities and how the European tourism policy can limit these risks.

Keywords: tourism, EU tourism policy, geopolitics, geopolitical risks, South-Eastern Mediterranean

1. Introduction

In this modern era, the tourism sector is a crucial component for the economic advancement of both developed and developing states due to its unprecedented contribution in increasing foreign reserves by tourist income and providing employment opportunities for their citizens[3]. The tourism

[3] Demir E., Gozgor G., Paramati S. R., 2020. T
o what extend economic uncertainty effects tourism investments? Evidence from OECD and non-OECD economies. Tourism Management Perspectives, 36, 100758. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2020.100758 [Accessed on 20 June, 2023]

industry has many advantages for a country, including increased employment opportunities, tax revenues, income earnings and foreign exchange reserves. Thus, it has become an important sector for economic development worldwide. In the next 10 years, the tourism industry will increase the global GDP to 11.53% and it is anticipated that it will create 421 million jobs.[4]

However, it is obvious that the tourism flows and therefore the tourism earnings of every nation are negatively influenced by some factors such as terrorism and political unrest since tourists are prone to visit secure and safe locations.

Actually, living in a "geopolitical world" and in a "geopolitical society"[5] is a contemporary reality as the geopolitical risks have increased in recent years. But what we mean by geopolitical risks; The authors define the geopolitical risks as the risks associated with terrorists' attacks, wars, and tension between the states, influencing the normal course of international relations. The term "geopolitics" covers a wide field of events with a wide variety of causes and consequences, from terrorist attacks to climate change, from Brexit to the Global Financial Crisis. [6] .

Despite the great appeal of Fukuyama's theory[7], of a new world order after the end of the Cold War, an order that would be founded on a global liberal revolution, the new world system is still plagued by significant geopolitical ruptures and crises. Today it is easy to select only a few from so many events in recent years, to illustrate the dominance of geopolitics and the increase in geopolitical crises especially in the Southeastern Mediterranean region: Conflicts in the Eastern Mediterranean have a long history as far as Greece and Turkey are for many years at odds regarding the delimitation of maritime zones. Today, the region is affected by many tensions between Greece / Cyprus and Turkey, governmental conflicts in Syria, Iraq, or Libya and also territorial and religious conflicts between Israeli–Palestine. Also, Russia's invasion of Ukraine represents a watershed not only in security policy but also in energy policy as long as demand for energy to replace supplies from Russia has increased. Already during the preparation for war, the new situation became noticeable in the rise of gas and oil prices that affected not only private households but also industrial enterprises and cause uncertainty for all Europe countries, included those in the region of Mediterranean.

The war in Ukraine has given new momentum to various transformations and crises that were already underway, which then began colliding with each other, increasing the sense of global disorder and acceleration, of geopolitical uncertainty, and of social upheaval. These changes caused by the geopolitical crises and mainly the war is illustrated with the following figure:

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[4] World Travel & Tourism Council. (2019). Economic Impact, Malaysia 2012. Available at: http://www.wttc.org/[Accessed on 20 June, 2023]

[5] Munoz, J.M., 2013. Handbook on the Geopolitics of Business. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, p.4

[6] Caldara, D. and Iacoviello, M., 2018. Measuring Geopolitical Risk. [pdf] Boston: Division of International Finance .p.6 , Available at: https://www.bc.edu/matteo-iacoviello/%20gpr_files/GPR_PAPER.pdf%3E, [Accessed 20 June, 2023].

[7] Fukuyama, Francis, The End of History and The Last Man, The Free Press, New York, 1992, p.66

