

CROSS-BORDER DENTAL CARE: DENTAL TOURISTS' PERCEPTIONS OF SERVICE QUALITY

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INTRODUCTION

Medical tourism defined as intentional travel abroad to privately access medical services (Hoffman et al., 2018), is a rapidly growing global niche market. The market size was valued at US\$ 44.8 billion in 2019 and is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 21.1% from 2020 to 2027 (Grand View Research, 2020). Dental tourism (DT), defined by the American Dental Association (2009) "as the act of traveling to another country for the purpose of obtaining dental treatment," is an important sector of the growing medical tourism industry (Jaapar et al., 2017; Kamath et al., 2015; Lovelock et al., 2018). The global DT market size is estimated to be worth US\$ 5.83 billion by 2025 driven by the non-availability of insurance coverage for dental procedures and increasing cost of treatment in developed countries (Globe News Wire, 2019).

Research on DT has primarily focused on identifying types of dental tourists, kinds of dental procedures they travel for, and their motivations for engaging in DT. Chandu (2015) classified dental tourists into two main groups. The first group comprises those who purposefully go to a foreign country for dental care, either for the sole purpose of receiving care or as part of a holiday package. The second group includes immigrants who return to their native country for a holiday or to visit relatives and then access dental care during their visit. In general, dental tourists travel for two types of care: general and specialized care. General dental care includes basic fillings, cleaning, scaling, and tooth whitening (Chandu, 2015). Specialized dental care involves complex restorative treatment and surgery, e.g., implant surgery (Chandu, 2015). Specialized care is commonly sought by dental tourists because of the significant cost difference for treatment between

their home countries and destination countries (Chandu, 2015). In line with DT being a subcategory of medical tourism, dental tourists' motives for seeking care outside their home countries are similar to medical tourists'. Amongst like motivations are cost-savings, timely service, quality of medical services, unavailable, restricted, or prohibited procedures, information availability, cultural similarity, and combining medical care and holiday (Elliott-Smith, 2010; Jaapar et al., 2017; Lovelock et al., 2018).

Despite the growth in DT and increasing interest in DT research, knowledge of DT is limited (Jaapar et al., 2017; Kamath et al., 2015; Lovelock et al., 2018). Regarding the quality of service received, both technical quality (quality of dental care outcome) and functional quality (quality of process of delivering dental care) remain a concern for dental tourists (Conti et al., 2014; Dhama et al., 2016; Lovelock et al., 2018). Given these continuing service quality concerns, DT providers need to better understand dental tourists' perceptions of their international patient experiences. Therefore, this research aims to determine the service quality (SERVQUAL) dimensions, i.e., tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy (Parasuraman et al., 1988), conveyed in dental tourists' testimonials posted on a dental clinic's website. SERVQUAL is deemed a suitable framework for this study since it was developed to measure consumer perceptions of service quality and past research has indicated that the criteria represented by the five SERVQUAL dimensions are those that are considered by consumers when assessing dental care service quality (Baldwin & Sohal, 2003; John et al., 2011; Palihawadana & Barnes, 2004). By content analyzing dental tourists' testimonials through a service quality lens, the research provides a first-person perspective of

dental tourists' service quality perceptions. To date, the author has not identified any studies in the DT literature that have used this approach to investigate DT service quality.

METHOD

Content analysis of 258 dental tourist testimonials posted on a Central European dental clinic's website was used to determine the SERVQUAL dimensions communicated in the testimonials. Testimonials from a Central European dental clinic's website served as the study's data since Central Europe is a hub of DT (Fisherova, 2018; Lubowiecki-Vikuk, 2018; Waski, 2017). Online patient testimonials are judged an appropriate dental tourist data source since consumers are inclined to rely on word-of-mouth communication, including online testimonials, when making medical tourism decisions (Crooks et al., 2011; Hohm & Snyder, 2015; Johnston et al., 2012). Content analysis is commonly used in medical tourism research to study user generated content (Abd Mutalib et al., 2017; Hohm & Snyder, 2015; Ozan-Rafferty et al., 2014) since medical tourists are not a readily available and easy population to sample (Cormany & Baloglu, 2011; Crooks et al., 2010; Jackson et al., 2018).

Data were collected from the website in 2020. According to the dental clinic's website, all testimonials analyzed in this research were posted by international patients who had purposely traveled from their home countries to the dental clinic for dental care. The testimonials were coded using the coding method devised by Day (1992) to examine how the SERVQUAL dimensions were communicated in service providers' marketing communications. This approach is consistent with other research that has used service quality dimensions as the basis for content analyzing online reviews (Ebong, 2017; Yang and Fang, 2004; Yang et al., 2001). Frequency distributions were calculated to determine the most common SERVQUAL dimensions communicated in the testimonials. Chi-square tests were used to investigate the relationship between the SERVQUAL dimensions cited and testimonial characteristics.

FINDINGS

Testimonial Characteristics. All testimonials are very positive with words such as excellent, fantastic, amazing, great, very happy, wonderful, delighted, perfect, fabulous, and first class describing the dental tourist's experience. The year the treatment occurred was noted in 74% of the testimonials. In these, 57% of the treatments happened in 2008-2013, with the rest (43%) occurring in 2014-2019. The type of dental care received was mentioned in 84% of the testimonials with all the treatments falling under Chandu's (2015) specialized care category. The dental tourist's gender could be determined for 98% of the testimonials. Of these, 55% were written by males and 45% by females. The dental tourist's home country could be ascertained for 53% of the testimonials with the U.K. (90%) being the most frequently cited home country. The balance (10%) is comprised of 11 different countries; eight in Western Europe. Based on the information contained in the testimonials, all dental tourists appeared to be part of the "purposeful" dental tourist group defined by Chandu (2015). Dentists were mentioned in 29% of the testimonials while other dental clinic staff were noted in 52% of the testimonials. Thirty-four percent of the testimonials explicitly recommended the dental clinic as a DT provider while 14% of the testimonials stated a willingness to return to the clinic for additional dental care.

