

# UNDERSTANDING CHALLENGES FACED BY FEMALE EMPLOYEES IN U.S. FOODSERVICE OPERATIONS

**Qianni Zhu**

*University of Missouri, USA*

**Pei Liu**

*University of Missouri, USA*

## INTRODUCTION

Female workers are an important part of the hospitality industry. There were 8,879,000 workers employed in the accommodation and foodservice industry in 2020, and women employees occupied 51.8% of the total employed workers in the U.S. (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021). Ng and Pine (2003) found that the number of female students who majors in hospitality management is more than male students in the same major. It also indicates that the potential of women workforce dominates the hospitality industry. However, according to the report of the Castell Project (2020), women only held 12% of hospitality industry leadership positions in 2019. Menicucci, Paolucci, and Paoloni (2019) also mentioned that women are the major group in the tourism workforce in most regions of the world, yet there is very low percentage of female promoted to the senior management level. According to DATAUSA (2019), there were 5.16 million female workforces and 4.57 million male workforces in the restaurants and food services industry in 2019. However, the average annual salary for male employees was \$25,979 and female employees was only \$19,280 with the similar workload.

There are many barriers related to female employees' work retention and promotion, such as women's dual role (involving in parenting and household tasks) (Menicucci, Paolucci, & Paoloni, 2019). Other factors, including corporate policies, corporate culture, and negative stereotypes, are also influence women's advancement (Knutson & Schmidgall, 1999). Menicucci and his colleges (2019) found evidence that female hotel executive managers didn't show poor job performance due to being a female. Moreover, female managers do

have a better performance in some conditions than male managers. Women leaders are better at developing, inspiring and motivating others, as well as building relationships and promoting teamwork than male leaders. Thus, women leaders are more suitable working in government and social service areas (Gipson et, al, 2017). Besides, Smith and her colleagues (2006) in their study mentioned that the proportion of women in top management jobs positively affects company performance. Nevertheless, there were 53% of female employees worked at an entry-level position in the restaurant industry, and only 18% of them were promoted to the C-suite executives in 2018 (Luna, 2019). Moreover, Zainol and his colleagues (2016) mentioned that female employees have a higher mobility rate in the restaurant industry than males. Thus, there is a urgent need to understand the challenges female employees faced in the foodservice industry and the barriers they have to retain the job and receive the promotion.

Human resource is a valuable asset of an organization (Mohammed, et, al., 2013). Women workers as a part of human resources are also important to the organization's development. Previous studies investigated women employees' working conditions and the promotion environment in the hotel and tourism industry, but no studies focus on the same questions in the foodservice industry. Thus, the current study aims to investigate the challenges female employees faced in the foodservice industry. More specifically, the study will answer the following research questions:

1. What's the current challenges female employees faced in the foodservice industry?
2. What are the factors contributing to female employees' turnover intention and promotion?
3. What companies can do to reduce female

employees' turnover intention and enhance their job satisfaction and opportunities to promotion in the foodservice industry?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Food service industry and female employees*

Commercial restaurants and institutional (non-commercial) organizations are two types of the foodservice industry. Commercial restaurants are profit-oriented and aim to earn revenue (EHL Insights, 2020), such as fine-dining restaurants, fast food restaurants, and catering companies. Their primary goal is to sell food products to customers. Differently, the primary goal for non-commercial organizations is not to make a profit on providing food products to the customers but setting the food providing service as a secondary support service (EHL Insights, 2020). This kind of foodservice organization includes hospitals, educational institutions, hotel food service, and other companies providing food service.

After comparing the job description between the commercial restaurants and institutional foodservice operations in the Indeed online website, there are several main differences between female employees working in both settings. Generally, for a similar position, such as kitchen staff, the institutional operations provide more job benefits for their employees than the commercial restaurants. The benefits include but are not limited to provide different insurance types, retirement plans, and supports to professional development. Moreover, the institutional foodservice operations generally have higher job requirements for their employees. For example, some institutional foodservice operations have a certificate requirement list on their job requirement description. Comparing to institutional foodservice operations, restaurant employees do have a longer and unevenly distributed work hours. The different policies, work environments, job benefits, and management supports presents a unique challenge for female employees in both foodservice settings.