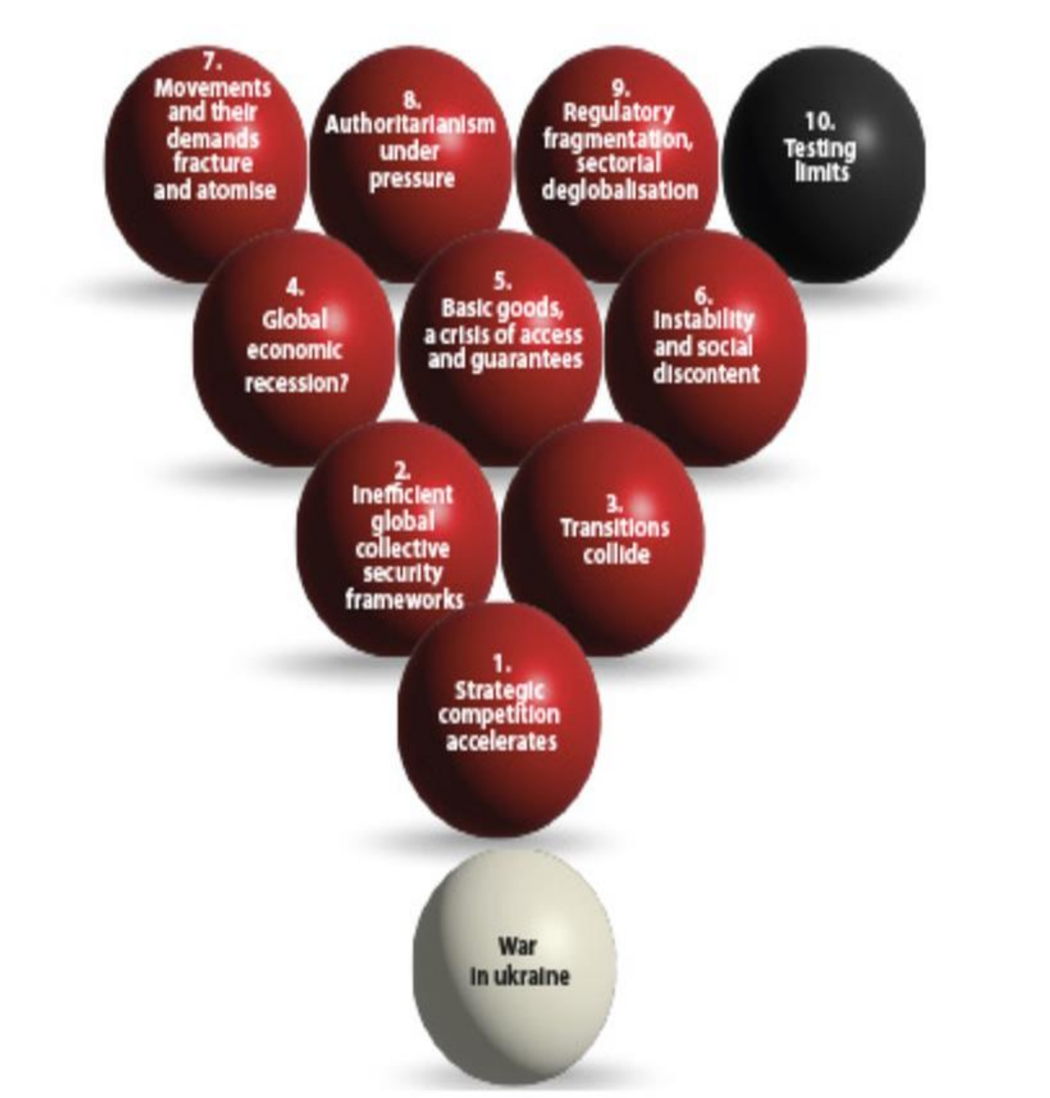

Figure 1. Ten issues that will shape international agenda[8]

As shown in the figure above, all these geopolitical and war-accelerated changes overlap and intertwine and cause uncertainty to many people who may feel insecure due to the rising prices of basic products and the inability to have access to common goods like food, energy and healthy environment and climate. Vulnerability and fragility are translated to uncertainty as it is also translated from collective security to individual survival.

[8] Colomina, C. (2023) The world in 2023: ten issues that will shape the international agenda, Available at: https://www.cidob.org/en/publications/publication_series/notes_internacionals/283/the_world_in_2023_ten_issues_that_will_shape_the_international_agenda [Accessed on 20 June, 2023]

And these are only a few, but there is a common feature: while the event is local or regional, the impact is global. As a result, the geopolitical risk has started being recognized as a global risk, with significant effects in several economic areas (finance, trade, business, tourism etc.) and particularly in the area of tourism [9]. The uncertainty that is provoked by geopolitical changes and risks can have a serious impact on tourism. A study conducted by Dragouni et al. (2016) was the first to show the effect of the economic policy uncertainty on tourism flows, and more specifically showed that sentiment and mood have a time- and event-dependent effect on tourism demand. The study discovered a significant effect on tourism when there is high uncertainty, whereas there is no spillover when there is low uncertainty.[10]

2. The impact of geopolitical events on the tourism activity

If geopolitics is the expression of the act of power, tourism is the expression of freedom, which tends to be increasingly conditioned by these power games[11]. To what extent do geopolitical events affect the tourism activity? Globally, the number of international tourists has grown each year, despite the rise in geopolitical risks. However, there are several examples from the past that show that geopolitical crises can have a negative impact on tourism.