SERVQUAL Dimensions. Of the five SERVQUAL dimensions, assurance and reliability were most frequently mentioned by dental tourists with 71% and 52% of the testimonials, respectively, conveying these facets. The other three dimensions, i.e., responsiveness (28%), empathy (25%), and tangibles (22%), were referred to less often.

Chi-Square Tests. Chi-square tests revealed testimonials that referred to the dentist providing care had a higher percentage of reliability comments ($X^2 = 6.36$, $p = .012$), responsiveness remarks ($X^2 = 5.11$, $p = .024$), assurance mentions ($X^2 = 6.66$, $p = .010$), and empathy observations ($X^2 = 5.51$, $p = .019$) than testimonials that did not mention a dentist. Testimonials that mentioned dental clinic staff (e.g., nurses) had a higher percentage of responsiveness comments ($X^2 = 9.63$, $p = .002$),

assurance remarks ($\chi^2 = 38.20$, $p = .000$), and empathy mentions ($\chi^2 = 29.30$, $p = .000$) than testimonials that did not refer to dental clinic staff.

IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this study was to provide a first-person perspective of dental tourists' perceptions of service quality when engaging in cross-border dental care by analyzing dental tourists' online testimonials to determine the primary SERVQUAL dimensions associated with DT. The study's results indicate that dental tourists have distinct perceptions of DT service quality. Based on the number of observations in their testimonials, assurance and reliability are the strongest service quality associations followed by responsiveness, empathy, and tangibles in that order. This pattern differs from previous service quality research that has found reliability to be the most important determinant of service quality followed by assurance, responsiveness, tangibles, and empathy, respectively (Parasuraman et al., 1988; Zeithaml et al., 2018). The prevalence of the assurance and reliability dimensions may be the result of dental care being high in credence qualities (Berry & Bendapudi, 2007; Eisingerich & Bell, 2007; Kasnakoglu, 2016), and consumers tending to rely on the functional aspects of the service delivery process (e.g., knowledge and courtesy of dentists and dental care staff and their ability to convey trust and confidence) when evaluating dental care service quality since, in general, they lack the expertise to evaluate technical quality (e.g., accuracy of a dental diagnosis) (Berry & Bendapudi, 2007; John et al., 2011; Kasnakoglu, 2016). Given the various risks associated with being a dental tourist (Barrowman et al., 2010; Lovelock et al., 2018; Turner, 2008), the pervasiveness of the assurance and reliability dimensions in the testimonials may also be due to these dimensions being linked to patients' risk perceptions before receiving dental care (Etgar & Fuchs, 2009). If dental tourists describe their patient experiences as more reliable and providing more assurance then they may perceive these experiences as less risky (Etgar & Fuchs, 2009). The research also showed that the assurance and reliability dimensions were stated more frequently in testimonials that

mentioned dentists and dental clinic staff. Therefore, DT providers should consider focusing on communicating these dimensions and the related qualities of their dentists and staff when marketing their DT services.

The SERVQUAL dimensions represent criteria consumers use in selecting and evaluating service providers (Day, 1992). Hence, DT providers need to consider the service quality perceptions of their services when planning brand communication and promotion programs to design messages that not only reflect the service quality they offer but also resonate with their target markets. The results also suggest DT providers should recognize the importance of dental tourists' desire to reduce risk before, during, and after treatment, and the potential use by dental tourists of service quality perceptions as indicators of such risks (Etgar & Fuchs, 2009). Thus, they should consider incorporating risk-reducing cues in the manners and formats in which their DT services are provided, in the ways in which dental service provider personnel interact with patients, in websites and other forms of marketing communication, and even in the tangible aspects of the provision of these dental services (Etgar & Fuchs, 2009).

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DOES THE PERCEIVED SAFETY MATTER FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS USING CONTACTLESS SERVICE IN QUICK-SERVICE RESTAURANTS (QSRs) IN THE USA?

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INTRODUCTION

The restaurant industry in the United States generated \$659 billion in sales in 2020 (NRA,). The U.S consumers eat at restaurants 5.8 times per week on average, and 53% of them think visiting a restaurant is an essential part of their lifestyle (NRA). Specifically, total sales of quick-service restaurants (QSRs) in 2020 was \$239 billion, which accounted for approximately 36% of the restaurant industry's revenue. Moreover, due to relatively reasonable price, quick & convenient service, QSRs have become popular places to eat out. Those common thoughts seem valid to college students who normally are on a tight budget (Knutson, 2000). About 84% of the U.S students consume food at QSRs, more than half percent of the students visit QSRs at least once a week (Haines et al., 2010). Additionally, due to the global pandemic, Covid-19, has accelerated rapidly the utilization of technology and contactless services in most of industries across the world. The restaurant industry is not an exception. Restaurants implement adjustments following CDC safety guidelines to reduce risk for employees, customers, and communities and slow the spread of Covid-19. Customers also concern about their safety and have adopted a new lifestyle that requires social distancing, wearing masks, and using contactless services. According to the online surveys conducted by NRA in 2019, 92% of consumers use drive-through at least once a month, and about half of US consumers experienced using third-party delivery services. There have been many studies about the use of various technology in restaurants, however, there is little research describing the relationship between college students' perceived safety and behavioral intention

to use contactless services in the context of QSRs. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine college students' perceived safety toward contactless services in QSRs and to test the relationships between the perceived safety and the theory of planned behavior of using contactless services in QSRs.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Contactless services:

In the light of Covid-19, restaurants keep operating contactless to protect both employees and customers. Contactless services eliminate the need for touching shared surfaces or interacting directly face to face. Contactless services can be implemented through either technology or changes in layout and operational adjustments. CDC offers guiding principles to reduce the risk of Covid-19 such as offering drive-through, curbside take out, or delivery options as applicable, using disposable or digital menus, no-touch trash cans and doors, and touchless payment options as much as possible, etc.

College students:

Young adults (aged 20 to 39) consume the most fast-food meals in comparison with other adults. (Fryar & Ervin, 2013). Especially, while most college students consume at least 1 fast-food meal a week (Gerend, 2009), some consume as many as 6 to 8 meals. (Driskell et al., 2005). Krukowski et al. (2006) also said that college students ate in QSRs 70% more often than non-college-attending adults within the same community. Therefore, college students form a huge market for QSRs.

Perceived safety:

Safety is a component of emotion, which includes a complex set of subjective and objective factors, mediated by neural and hormonal stimuli that provoke affective experience (Bigne & Andreu, 2004). The safety concern is associated with uncertainty avoidance and prevails over other needs where uncertainty avoidance is strong (Hofstede, 2001). Uncertainty feeling is subjective and nonrational feeling. An individual may feel comfortable in a situation familiar to him or her, but others may perceive risky in such a situation (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). By integrating the conceptualizations in the literature, perceived safety in this current study is a degree of comfort that college students perceive toward contactless services in QSRs.

Many studies found that consumers are concerned about safety when choosing to eat at restaurants. Henson et al. (2006) identified the important attributes used to determine a restaurant's safety were observed cleanliness, the appearance of staff, inspection results, and the general impression of the restaurant. Although food safety is not always obviously indicated, customers pay attention to food quality. This finding was supported by Macaskill et al. (2000) and Scarcelli (2007), who concluded the cleanliness of restaurants reflected the safety of food. In the United States, QSRs must concentrate on providing outstanding quality service and practical value if they want to attract college students (Kim et al., 2010). Alonso et al. (2013) demonstrated that in addition to food safety, positive experiences, a clean production/service environment and hospitable services are central factors that most strongly influence customers' attitudes and restaurant choices.

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

The theory predicts and explains the performance of a behavior by intention to engage in it. The TPB postulates three determining factors, attitude, subject norm, and perceived behavioral

control, and behavioral intentions.

- Attitude refers to "the degree to which a person has a favorable or unfavorable evaluation or appraisal of the behavior in question" (Ajzen, 1991, p. 188). The general rule is the more favorable attitude individuals have, the more likely they perform a particular behavior.
- Subjective norm that refers to "the perceived social pressure to perform or not perform the behavior" (Ajzen, 1991, p. 188). When people who are important to themselves believe they should engage in a particular behavior, the greater intentions they perform that behavior.
- Perceived behavioral control refers to "the perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behavior and it is assumed to reflect past experience as well as anticipated impediments and obstacles" (Ajzen, 1991, p. 188).
- Behavioral intention is defined as a motivational factor probability that a person will perform a given behavior. The stronger the intention to perform the behavior, the more likely the behavior will be performed. (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). Based on this definition, behavioral intention in this study is described as a likelihood to use contactless services in QSRs.

In accordance with the literature above, this study postulates the following hypothesis:

H1: Perceived safety of contactless service influences the consumers' attitudes.

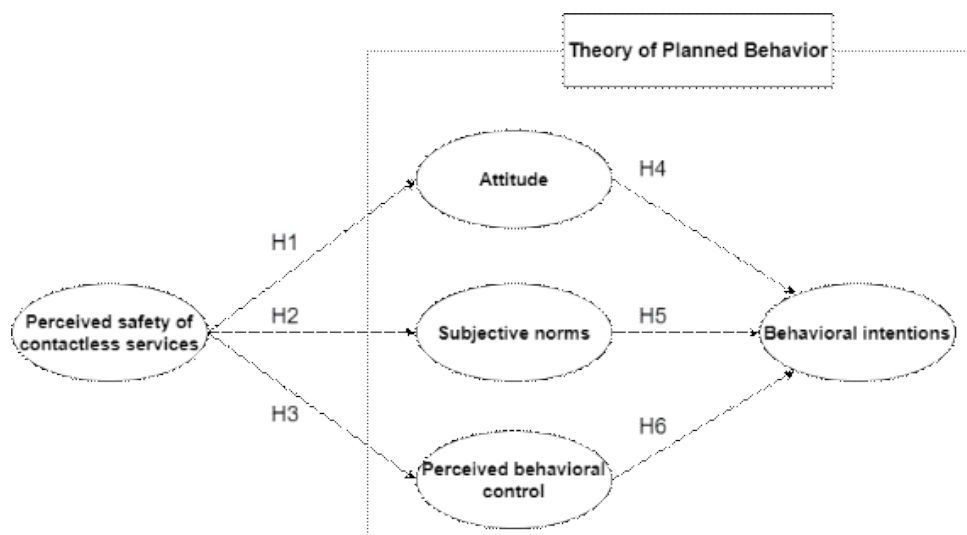
H2: Perceived safety of contactless service influences the subjective norms.