The first challenge that female employees may face in this industry is the unequal salary based on gender. Shierholz (2014) reported that females' average hourly rate in the restaurant industry was \$9.50, and males' average hourly rate was \$10.15.

Secondly, sexual harassment is another challenge in this industry. According to Johnson and Madera (2018), 90% of women reported sexual harassment in the restaurant industry. These sexual harassment behaviors were reported not only from their supervisors, but also from the customers. Because the special characteristics of "the customer are the most important" view in the restaurant industry, some supervisors tend to ignore the reports from the employees to maintain the relationship with customers. Moreover, as mentioned earlier, women's dual role is the third challenge for keeping the balance between life and work responsibilities without any support (Menicucci, Paolucci, & Paoloni, 2019).

In terms of the promotion, one barrier that slows women employees' promotion is the "glass ceiling". It includes many different types, such as gender discrimination in a company, stereotypes, and tokenism (Oakley, 2000). This kind of thought insists on believing female employees are lack of capability and skills than male, even though many scholars found there is almost no difference in the innate abilities between female and male managers (Appelbaum, Audet, & Miller, 2003). Appelbaum (2003) and his colleagues found that women leaders have many advantages than men. For example, women have more empathy and easier communicate with others than men; women are highly rated on people skills than men; women leadership also more efficient than men on people-oriented leadership skills; and women employees could better integrate multiple organizational roles and do better on work-life balance than men. Therefore, improving work environment for female employees would provide a great advantage for a company's management.

### *Strategic human resource management*

As human-oriented industry, the hospitality companies may different from others as they provide more intangible products (service experience) than tangible products. The intangible service experience highly depends on the face-to-face interactions between employees and customers (Madera, et. al, 2017). Thus, human resource is a significant part of the whole hospitality companies. Effective use of human resources can better help to improve corporate performance. Strategic human resource

management defined the relationship between employee performance and firm performance (Uysal, 2014). It describes the human resource management affects individuals' performance, individuals' performance affects the business department's performance, and the business department's performance affects the firm performance. It is also a helpful tool to help a company understand how to enhance their

performance by increasing their employees' personal performance. With this assumption, this study is trying to seek what companies can do to reduce their female employees work challenges related to retention and promotion. Thus, as a part of human resource management, the appropriate company's policy could improve female employees' job satisfaction and work performance.

### Study Model

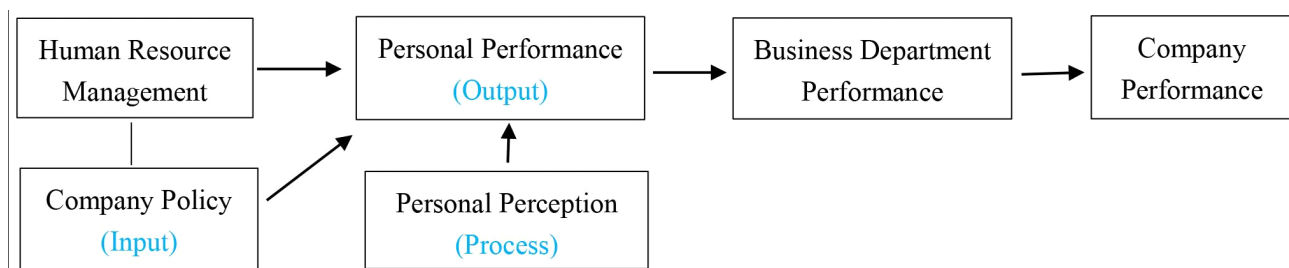


Figure 1. Study Model

## METHOD

### Participant selection

This study will invite a total of 40 female employees who are working in the foodservice industry. Twenty participants will be selected from the commercial restaurants and another 20 participants will be selected from the institutional foodservice operations (e.g., schools, hospitals, and daycares). A 45-minute individual interview will be conducted among participants.