For example, after the repeated attacks in the French capital, Paris lost in 2016, 5% of its tourists and after the terrorist phenomenon in 2018 the security conditions were quite uncomfortable for tourists as additional security filters were put in shops, tourist objectives, on the streets, in railway stations, not to mention the usual ones in railway stations and were associated with delays, etc. Similar situations were in London, Brussels, Barcelona, and other cities. The secessionist effects in Catalonia 2017, Lugansk and Donbass 2014-2018 had the same impact on tourism, as from 25 million tourists in 2008, Ukraine accounted only 12 million in 2015 and similar examples are many.

When war or when terrorist attacks are concerned, the tourist phenomenon is affected, in the most unpredictable ways, from the disappearance of landmarks, wiped off the face of the earth (such as Palmira in Syria, on UNESCO World Heritage List, dynamited by ISIS in 2017) up to quantitative and also qualitative changes in tourism flows. The figure below shows how geopolitical risks can affect tourist flows.

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[9] Normand, F., 2009. Les États-Unis présentent le principal risque géopolitique. Les Affaires, [online] Available at: https://www.lesaffaires.com/strategie-d-entreprise/entreprendre/lesetats-unis-presentent-le-principal-risque-geopolitique/500961 [Accessed on 20 June, 2023]

[10] Dragouni M., Filis G., Gavriilidis K., Santamaria D. (2016). Sentiment, mood and outbound tourism demand. Annals of Tourism Research, 60, 80–96.Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2016.06.004, [Accessed on 20 June, 2023]

[11] Neguț, S. and Neacșu, M.C., 2013. Tourism, Expression of Freedom in The Global Era. International Journal for Responsible Tourism, 2(3), pp. 45-53.