H3: Perceived safety of contactless service influences the perceived behavioral control.

H4: The attitude toward contactless service influences the behavioral intentions to use contactless service.

H5: The subjective norm toward contactless service influences the behavioral intentions to use contactless service.

H6: The perceived behavioral control toward contactless service influences the behavioral intentions to use contactless service.



METHODOLOGY

Survey instrument:

A survey questionnaire comprises 2 sections. The first section asks respondents to measure their perceived safety, attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control and behavioral intention about using contactless service in QSRs. The survey questionnaire will use a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) to measure respondents' opinions about each statement. The second section obtains respondents' demographic profiles. Demographic questions include gender, age, ethnicity, education level, household income, and dining frequency in QSRs.

Data collection / Data analysis:

There will be a convenient sampling method used to collect data for this study. The respondents are college students who have experienced using contactless services in QSRs in the past 6 months. The respondents are students currently enrolling in a college/university. An online survey tool (Qualtrics) will be utilized to create a questionnaire and to collect data. An online survey link will be randomly distributed to respondents by posting on social media (Facebook, Instagram). An IRB approval will be obtained before collecting data. We are expecting to collect approximately 300 usable responses for data analysis. We are planning to use a confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling to process and analyze data.

Measurement item examples:

Perceived safety: I feel safe to use contactless service when ordering food in QSRs.

Attitude: Contactless services use in QSRs are favorable.

Subjective norm: Most people who are important to me think I should use contactless service when ordering food in QSRs.

Perceived behavioral control: Whether or not to use contactless service when ordering food in QSRs is completely up to me.

Behavioral intention to use contactless service: I intend to use contactless service when ordering food in QSRs.

CONTRIBUTION

The outcome of this study will have both theoretical and practical contributions. The findings will provide insights into college students' perceptions of safety/value toward contactless services and how it influences their attitudes and their behavioral intentions to use contactless services in QSRs. In addition, the results of this study will help restaurant owners and managers understand customers' preference for a particular contactless service. It helps the industry practitioners effectively implement their contactless services to improve customers' experiences in the restaurant businesses.

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THE IMPACT OF PHYSICAL CONFINEMENT ON TOURIST CHOICE

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INTRODUCTION

COVID-19 is a crisis like few we have ever experienced before. Some compare the existing pandemic to epidemic outbreaks such as SARS, H1N1 and Ebola. However, the world didn't experience such a widespread lockdown in the globe, as governments take a series of administrative measures closing customs, public places and even communities. Consequently, people in many nations are forbidden to travel and this miserable process seems hardly to be changed in the short term due to the recrudescence epidemic. The crisis, needless to say, has brought about great hit to the hospitality and tourism industry in the world (Wan et al., 2020) (Sharma & Nicolau, 2020).

What greatly attracts researchers, recently, is how consumers' behaviors could change under such a situation as the COVID-19. As is known to tourism researchers and practitioners, one of the most notable hallmarks during the epidemic is physical confinement. We define physical confinement as a situation that people are forced to stay in a place with limited mobility as a result of uncontrollable reasons (e.g., lockdown, travel ban, etc.), which limits a person's space of mobility, and subsequently affect their perceptions of freedom psychologically. Needless to say, we've never been more familiar with this concept as we are during the COVID-19 epidemic. According to the media, people in many countries are prohibited to travel or even leave their home in most infected cities, and many tourism destinations have issued policies such as cancelled bookings, limited logistics and forbidden entries (BBC News, 2020). Relevant research has demonstrated significant impacts of physical confinement on consumer behavior. For

instance, Levav and Zhu (2009) found that the feeling of confinement generated by narrow aisles would activate participants' perceived freedom threat and influence their subsequent decision-making: physically confined consumers have a preference for more varied products. Arguably, we predict that this kind of effect is not only limited to environmental restriction such as space constraints, but could also be extended to physical confinement (lockdown, movement limit, stay-at-home order, etc.), and it would result in an immense impact on tourists' psychological responses towards tourism products or services.

The theory of psychological reactance and compensatory behavior could help us understand how tourists' behavior would change in face of such perceived freedom threat during the COVID-19. The major assumption of psychological reactance theory is that humans believe that they have freedom to decide their own behaviors. Therefore, any attempts that invade, limit or eliminate their freedom may elicit negative emotions, further engendering psychological reactance (Jullian J. Edney et al., 1976). Following this reasoning, it could be referred that physical confinement may activate a sense of freedom threat, and threatened tourists tend to exhibit reactance in the form of acts aiming to regain their infringed freedom. Compensatory behavior theory was first conceptualized by (Higgins, 1987). It posits that once people experience threats to important aspects of themselves, it produces discrepancies between their actual and ideal self-concepts. Consequently, they tend to compensate the threats by acquiring or displaying products that signal success on those threatened domains (Mende et al., 2019). Numerous relevant studies have demonstrated this psychological

process. For instance, consumers who were prohibited to touch products in a retailing shop are more prone to subsequently touch them to counterbalance a loss if sensory freedom (Ringler et al., 2019), and participants whose talents were questioned are more likely to consume products that signaling their intelligence (Gao et al., 2009). Recall that physical confinement such as lockdown and travel bans would invade people's movement freedom, thus eliciting negative emotions and generating discrepancies between their actual and ideal states. We arguably predict that tourists who have a sense of threatened freedom would react to physical confinement in the form of compensatory behavior (i.e., purchasing products/services that signaling freedom).