### Interview question development and pilot study

The individual interviews with female employees will be conducted to (a) investigate past experiences, challenges, and barriers related to their job retention and promotion; and (b) identify the appropriate company policies preferred by this group. The interview questions for the study will be developed based on the literature review, input from three female foodservice employees and human resource management experts, and results from the pilot study.

### Data collection process and data analysis

Participants will be contacted by telephone

and asked to participate in a 45 minutes interview. Upon participant agreement, all interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. After data collection, Nvivo software will be used to analyze and summarize the results. Common themes will be identified from the transcribed data.

## IMPLICATIONS

This study's results and conclusion will provide a new thought for the foodservice operations to increase female employee's retention and satisfaction. Besides, this study explores what organization policies or support favorite by female employees and would benefit their career success.

## REFERENCES

- Appelbaum, S. H., Audet, L. & Miller, J. C. (2003). Gender and leadership? Leadership and gender? A journey through the landscape of theories. *Leadership and Organization Development Journal*, Vol. 24, Issue 1. <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/01437730310457320/full/html#idm45800424636544>

- American Psychological Association. (2020). APA Dictionary of Psychology: input-process-output model (IPO model).  
<https://dictionary.apa.org/input-process-output-model>
- Castell Project, Inc. (2020). Women in Hospitality Industry Leadership 2020.  
[https://www.ahlafoundation.org/sites/default/files/2020-02/Castell\\_Report\\_lk\\_v5\\_01.20%20%28002%29.pdf](https://www.ahlafoundation.org/sites/default/files/2020-02/Castell_Report_lk_v5_01.20%20%28002%29.pdf)
- DATAUSA. (2019). Restaurants & Food Services. From: <https://datausa.io/profile/naics/restaurants-food-services#demographics>
- EHL Insights. (2020). Commercial vs non-commercial food services: What is the difference? <https://hospitalityinsights.ehl.edu/commercial-vs-non-commercial-food-services>
- Gipson, A. N., Pfaff, D. L., Mendelsohn, D. B., Catenacci, L. T., Burke, W. W. (2017) Women and Leadership: Selection, Development, Leadership Style, and Performance. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science* 53(1):32-65. doi:10.1177/0021886316687247
- Johnson, S. K., & Medera, J. M. (2018). Sexual Harassment Is Pervasive in the Restaurant Industry. Here's What Needs to Change. *Harvard Business Review*.  
<https://hbr.org/2018/01/sexual-harassment-is-pervasive-in-the-restaurant-industry-heres-what-needs-to-change>
- Knutson, B. J. & Schmidgall, R. S. (1999). Dimensions of the Glass Ceiling in the Hospitality Industry. *American Hotel & Motel Association, "Facts about Hospitality" (an informational pamphlet)*.  
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/001088049904000618>
- Luna, N. (2019). Report: Gender gap widens in key food industry leadership roles. *Nation's Restaurant News*.  
<https://www.nrn.com/workforce/report-gender-gap-widens-key-food-industry-leadership-roles>
- Madera, J. M., Dawson, M, Guchait, P., & Belarmino, A. M. (2017). Strategic human resources management research in hospitality and tourism: A review of current literature and suggestions for the future. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 29, Issue 1,  
[https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/IJCHM-02-2016-0051/full/html?casa\\_token=yEFE1EX1SuUAAAAA:t6-gkvOHQUyvG3yWdYJPN0GRMeswXRL6NIEFa65PImsuD4kssqXFZRrf1a22HN2FW6YA38bNaRKGQmRp-uNu1kXhJzrcmsINIPpZUHTdTPsn8qG65ZI](https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/IJCHM-02-2016-0051/full/html?casa_token=yEFE1EX1SuUAAAAA:t6-gkvOHQUyvG3yWdYJPN0GRMeswXRL6NIEFa65PImsuD4kssqXFZRrf1a22HN2FW6YA38bNaRKGQmRp-uNu1kXhJzrcmsINIPpZUHTdTPsn8qG65ZI)
- Menicucci, E., Paolucci, G., Paoloni, N. (2019). Does gender matter for hotel performance? Evidence from the Italian hospitality industry. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, Vol. 21, Issue 5,  
<https://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.2286>
- Mohammed, J., Bhatti, M. K., Jariko, G. A., & Zehri, A. W. (2013). Importance of Human Resource Investment for Organizations and Economy: A Critical Analysis. *Journal of Managerial Sciences*, Vol. 7, No. 1,  
[https://www.qurtuba.edu.pk/jms/default\\_files/JMS/7\\_1/JMS\\_January\\_June2013\\_127-133.pdf](https://www.qurtuba.edu.pk/jms/default_files/JMS/7_1/JMS_January_June2013_127-133.pdf)
- Ng, K., & Pine, R. (2003). Women and men in hotel management in Hong Kong: Perceptions of gender and career development issues. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 22(1), 85–102.  
[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0278-4319\(02\)00077-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0278-4319(02)00077-4)
- Oakley, J.G. (2000), "Gender-based barriers to senior management positions: understanding the scarcity of female CEO's", *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 27 No. 4, pp. 321-34.  
<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1023/A:1006226129868>
- Sheierholz, H. (2014) Low Wages and Few Benefits Mean Many Restaurant Workers Can't Make Ends Meet. *Economic Policy Institute*.  
<https://www.epi.org/publication/restaurant-worker-s/>
- Smith, N., Smith, V., Verner, M. (2006). Do women in top management affect firm performance? A panel study of 2,500 Danish firms. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*, 55, 569-593.  
<https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/17410400610702160/full/html>
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2021). Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey.  
<https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat18.htm>
- Uysal, G. (2014). Stages, Content, and Theory of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM): An Exploratory Study. *Journal of Modern Accounting and Auditing*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 252-256.
- Zainol, N., Abdul, R. A. R., Apendi, S. R.N., Nordin, N., & Rahim, N. (2016). Employees Mobility in Restaurants Industry: Emphasis on Gender in P.Pinang, Malaysia. *Cognitive Social Science e-Journal*. 8(105).

# THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT OF HOTEL FRONT-LINERS

**Raymart Felicilda**

*University of Mindanao, Philippines*

**Stilo Floyd Schneider**

*University of Mindanao, Philippines*

## INTRODUCTION

Many people consider our generation to be the most innovative ever because of the rapid pace of technological change today (Polimenov et al., 2015). Despite the undeniable benefits of technological advancements, the human factor remains a critical and irreplaceable component of the hospitality service process. Despite massive investments in information technology by hoteliers, which have enormous industrial potential, productivity growth has been disappointingly slow in recent years. Evidence of increased productivity is scarce, leading to speculation about a "productivity paradox" (Brynjolfsson, 1993). This research will be carried within this framework to determine the effect of technological innovations on hotel employees' work-life balance and engagement. Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, technological advancements were used more than ever before.

Employee engagement has become one of the most important concepts in the field of management (Bailey et al., 2017). In light of the fact that companies are keen on leveraging improved individual and organizational success through high levels of employee engagement. It has also been repeatedly recorded that levels of engagement are at an all-time low. Gallup (2017), a pioneering organization that has been monitoring employee engagement in various countries since 2000, found that only 13% of the working population worldwide is engaged. In reality, over the last decade, levels of engagement have barely increased. According to Mann et al. (2016), the current employee engagement crisis is having severe and long-term consequences for the global

economy. To maintain a competitive advantage, hotel companies must understand the value of maintaining frontline employees who offer high-quality services to consumers and have a stronger consumer orientation (Afsar et al., 2018; Lombardi et al., 2019).

Research has been conducted in various parts of the world on the impact of technological innovations on work-life balance and employee engagement. The researcher, on the other hand, has not come across any studies on the impact of technological innovations on work-life balance and employee engagement in a local setting. Furthermore, the hospitality industry acts as a valuable human resource in providing service and achieving long-term goals, so if these goals and expectations are achieved, it will have a positive impact on society. Thus, this research is urgently required.