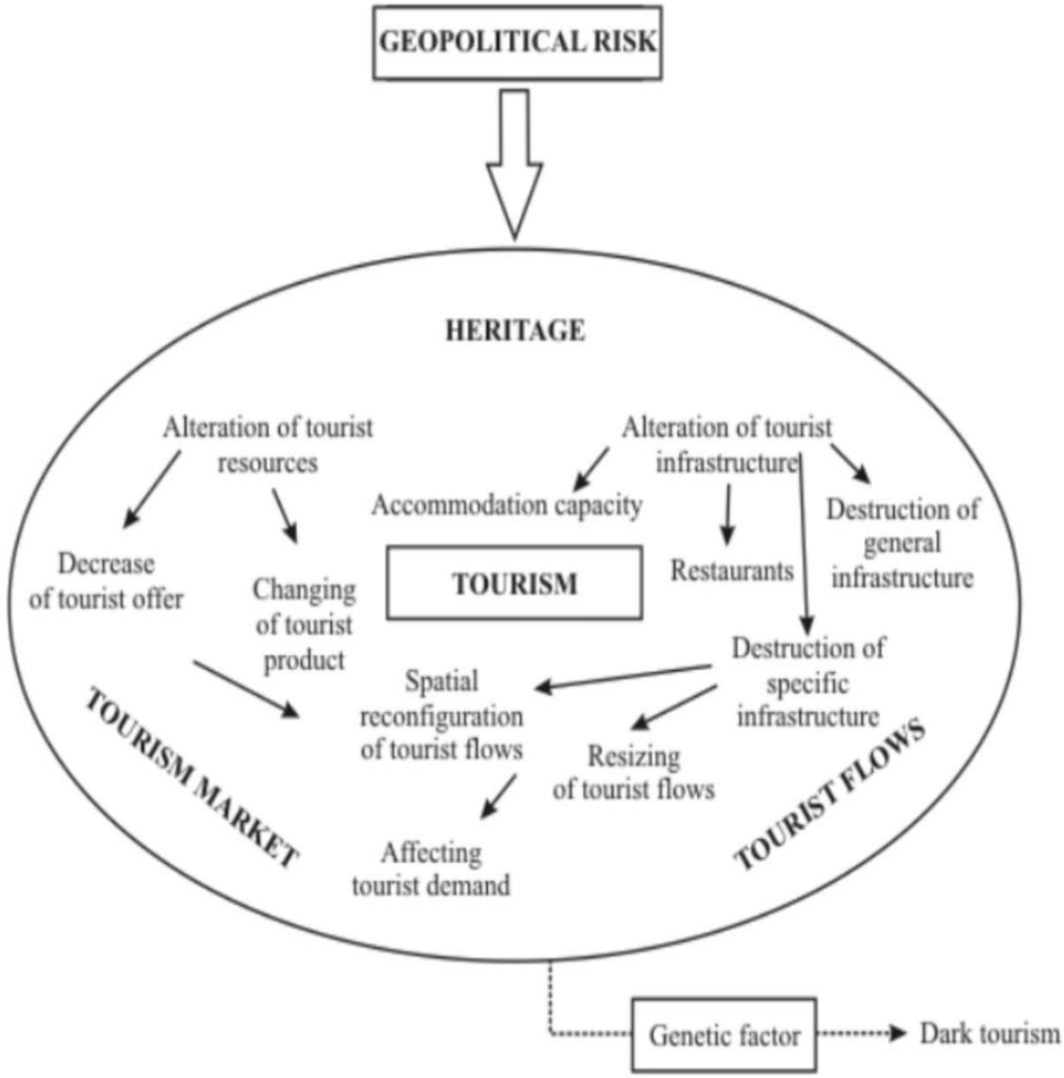

Figure 2: The theoretical scheme of the impact of geopolitical risks on tourism[12]

Moreover, the manifestation of geopolitical risks can generate a specific type of tourism, such as dark tourism (also black tourism, morbid tourism, or grief tourism), which has been defined as tourism involving travel to places historically associated with death and tragedy. The main attraction to dark locations is their historical value rather than their associations with death and suffering. For Example, holocaust tourism contains aspects of both dark tourism and heritage tourism the tourist resources consisting,[13]

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[12] Neacsu, M. Negut, S. and Vlasceanu, G. 2018. The Impact of Geopolitical Risks on Tourism, The AMFITEATRU ECONOMIC journal, 20 (12) p.879

[13] Neacsu, M. Negut, S. and Vlasceanu, G. 2018. The Impact of Geopolitical Risks on Tourism, The AMFITEATRU ECONOMIC journal, 20 (12) pp. 870

3. Geopolitical risks in the South - Eastern Mediterranean region

The Mediterranean has been a crossroads of peoples, religions, cultures, trades, and ideas. This region has been defined by British historian David Abulafia[14] as a sea between lands, a region that goes beyond its coasts to include Europe (to the north), North Africa (to the South), Anatolia and the Levant as far as Mesopotamia (to the East); and beyond, through its straits, the Red Sea, the Horn of Africa, the Arabian Peninsula (to the South-East); and the Black Sea (to the North-East). Due to its position, it has been always a place of confrontation and clash between civilizations, empires and states that have fought over its control. Although, in the last five centuries, its importance has been declining – first, in favor of the Atlantic and, today, of the Indo-Pacific – it remains a key area in the global context, where the interests and ambitions of all major international players intersect.

The war in Ukraine has especially heightened energy and military challenges. The increasing militarization of the Mediterranean, like the rise of tensions between certain countries, does not stem from the Ukraine war only, but in some cases transcends and precedes it. This is the case with the tensions between Greece and Cyprus on the one side and Turkey on the other, the unresolved Libyan crisis, the effects of conflicts in Syria on the neighboring countries. The Ukraine war has worsened the picture and triggered a more heated rivalry between an increasingly proactive Russia and USA (and NATO allies), which had already emerged since the start of the Syrian crisis, in the 2010s. Moreover, ten years of unresolved wars and crises have forced millions of refugees and displaced persons to abandon their homes to seek refuge in Europe or other countries. This should be added to the thousands of economic migrants who move across the Broader Mediterranean in search for a better life, a large proportion of whom cross into Europe every year.

All these different crises ladder up to a larger and more general geopolitical game that has its focus in the South-Eastern Mediterranean and involves global powers such as the United States and European Union, Russia, China, India, as well as emerging regional players. This game is particularly important for European countries, as it goes beyond individual internal crises or cyclically resurfacing tensions between countries and it had a significant impact on the internal political life and economy of the countries of South-Eastern Europe, and in particular on the tourism revenues in them as it causes instability and by extension insecurity to the would-be visitors to them.

In an increasingly multipolar and disorderly world, where the Great Powers contend for spaces of influence in the various regions of the globe, if the Indo-Pacific remains at the core of Chinese and US interests, the South-Eastern Mediterranean has grown in importance. The war in Ukraine, which has led to a clear political break-up between Russia and the West, and - above all - has had serious repercussions in the area as for example the energy issue, with producing countries in the area becoming increasingly more important and influential not only because of the war in Ukraine,

[14] Abulafia, D (2019). The Boundless Sea: A Human History of the Oceans. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019

but also because of growing demand for energy from developing countries and the need for many large European countries to diversify their supplies. The need for states to secure their own energy resources or become energy transit hubs creates a flammable and volatile environment in the region that causes uncertainty and insecurity for potential tourists. Also, the energy crisis as a result of the war in Ukraine brings about an increase in the prices of all services and particularly in the prices of services related to tourism. And although the south-eastern Mediterranean was less affected by the energy crisis as it had the possibility to procure energy resources from other routes, the prices of energy resources are also higher in this region than in the past. As a result, tourism services are also burdened and consequently are currently more expensive, a fact which is expected to have a negative impact on tourism flows.