Based on above conceptualization, this study hypothesized that:

- H1. Physical confinement will increase consumer compensatory behavior, that is, to choose products/services that signaling freedom.
- H2. The impact of physical confinement on consumer compensatory behaviors is mediated by a perceived freedom threat.

METHOD

In study 1, daily search queries pertaining to people's feelings towards physical confinement in

Britain such as *No lockdown* and *Open up UK* were obtained from Google Trends. Time series analysis was then harnessed to monitor people's attitudes corresponding to each large-scale lockdown periods in the whole country. In study 2, we conducted a 2 (physical confinement: lockdown vs. non-lockdown) \times 1 between-subject study to test the main effect of physical confinement on tourist choice and the underpinning effect of freedom threat.

FINDINGS

Consistent with the psychological reactance theory, findings of study 1 revealed that volumes of search queries signaling people's dissatisfaction towards mobility limits spiked significantly, suggesting that physical confinement elicits a sense of freedom threat, thus engendering people's strong psychological reactance. The results of study 2 showed that participants under lockdown (vs. non-lockdown) condition were more inclined to choose hotel services that signaling freedom, supporting the main effect (H1). Moreover, the mediating effect (H2) was further demonstrated, suggesting that the effect of physical confinement on freedom-oriented choices were mediated by tourists' perceptions of freedom threat (Figure 1).

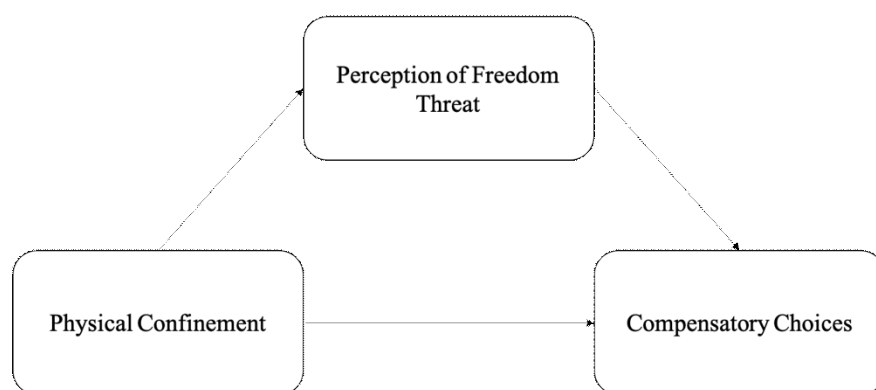


Figure 1. The conceptual model

IMPLICATIONS

This is an essential research given that recent statistics (Loo, 2017) showing compensatory consumption accounts for 60% of the whole transaction in the hospitality and tourism industry.

Moreover, it seems necessary to investigate the impact of physical confinement on tourists' psychological process and choices in the era of COVID-19. In this research, a secondary data analysis and one laboratory study provide support for our hypothesis. This study prompts several

managerial implications. First, our findings contribute to the literature by shedding light on the unknown area of physical confinement and consumers' compensatory choices. Our empirical results suggest that people who experience physical confinement are more prone to choose products or services that signaling freedom. Second, the current findings also hold relevance for practitioners in hospitality and tourism industry. Our findings suggest that marketers in the tourism & hospitality industry are ought to focus on signaling freedom when promoting new products and services in the COVID-19 era.

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COMMODYING INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE AS TOURISM SOUVENIR FOR SUSTAINABILITY? A PERSPECTIVE OF THE PRACTITIONERS

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INTRODUCTION

Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) has been rising as a significant tourism attraction while is facing with harsh test of sustainable development. China as one of the countries with rich ICH elements has developed a relative complete preservation system (Xin, & Huang, 2011) and moreover, has promoted ICH to tourists as attraction or souvenir as the other countries. For one thing, it cannot deny that such tourism business contributes much for the ICH development, especially in the economic benefit issue. However, as the commodification of culture so as to fulfill public expectations (Hitchcock, 2000), ICH as souvenir also has to suffer the potential risk in various aspects on its sustainable development which has been criticized too (Baillie, 2010), such as the loss of authenticity, handcraft art, pricing competition and so on.

With respect to the concept of souvenirs, they are identified as a present, gift that reminds of a person, location, or activity and is associated with the remembrance of someone or something, as defined by the dictionary (Słownik języka polskiego, 2007). ICH as tourism souvenir for most people, particularly cultural tourists, are a critical element during their journey. Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) is a non-physical asset and involves skills, oral tradition, knowledge, artifact, or folklore, which are usually transmitted from generation to generation (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, UNESCO, 2003). In other words, ICH as an attraction to some extent is more fragile and vulnerable than other tourism resources as it will soon disappear once there is no inheritor (Tan, Tan, Kok, & Choon, 2018). On the other side, The UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2003 emphasizes the importance of communities in

commercializing ICH experiences. This Convention calls for the active involvement and of the community to which the ICH belongs, given that it is this community that is best placed to safeguard its future (Bakar, Osman, Bachok, & Ibrahim, 2014; Blake, 2009).