## METHOD

This study employed a causal-effect methodology in a quantitative, non-experimental research design. It is a quantitative research design in that the researcher will use measurement to test the hypothesis by collecting data through surveys, which will result in statistical data (Labare, 2009). Employees of hotel establishments in Davao City accredited by the Department of Tourism Area XI (September, 2020) are the respondents, regardless of their employment status. They are the ones who are appropriate for the survey respondents and provide useful information for testing the study's hypothesis. In order to determine the number of employees per hotel establishment, the researcher will use stratified random sampling. In this

segment, the researcher will collect and gather relevant data using a printed and electronic structured questionnaire. These survey questionnaires were believed to be appropriate for it was already treated to be valid and reliable. Furthermore, pilot testing was also done prior to the conduct of the study and has a value of the Cronbach Alpha which is 0.983 for technological innovations, 0.958 in employee engagement and 0.784 in work-life balance. This means that the terms used in the questionnaires were excellently related to each other. The questionnaire followed the 5-point Likert scale, 5 being the highest while 1 being the lowest.

## FINDINGS

### *Level of Technological Innovations.*

Shown in Table 1 is the descriptive statistics results on assessing the level technological innovations as perceived by hotel front-liners in Davao City, which has an overall mean of 4.45 (SD=0.575), described as very high. The very high levels surmised of its indicators, to include data management ( $\bar{x}$ =4.48, SD=0.579), performance targets and achievements ( $\bar{x}$ =4.46, SD=0.600), accountability ( $\bar{x}$ =4.40, SD=0.641) and quality of service ( $\bar{x}$ =4.48, SD=0.626).

**Table 1. Level of technological innovation**

Indicators	Mean	SD	Descriptive Level
<i>Data Management</i>	4.48	.579	Very High
<i>Performance Targets And Achievements</i>	4.46	.600	Very High
<i>Accountability</i>	4.40	.641	Very High
<i>Quality Of Service</i>	4.48	.626	Very High
Overall	4.45	.575	Very High

Overall, hotel employees believe that their company values data processing and providing high-quality service in their operations. Furthermore, the very high levels of data management and service quality compared to other measures may indicate that situations involving providing quality of service to guests and securing pertinent information are more pronounced in Davao City's hotel establishments.

### *Level of Employee's Work-Life Balance of Hotel Front-liners in Davao City.*

Manifested in Table 2 is the descriptive statistics results in measuring the level of work-life balance of hotel front-liners in Davao City. Overall mean of work-life balance is 3.69 (SD=0.699), assessed to be high. The high level could be attributed to predominantly high ratings given by employees on job stress ( $\bar{x}$ =3.68, SD=0.810), long working hours ( $\bar{x}$ =3.90, SD=0.884) and work-family conflict ( $\bar{x}$ =3.85, SD=0.756) with role overload ( $\bar{x}$ =3.33, SD=1.107) being the only measure assessed as moderate.

**Table 2. Level of work-life balance**

Indicators	Mean	SD	Descriptive Level
<i>Job Stress</i>	3.68	.810	High
<i>Role Overload</i>	3.33	1.107	Moderate
<i>Long Working Hours</i>	3.90	.884	High
<i>Work-Family Conflict</i>	3.85	.756	High
Overall	3.69	.699	High

In general, hotel workers are thought to be reasonably sensitive to circumstances that are perceived as adverse or contradictory in their quest

to balance work and personal life. Since hotel employees work such long hours, this dimension is more prominent than three other measures of

work-life balance among hotel front-line employees.

### ***Level of Employee Engagement.***

Table 3 exhibit the descriptive statistics results on assessing the level of employee engagement as perceived by hotel front-liners in Davao City, which has an overall mean of 4.15 (SD=0.679), described

as high. The high level is also reflective of high to very high levels of its indicators, to include leadership ( $\bar{x}=4.37$ , SD=0.649), communication ( $\bar{x}=4.21$ , SD=0.693) – both of which are very high – commitment ( $\bar{x}=4.15$ , SD=0.844), and employee involvement ( $\bar{x}=3.87$ , SD=0.865).