Finally, the rise of strong regional players - as the Gulf countries- and revisionist and maximalist states - as Turkey - which intend to assert themselves in an increasingly multipolar world with their own autonomous profile through a pure realistic foreign policy is related to a more general instability in the area which, as mentioned above, can cause insecurity for anyone thinking of visiting it .[15]

4. Recent Data on tourism flows in Europe and in the Mediterranean region in 2023

According to The UNWTO World Tourism Barometer - which is a publication of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) that monitors short term tourism trends on a regular basis to provide global tourism stakeholders with up-to-date analysis on international tourism - international arrivals reached 80% of pre-pandemic levels in the first quarter of 2023 (-20% compared to the same quarter of 2019) boosted by strong results in Europe and the Middle East, compared to a 66% recovery level for the year 2022 overall.

International tourism grew 86% in the first quarter of 2023 compared to the same period last year, reflecting continued strength at the start of the year. An estimated 235 million tourists travelled internationally in the first three months, more than double those in the same period of 2022. These results are in line with UNWTO's forward looking scenarios for 2023 which projected international arrivals to recover 80% to 95% of prepandemic levels by the end of this year. The Middle East saw the strongest performance, with arrivals exceeding by 15% the number recorded in the first quarter of 2019. As a result, the Middle East is the first world region to recover pre-pandemic numbers in a full quarter.

Europe, the world's largest destination region, reached 90% of pre-pandemic levels in Q1 2023, supported by robust intra-regional demand. Travel from the United States also contributed to results. According to data from the US National Travel and Tourism Office, US travel to Europe continued to show robust growth at the start of the year (+118% in January 2023 versus January

[15] Casini, E. 2023. The Mediterranean challenge, available at: https://www.med-or.org/en/news/la-sfida-mediterranea [Accessed on 20 June, 2023]

2022). Several destinations reported extraordinary growth in arrivals in the first quarter of (Q1)2023 versus Q1 2019, including Qatar (+98%), Saudi Arabia (+64%), Bulgaria, Serbia (both +27%), versus Cyprus (+10%).

According to the Panel of Experts, the challenging economic environment continues to be the main factor weighing on the effective recovery of international tourism in 2023, with high inflation and rising oil prices translating into higher transport and accommodations costs. Against this backdrop, tourists are expected to increasingly seek value for money and travel closer to home in response to elevated prices and the overall economic challenges. The International Monetary Fund's latest World Economic Outlook (April 2023) indicates that global growth could fall from 3.4% in 2022 to 2.8% in 2023, amid financial sector turmoil, high inflation, and the impacts of three years of COVID. The uncertainty derived from the Russian aggression against Ukraine and other mounting geopolitical tensions also continue to represent downside risks.

International Tourist Arrivals by (Sub)region

											Monthly/quarterly data series							
					Share	Change (%)					Change (%)*							
	(million)				(%)				vs. 2019		2022 versus 2021[2]				2022 versus 2019			
	2019	2020	2021*	2022*	2022*	20/19	21/20*	22/21*	21/19*	22/19*	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
World	**1465**	**409**	**455**	**917**	**100**	**-72.1**	**11.2**	**101.6**	**-69.0**	**-37.4**	**190**	**226**	**68**	**62**	**-59.0**	**-39.4**	**-28.4**	**-28.2**
Advanced economies[1]	*778*	*222*	*244*	*516*	*56.2*	*-71.5*	*9.9*	*111.7*	*-68.7*	*-33.7*	*322*	*338*	*65*	*54*	*-57.8*	*-35.2*	*-24.9*	*-25.3*
Emerging economies[1]	*688*	*187*	*211*	*401*	*43.8*	*-72.8*	*12.7*	*90.0*	*-69.3*	*-41.6*	*119*	*137*	*73*	*71*	*-60.1*	*-44.7*	*-33.1*	*-31.3*
By UNWTO regions:																		
Europe	***744.5***	***241.9***	***304.7***	***584.9***	***63.8***	***-67.5***	***26.0***	***92.0***	***-59.1***	***-21.4***	***287***	***293***	***49***	***39***	***-41.3***	***-22.7***	***-15.2***	***-14.5***
Northern Europe	83.7	23.3	21.0	68.7	7.5	-72.1	-9.8	226.5	-74.9	-18.0	682	848	170	83	-47.6	-16.9	-8.8	-15.0
Western Europe	205.1	83.5	87.7	178.1	19.4	-59.3	5.1	102.9	-57.2	-13.2	402	455	46	44	-40.2	-13.0	-3.7	-7.0
Central/Eastern Eur.	151.7	46.7	57.2	90.1	9.8	-69.2	22.4	57.6	-62.3	-40.6	139	126	23	37	-49.6	-44.4	-39.3	-31.2
Southern/Medit. Eur.	303.9	88.3	138.7	248.0	27.0	-70.9	57.0	78.8	-54.4	-18.4	275	245	43	28	-35.0	-21.0	-14.4	-10.7
- of which EU-27	539.8	185.1	225.9	435.3	47.5	-65.7	22.0	92.7	-58.2	-19.4	342	327	47	36	-41.1	-20.3	-13.3	-12.7