Within a community, the practitioners of the ICH have a predominant role of relevant tourism resource provider as they are the significant individuals to deliver and convey the ICH and has major implications for the development and sustainability of destination tourism (Blake, 2009; Io, 2019; Meijer-van Mensch, 2011). According to the UNESCO' definition, ICH practitioners are the people: 'within or across communities who have distinct skills, knowledge, experience, or other characteristics, and thus perform specific roles in the present and future practice, re-creation and/or transmission of their intangible cultural heritage as, for example, cultural custodians, practitioners and, where appropriate, apprentice.' (Asia/pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO [ACCU], 2006, p. 4). In the meantime, as the tourism business participants, ICH practitioners have to take responsibility for the conservation of ICH and enhance its understanding, reputation, and popularity to engage the marketing tasks. Moreover, the capacity for a productive relationship between dissemination of authentic ICH and development of it as a sustainable tourism resource is acknowledged by ICH practitioners.

Despite the important role of ICH practitioners in safeguarding sustainability, there has been very limited research regarding ICH practitioner perspectives on the sustainability of ICH, especially regarding the issue about the complex ambiguous relationship between commodification of ICH as tourism souvenir and its sustainable development. Therefore, this article

first of all will present the current research with respect to the ICH tourism development alongside comprehensive review of the literature of the concept of sustainability in the ICH context and the ICH practitioners' performance. Secondly, this study will use two Chinese ICH cases to explore whether and how the commodification way of tourism souvenir demonstrated and how it influences on the sustainability development of ICH from the perspective of those ICH practitioners through qualitative study.

METHOD

Two cases of ICH in China were chosen as the research target, one of them is handcrafted iron wok skill originated in Zhangqiu, Shandong Province, China, and the other is Deng's handmade knife skill in Chongqing, China. Both of the products of the two ICH are high reputation Chinese traditional gastronomy instruments, and both are facing with the dilemma of commodification of tourism souvenir. According to the discussion by Lamers et al. (2017) regarding theories in tourism research that include the unpacking of social phenomena, qualitative research methods, such as participation observation (Schmidt, 2016) are necessary. Meanwhile, focus groups and interviewing, and other methods developed by ethno-methodologists (Garfinkel, 1984) are adopted as well to record in detail the physical aspects of local context of those ICH practitioners, the objects and material elements involved, and the configuration of the practice as enacted by the participants of the practice (Souza Bispo, 2016).

First, a brief statistical analysis was adopted to evaluate the regional composition of these group of ICH practitioners who are now working on these two ICH, such as their demographic characteristics, working experience and so on. Secondly, data on those ICH, such as current ICH souvenir production process, product types, sales channels, and local tourism development were obtained through focus group discussion. Thirdly, the descriptions of how those ICH practitioners demonstrated their working-life reality, ICH working experience, and their perception and attitude among the current commodification of ICH as tourism souvenir were obtained through in-depth interviews, participant

observation, and focus group discussions. Besides, a rigorous sampling strategy based on homogenous-purpose sampling established the findings' transferability (Decrop, 2004) with 12 practitioners for each ICH case. Data analysis triangulation, such as combining qualitative content analysis with constant comparison analysis, added credibility to the findings (Decrop, 2004; Leech, Onwuegbuzie, & Combs, 2011).

FINDINGS

Since this study is still ongoing, based on current facts and evidence collected from second-hand literature and initial field survey, the results were relied on two main categories in both positive and negative aspect regarding these ICH practitioners' attitude among the commodification of tourism souvenir of ICH. In the Chinese literature context, this kind of process of manufacturing, distributing, promotion and selling of ICH tourism souvenir is referred to as productive protection since it could contribute to the producers' economic income and enhance the popularity of ICH (Liu, H., Han, F. and Wang, J., 2020). Indeed, this method in some degree is reasonable since Harrell (2013) argues that whatever methods can maintain a conventional culture alive, including commodification, are worthy. The current research finding from ICH practitioners is identified this point since its effective illustration for ICH sustainable development through increasing economic benefit. However, the negative effect, concern of ICH tourism souvenir production also is significant as well, which mainly rely on the conflict between cost saving for economic profit and the insistence of traditional handcraft skills too.

IMPLICATIONS

This study will enrich the current literature of Intangible Cultural Heritage related to sustainability and its relations and consequences towards commodification by investigating two cases of ICH heritage in China that are on the way to be mass tourism souvenir from the exploratory of ICH practitioners. Besides, understanding the growth of ICH as a tourism resource, as well as the ICH practitioners, who are in the frontier of

the sustainable development of ICH, their understanding of such crucial issue can help policymakers in both tourism industry and the managerial staffs of ICH to have further collaborative strategies and policies to improve and support the sustainability of ICH in China.

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IMPACT OF “DISTANCE” ON HOTEL DEMAND MODELING

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INTRODUCTION

Among factors affecting tourism and hotel demand, the distance between a destination and its place of origins, which can deter and attract tourists, has received close attention from tourism scholars (Beaman, 1974; Smith, 1983; Mayo and Jarvis, 1986). Distance effectively represents the influence of many factors and is the foundation for a series of complicated decisions regarding whether, where, and which route to travel. As such, this construct exerts a profound influence on tourism activities (Cao et al., 2018). Incorporating spatial factors such as distance into a destination selection model should thus deepen our understanding of tourist behavior overall (Desbarats, 1983; Woodside and Lysonski, 1989).