**Table 3. Level of employee engagement**

Indicators	Mean	SD	Descriptive Level
<i>Leadership</i>	4.37	.649	Very High
<i>Communication</i>	4.21	.693	Very High
<i>Commitment</i>	4.15	.844	High
<i>Employee Involvement</i>	3.87	.865	High
Overall	4.15	.679	High

It is clear that the hotel employees' approach to implementing management techniques is similar to their activities, which includes the type of leadership and communication. These two steps are at a very high level, indicating that hotel employees in Davao City deal with circumstances like these nearly all of the time, if not all of the time. Furthermore, the high degree of commitment in the remaining two metrics shows that hotel employees have been seen to complete their performance tasks the majority of time.

### ***Correlation between Technological Innovations, Work-Life Balance and Employee Engagement of Hotel Front-Liners.***

Displayed in Table 4 are the results of the relationship between the independent (work-life balance), dependent (employee engagement) and mediator (technological innovations) variables. Bivariate correlation analysis using Pearson product moment correlation was employed to determine the relationship between the variables mentioned.

The first zero-ordered correlation analysis between work-life balance and employee engagement revealed a computed r-value of -0.0601 with a probability value of  $p < 0.000$  which is significant at the 0.05 level. This indicates that there exist a positive and strong association between the two variables. Thus, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship is therefore rejected.

**Table 4. Correlation Analysis of the Variables**

Pair	Variables	Correlation Coefficient	P-Value	Decision On Ho
IV And DV	<i>Work-Life Balance And Employee Engagement</i>	-0.601	0.000	Reject
IV And MV	<i>Work-Life Balance And Technological Innovations</i>	-0.429	0.000	Reject
MV And DV	<i>Technological Innovations And Employee Engagement</i>	0.681	0.000	Reject

In the same manner, second bivariate correlation analysis involving work-life balance and technological innovations yielded an r-value of -0.429 with a probability value of  $p < 0.000$ , which is significant at 0.05 level. This indicates that there exist a positive association between the two

variables. Thus, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship is also rejected.

The third correlational analysis between technological innovations and employee engagement yielded an r-value of 0.681 with a probability value of  $p = 0.000$ , which is significant

at 0.05 level. This indicates that there exist a positive association between the two variables. Thus, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship is also rejected.

## IMPLICATIONS or CONCLUSION

With the high level of technological innovation in the hotel industry, this study is a clear shift in their delivery. Technology has also expanded the reach of how the hospitality industry operates today, and it will continue to do so in the future, assisting in the advancement of strategic competitive advantage within the industry. This can take the form of a new service product, technology, or specific elements of its implementation; the organization of hotel operations; or new approaches to hotel management or marketing. In the hotel industry, innovative innovations are aimed at effectively meeting customer needs and increasing the organization's productivity in terms of service delivery.

Corporate organisations may have different organizational policies, traditions, and stresses that encourage the use of ICTs in a different way than the current academic environment. Furthermore, findings may differ depending on whether employees' perceptions of technology's impact on work-life balance is studied in a large company or a small business. We will have to reconsider how we do business as demand rises as a result of increased competition. We will be forced to adjust the way we use technology if additional resources are not available, or if they are reduced.

There are some things that an organization can do to help workers achieve a better work-life balance, such as maintaining structural stability, promoting a positive work environment, providing leisure time, and providing training or improving their skills. Furthermore, employee motivation is about creating environments under which workers can work more efficiently, not about motivating them to work harder. Long working hours are less likely to trigger this than a good work-life balance.

Employees may bring not only their true selves to work, but also feel valued/engaged while at work, which helps to achieve more favorable individual and organizational results when policies and processes supporting work-life balance are

strategically and proactively implemented. In this way, human resource experts and companies will use the work-life balance lens to efficiently solve retention and engagement problems.