Figure 3: International tourist activity by region. Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) (Data as collected by UNWTO, May 2023)[16] (Data as collected by UNWTO, May 2023)[17]

[16] Available at: https://webunwto.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2023-05/UNWTO_Barom23_02_May_EXCERPT_final.pdf?VersionId=gGmuSXlwfM1yoemsRrBI9ZJf.Vmc9gYD, [Accessed on 20 June, 2023]

[17]

In the first quarter of 2023, international arrivals drew closer (80%) to the level they were at before the pandemic. More than 230 million tourists travelled internationally between the beginning of January and the end of March 2023, which is double the number in the same period of 2022. The Middle East saw the greatest recovery: arrivals were 15% higher than they were in 2019. UNTWO's projections for the whole 2023 year foresee international arrivals recovering 80% to 95% of pre-pandemic levels. At the same time, as the figure above shows, Europe and in particular the under-analysis region of the south-eastern Mediterranean has shown an increase in tourist flows compared to the previous period of time

5. UNWTO's Panel of Experts: geopolitical insecurity has a potential impact on tourism.

However, the UNWTO's Panel of Experts warn that the economic situation in many countries could drag down. The economic situation remains the main factor weighing on the effective recovery of international tourism in 2023, with high inflation and rising oil prices translating into higher transport and accommodations costs. As a result, tourists may seek value for money and travel closer to their homes. Uncertainty derived from the Russian aggression against Ukraine and other mounting geopolitical tensions, also continue to represent risks and t causes an insecurity that can have a negative impact on tourist flows.

More specifically, UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili said that while tourism is bouncing back nicely, new challenges have arisen in 2023 that may affect the volume of arrivals or the destinations that tourists choose. Although, the start of 2023 has shown again tourism's unique ability to bounce back and in many places tourism flows are close to or even above pre-pandemic levels of arrivals, tourism can be affected by challenges ranging from geopolitical insecurity and the potential impact of the cost-of-living crisis on tourism. [18]

Therefore, geopolitical changes and tensions such as those described above create an insecurity for the potential visitors who, according to the experts on global tourism issues, may hesitate to visit areas such as the south-eastern Mediterranean if geopolitical risks are presented. High inflation, rising prices on energy and food products, disruptions of supply chains, and insecurity related to the military aggression of Ukraine impose heavy burdens on the provision and affordability of travel and hospitality services, limitations on travel have serious effects on the operations and prices of passenger transport across all Member States, including, but not limited to, flights and cruises.

UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, 2023. Vol. 21, issue 1, available at: https://webunwto.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2023- {Accessed on 20 June, 2023]

01/UNWTO_Barom23_01_January_EXCERPT.pdf?VersionId=_2bbK5GIwk5KrBGJZt5iNPAGnrWoH8NB

[18] Available at: https://monitor.icef.com/2023/05/unwto-data-shows-that-international-tourism-arrivals-are-approaching-pre-pandemic-levels[Accessed on 20 June, 2023]

The following chart shows trends over time across regions. While Asia-Pacific has seen the weakest recovery so far, the UNTWO believes this will accelerate though the year, especially given that China's borders are now open.