Importantly, the influence of distance on tourists' destination choices does not suggest that potential tourists select destinations merely based on distance (Lee et al., 2012); rather, distance is a proxy of several tangible and intangible attributes, contextual influences, and physical geographic considerations (McKercher and Mak, 2019). In modern times, the limitation of distance on tourism activities is no longer completely reflected in the absolute geographical distance as in the past when transportation was not developed, but in a more relative sense. As Kreisel (2004) notes, past interpretations of geographical space focused merely on spatial aspects, which was not consistent with the 'real' space as other dimension, such as socio-psychological factors, also have multiple and nonnegligible influences on tourist behaviors. The term relative distance is used to reflect the time features of stretching and shrinking of the

geographical space in modern society (Abler, Adams, & Gould, 1972), and studies showed that tourist behavior in relation to relative space did not have completely the same features of geographic distance (Gatrell, 1983).

Under this background, this study argue that hotel demand is reflected by both physical and relative distance between origins and destinations. Daily online booking data for hotels in Hangzhou, China from July 2017 to August 2018 was collected to measure the city's hotel demand. This study explores different forms of relative distance including economic distance, transportation convenience, cultural distance and climate distance between the city and its major origin markets. In addition, this study also considers tourism resources endowment of the destination city measured by the number of national 5A-level tourist attractions, the origin markets' economic development status (measured by GDP) and population size as the determinants of hotel demand in Hangzhou using a gravity model approach. Differences of the determinants affecting hotel demand will be examined across a number of factors such as hotel categories, travel purposes, levels of tourist consumption and travel time. Our findings can benefit tourism market practitioners by highlighting the major influencing factors driving online hotel demand. Results can therefore guide the government and tourism marketers in making better-informed decisions when distributing and allocating tourism resources.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The influence of distance on travelers'

destination choices constitutes a complex dynamic system including frictional and catalytic effects (Lin and Morais, 2008). The frictional effect implies that climbing costs associated with time, money, and physical strength can hinder potential tourists' travel willingness and constrain tourism demand as distance grows. The catalytic effect reflects psychological benefits accompanying an increase in distance, such as a sense of novelty or a fulfilled psychological need to escape, which can offset the negative effects of costs to some extent. Gravity model, which is well suited to this circumstance, has been extensively applied to explain international flows given their ability to provide an "understandable and practical method to measure the relationship of one zone to another zone" (Moorthy, 2014).

Travel distance consists of several components including physical, psychological, social, and economic distance (Morley et al., 2014). Goeldner and Ritchie (2009) clearly defined economic and cultural distance, which were both categorized as resistance factors inversely associated with travel demand. Economic distance refers to the time and cost involved in traveling from one's place of origin to a destination and back. Economic distance presumably has a positive relationship with resistance for a destination, resulting in a negative relationship with travel demand (Goeldner and Ritchie, 2009). Cultural distance is the most commonly studied dimension of distance. The concept of cultural distance originates from the description of cultural differences. In the field of tourism research, cultural distance refers to the degree of cultural differences between tourist origin and destination. According to the 'similarity attraction' hypothesis (Byrne & Nelson, 1965), traveling to places with similar cultures can mitigate the culture shock, which may lead to a positive experience. Still, some researchers believe tourists' destination choices may be driven by cultural differences rather than similarities (McKercher & Cros, 2003; O'Leary & Deegan, 2003). Climate has been identified as an important destination attribute (Hu & Ritchie, 1993) and one of the most important determinants of international tourist flows (Boniface & Cooper, 2009). The relationship between climate and tourism demand is close and complex. Climate factors affect tourists'

travel motivations, travel abilities and perceptions of the destination. In some cases, specific climate and weather are necessary conditions and main attractions of tourism (Martín, 2005). Empirical evidence showed that climate distance could also positively affect the tourism demand (Lorde, 2014; Lorde et al., 2016), encouraging tourists to take longer visits to a destination (Jackman et al., 2020). Thus, in the domestic context, it is also reasonable to take climate distance into consideration when modelling hotel demand. To the best of our knowledge, the impact of distance on all aspects of tourism demand is well-acknowledged but has not been fully explored (McKercher, 2018): the real effect of distance on tourist behavior remains unclear and calls for additional research to conceptualize its influence on travel demand (Xue and Zhang, 2020).

METHODOLOGY

Data for this study were collected from multiple sources. The number of person-trips included in each hotel booking was used as a proxy for online hotel demand for Hangzhou, China. The dataset consisted of categorical variables (e.g., hotel rating, residence city, consumption level and travel purpose) and numerical variables (e.g., number of person-trips). We aggregated records containing bookings in the same city to obtain records at the city-pair level for all of the above subcategories. The **geographic distance** between the origin city and Hangzhou City was Web crawled from the authorized API offered by Baidu Map. Given China's complex topography and elevation changes from the western to eastern regions, the driving distance was used to measure the geographic distance. Train timetables and ticket fares were Web crawled from Ctrip, China's leading online travel market service platform. The number of trains from each origin city to Hangzhou was used to measure the **transportation convenience** between the two cities, and the lowest price and shortest time among these trains were used to measure the **economic distance**. The *Linguistic Atlas of China (2012 edition)* provides detailed information on the distribution of various dialects in the country. We adopted the dialect distance as the proxy for **cultural distance**, which was similar to language distance

that frequently used in cultural distance studies. Specifically, if the origin city and Hangzhou both belong to a same dialect segment, then the dialect distance is assigned with 0; if both belong to a same dialect area but a different dialect segment, the dialect distance is assigned with 1; if the origin city and Hangzhou belong to different dialect regions, the dialect distance is as assigned with 2. The **climate distance** was constructed in a similar way. The climate of each city was identified by the national first-level climatic regionalization. If the origin city's climate is the same with Hangzhou, the climate distance is 0; if the origin city belongs to subtropical zone but has different climate with Hangzhou, the climate distance is 1; otherwise the climate distance is 2. This study also introduces the GDP, population of the city and the number of national AAAAA level tourist attractions of the province where the city belongs to explore the determinants of the hotel demand using a gravity model approach. Data was collected from official public sources. Finally, the cross-sectional econometric model was estimated by robust OLS regression. In addition, the influence of multiple factors under different hotel stars, travel purposes, tourist consumption levels and travel time were explored and discussed by subsample regressions.