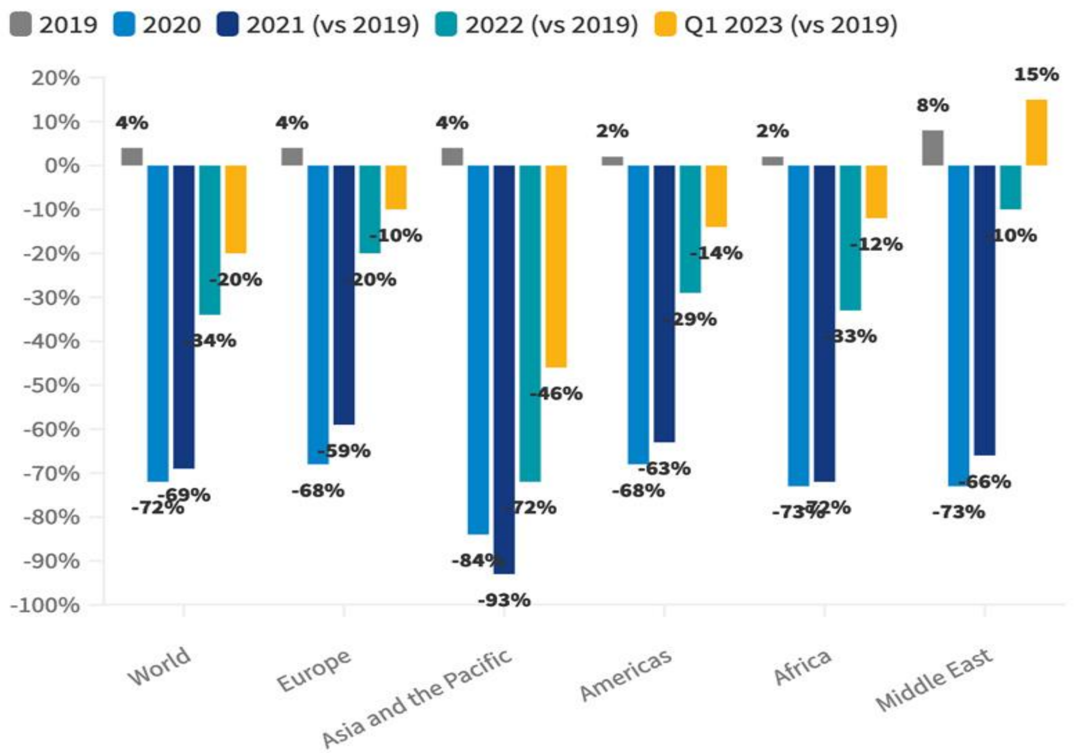

Figure 4: The Middle East has seen the greatest recovery in tourism, followed by Europe. European tourism was boosted by intra-regional flows, and Southern Mediterranean Europe saw arrivals exceed those in 2019. Source: UNWTO[19]

6. European union actions and initiatives in tourism

The European Union supports, coordinates, and complements the actions of EU countries related to tourism. EU tourism policy aims to maintain Europe's position as a leading global destination and to turn Europe into a sustainable destination, bearing also its social and environmental aspects. Some objectives are, notably, to maximize the industry's contribution to growth and jobs, as well as to promote cooperation between EU countries and develop the attractiveness of Europe as a destination.

[19] Available at: https://webunwto.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2023-05/UNWTO_Barom23_02_May_EXCERPT_final.pdf?VersionId=gGmuSXlwfM1yoemsRrBI9ZJf.Vmc9gYD, [Accessed on 20 June, 2023]

EU recognizes the importance of promoting a sustainable, innovative and resilient tourism ecosystem and condemns Russia's unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine, and regrets its economic, political and humanitarian effects, including its negative impact on tourism, among other sectors, particularly in countries close to Ukraine.

Article 195 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union [20] underlines that the Union shall complement the action of the Member States in the tourism sector, in particular by promoting the competitiveness of Union undertakings in that sector". The EU, therefore, encourages the creation of a favorable environment and promotes cooperation between EU countries.

Over the past decade, Europe confirmed its position as the world-leading tourism destination. The European Commission proposed to co-create a transition pathway with industry, public authorities, social partners and other stakeholders. More specifically on December 2022, the Council of the European Union adopted the European agenda for tourism 2030. The agenda is based on the Commission's transition pathway for tourism and includes a multi-annual work plan with actions to be taken by the EU countries, the Commission and tourism stakeholders.[21]. The report identifies 27 areas of measures for the green and digital transition and for improving the resilience of EU tourism.

It must be mentioned that the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) is an initiative launched jointly by the European Commission and the EIB Group (European Investment Bank and European Investment Fund) to help overcome the worst financial crisis since the late 1920s by mobilizing private financing for strategic investments. With EFSI support, the EIB Group is providing funding for economically viable projects, especially for projects with a higher risk profile than usually taken on by the Bank. It focuses on sectors of key importance for the European economy and may support tourism-related actions, such as, among other things: travel infrastructures (regional airports, ports, etc.), energy efficiency of hotels and tourism resorts, revitalization of brown fields for recreational purposes, tourism financing agreements, setting up "investment platforms" (IPs) dedicated to tourism.

EFSI is demand-driven and provides support for projects everywhere in the EU, including cross-border projects. Projects are considered based on their individual merits. There is the possibility to combined contributions from EFSI and ESIF (European Structural and Investment Funds).

Generally, EU invites Member States to exchange knowledge and best practices for developing and implementing tourism strategies at various governance levels, taking account of the economic, environmental, cultural and social sustainability of tourism and including the perspectives of visitors as well as local residents, organize awareness-raising activities on such themes as the benefits of the green and digital transformation, demand for sustainable offers, new skills needs

[20]Consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, PART THREE - UNION POLICIES AND INTERNAL ACTIONS, TITLE XXII – TOURISM, Article 195. OJ C 202, 7.6.2016, p. 135–13

[21] European Commision, Transition Pathway for Tourism, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/49498

and experimenting in tourism, and provide for the protection of local culture, including tangible and intangible cultural heritage, help to build resilience in the tourism ecosystem across sectors and different public and private actors.[22]

Despite the notable disparities between EU countries, tourism represents an important part of the EU's overall economy. In 2019, it represented nearly 10% of the EU Gross Domestic Product and accounted for around 23 million jobs in the Union. The EU's tourism sector is highly diverse and complex, covering globalized and interconnected value chains. It comprises businesses in several other subsectors, including food and beverage services, online information, and services providers (e.g., tourist offices or digital platforms), travel agents and tour operators, accommodation suppliers, destination managing organizations, attractions, and passenger transport (such as airlines and airports, trains, busses, and boats).

In conclusion since the tourism sector is very important for the European economy, perhaps gradually the European partners should proceed to jointly grant more powers to the European Union so that EU can take more measures at a supranational level to deal with the risks presented due to geopolitical crises, as they can threaten this so important for the economy sector. More Specifically, it might be useful if tourism were included in shared competences (Article 4 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union). The EU and its Member States will be then able to legislate and adopt legally binding acts and Member States will exercise their own competence only where the EU does not exercise, or has decided not to exercise, its own competence.

Conclusion

This study attempted to highlight the possible negative impact of the geopolitical crises and risks that are currently present in Europe and in the south-eastern Mediterranean. The geopolitical spillovers and subsequent instability create insecurity and discourage would-be travelers from visiting the regions in question while the energy and economic crisis, caused by the war in Ukraine, are likely to lead travelers to an option close to home to avoid the high cost of tourism services.

Therefore, the reduction of geopolitical risk can play a significant role in the tourism sector's promotion. [23] Therefore, the government and officials must take necessary actions and required measures to ensure international harmony, national security, and public protection against such unpleasant events. By improving bilateral diplomatic relationships, safety, and security states can reduce the geopolitical risks and promote tourism flows. The geopolitical and energy crisis also

[22] European Agenda for Tourism 2030 - Council conclusions (adopted on 01/12/2022) Available at: https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-15441-2022-INIT/en/pdf. [Accessed on 20 June, 2023]

[23] Ghalia, T., Fidrmuc, J., Samrgandi, N., Sohag, K. 2019. Institutional Quality, Political Risk and Tourism. Tourism Management, 32, pp. 1-15.

provides an opportunity to reconsider the future of tourism and advance longstanding priorities such as addressing climate change and promoting a renewable energy transition [24].

The European Union and the Member States must encourage the structural changes required to transform the tourism industry in line with geopolitical challenges. Addressing these challenges also calls for international organizations, as the European Union, to use the full extent of their resources and financial instruments to restore travelers' confidence, while helping the tourism industry to adapt and survive (Kara et al., 2020).[25]

The national tourist authorities throughout Europe and the European Union authorities, according to the official data of the World Tourism Organization, are right to be hopeful about the resurgence in tourism predicted for summer of 2023. However, it will be a mistake to turn a blind eye to the geopolitical challenges on the horizon.

The EU tourism experts and brightest minds in the national tourism sector must come together to strategize on the geopolitical and environmental issues that will affect us for the months and years ahead. Coordinated action in all areas is required to contribute to the further development of genuine, connecting tourism. But such action calls for member states to work even more sustainably, in a connected, high-quality, innovative way together with their European partners and the European Travel Commission. It may even gradually require that tourism be included among the "shared competences" so that the European Union can legislate and adopt legally binding acts when each member state cannot implement a tourism policy that will prevent the negative impact of geopolitical risks on tourism flows.

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