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS

Preliminary results showed that GDP, population, number of tourist attractions, geographic distance, economic distance, transportation convenience, cultural distance and climate distance were all significant determinants of online hotel demand. The online hotel demand in Hangzhou was negatively affected by geographic distance, while positively affected by origin city's GDP and population, transportation convenience and climate distance. However, the effect of economic distance and cultural distance were not consistent across different hotel stars, travel purposes, tourist consumption levels and travel time, which worth further discussion. For example, the effect of economic distance was positive for tourists who have business purposes, medium to high consumption level and travel on weekends and vacations.

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HOW MOBILE PHONE USAGE AFFECTS REACTIONS IN SERVICE FAILURE

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INTRODUCTION

Portable devices are increasingly adopted in self-service with the enhancement of mobile technology (e.g., e-service mobile applications, self-ordering tablets) (Pew Research Center 2017). Smartphones, among all the portable devices, have been viewed as the most fast-growing device type in the past few years and now become equally ubiquitous as laptops (Pew Research Center 2015; 2019). In addition, an increasing number of consumers have become multiple device owners (Bröhl et al. 2018). Prior research has demonstrated that multiple device users tend to assign specific functions to different devices (Bröhl et al. 2018). Specifically, laptop and computers are mostly used for complicated text-processing and video games, whereas tablets are associated with entertainment activities of watching video and playing less sophisticated games. Smartphones are linked with daily chores (e.g., e-banking, information searching, online shopping), communication and social media, thus serving as a personal assistant. Although there are some variations in online shopping among different ages, smartphones are the priority for online shopping among the generations who were born after 1980 (Bröhl et al. 2018; Pew Research Center 2016). To cater such specific-device-for-specific-activity trend, practitioners have developed applications with tailored operations for different devices (e.g., gestures and interface design on tablets are different from on smartphones). Although such actions have been adopted, scant research has examined how these device-specific operations affect customers' cognition, from which their responses in the service are elicited.

We propose that compared to tablets, the operations of smartphones are more associated with service functions, hence, people would feel more familiar and easier to do a new self-service task via smartphones (vs. other personal devices). According to illusions of control theory, one of the antecedents to boost a sense of inflated control is perceived familiarity of tool or materials (Thompson 1998). Furthermore, such illusory control after completing task would extend to more far-reaching events that are associated with the task outcome (example see Fast et al. 2009). By the same token, we propose that such feeling of similarity towards task material (i.e., the operation on smartphones) would induce customers' illusory control over the self-service process, which leads to an inclination of personal responsibility in subsequent service failure and thus less dissatisfaction with the service firm.

METHOD

Participants will be randomly assigned to a one-way (devices: tablet vs. mobile) between-subjects design of a lab experiment. They are invited to a mock unmanned stand that sells snacks (chocolate and jerky). Only QR codes and pictures of the snacks are presented in front of them. Respondents are told that certain restaurant at school is considering using such remote ordering service to increase sales and lower the costs of manpower, and they are invited to help test the technology using their own portable devices. They will order by scanning the QR code on the stand and later the experimenter would bring what they ordered to the stand. Service failure is described as bringing the

wrong order. Later, participants would complete a survey consisting of a set of dependent measures including dissatisfaction, responsibility attribution, and perceived control.

FINDINGS

Perceived control.

We predict a main effect of device on perceived control. Specifically, mobile phone users (vs. tablet users) would believe that they have more control over the service process.

Responsibility attribution.

Again, the main effect of device type is predicted. That is, mobile phone users would attribute more responsibility to their own and would tablet users.

Dissatisfaction.

We predict a main effect of device type on dissatisfaction. Specifically, mobile users would express less dissatisfactions in the service failure. In addition, a serial mediation via SPSS Process 3.0 (Hayes 2017) would be conducted. We predict that such mediation would be significant.

CONCLUSIONS

This research provides a new perspective in the era of self-service via mobile devices. Specifically, this research offers an explanation how self-service device itself would trigger customers' differential reactions under service failure. We expect that by inducing a higher level of perceived control in service process and thus more personal responsibility in subsequent service failures, smartphones are the most effective portable device to alleviate dissatisfaction.

Several marketing implications could be yielded from this research. Smartphones should be adopted in terms of triggering personal responsibility in service process. Furthermore, a sense of similarity with other service-related operations (e.g., scanning QR code, similar operative gestures) on smartphones is the key to elicit more perceived control in the service process. Therefore, self-service interface should avoid gestures or layouts that is too new for customers.

On the other hand, interface designers of tablets could make the layout of self-service more similar to that on smartphones.

Limitations of the research are also considered. The alternative explanation of screen size should be ruled out in the future studies. That is, the screen size of smartphones and tablet in future experiments should be controlled. Furthermore, boundary conditions such as device ownership (i.e., whether such effect would only appear when the device is owned by customers themselves) needs to be further explored.

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