Technology has many advantages for hoteliers, but it's important to note that it can't replace the above-and-beyond human experiences that guests have with their favorite hotel workers. Technology will help your hotel run more smoothly and efficiently if implemented correctly, enabling your employees to concentrate on what matters most: your guests.

## REFERENCES

- Afsar, B., Shahjehan, A., & Shah, S. I (2018) 'Frontline employees' high-performance work practices, trust in supervisor, job-embeddedness and turnover intentions in hospitality industry.', *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 30(3), pp. 1436–1452.
- Bailey, C., Madden, A., Alfes, K., & Fletcher, L. (2017). The meaning, antecedents and outcomes of employee engagement: A narrative synthesis. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 19(1), 31–53.
- Brynjolfsson, Erik (1993). "The Productivity Paradox of Information Technology," *Communications of the ACM*, 36(12):66-77.
- Gallup, Inc. (2017) 'State of the American Workplace', [Online]. Available at: <https://news.gallup.com/reports/199961/7.aspx> (Accessed: 22 November 2020).
- Lombardi, S., Sassetti, S., & Cavaliere, V. (2019) 'Linking employees' affective commitment and knowledge sharing for an increased customer orientation. ', *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 31(11), (4293–4312).
- Mann, A., & Harter, J. (2016). The worldwide employee engagement crisis. Gallup. Washington, DC, U.S.A. Retrieved from <http://www.gallup.com/businessjournal/188033/worldwideemployee-engagementcrisis.aspx>
- Polimenov, M. et al. (2015). Traditions of national cuisine as the basis for innovations of the restaurant product. Report, International Scientific Conference "Tourism in the Age of Transformation", Varna: Nauka i ikonomika.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I'd like to express my gratitude to everyone whose help was instrumental in achieving my end goal. To my mentor, Dr. Stilo Floyd Schneider, who has been incredibly supportive during my journey and without whom completing the study would be impossible. Thank you for your continued support, Dr. Florence Kristina Jimenez, program coordinator, and the rest of the faculty. Dr. John Vianne B. Murcia did the statistical data computation, and Dr. Shella May L. Dandan gave me suggestions about how to interpret the findings.

I'd like to express my gratitude to Dr. Wilfredo

Takasan and Dr. Anthony Pol Fulache, who have always encouraged me to pursue my studies. To my friends for their moral support; without them, the journey would be impossible to complete.

To my Mama, Papa, and Dr. Dexter A Cequina, who did all they could to help and nurture me, and who are responsible for who I am today. Above all, I am grateful to our Almighty Father in heaven for all of the knowledge and wisdom He has bestowed upon me, which has enabled me to complete the thesis.

Thank you so much!!!

RIF

# THE EFFECT OF UNESCO'S CREATIVE CITY OF GASTRONOMY ON DESTINATION IMAGE IN MACAU SAR, CHINA

Ada Sio

*Griffith University, Australia*

## INTRODUCTION

Over recent decades, tourism has become one of the fastest-growing and most competitive industries in the world (World Tourism Organisation, 2020). Hence, it is important for tourism destinations, Destination Marketing Organisations (DMOs), and tourism providers to identify their competitive advantages, so as to promote and market their distinctive characteristics to stand out from their competitors. The promotion of Special Interest Tourism (SIT) has therefore become important for many destinations. Thus, the research presented in this paper focuses on gastronomy tourism, which is classified within cultural tourism (World Tourism Organisation, n.d.a). According to the World Tourism Organisation (n.d.b), gastronomy is not only about food, it also reflects the culture, tradition and sense of community of different places. Indeed, local culture is an element that is unique to its place, because, it is distinct to every destination, as local culture incorporates the identity, traditions and values of a place. Hence, gastronomy tourism acts as an important protector and promoter of local culture and in recent years, many DMOs have utilised local food as one of their distinctive promotional strategies to differentiate themselves from competitors (Knollenberg, Duffy, Kline, & Kim, 2020).

The proposed location for this research is Macau, one of the Special Administrative Regions of China. The economy of Macau is mainly dependent on the tourism industry and especially the gambling and gaming industry. According to the Tourism Satellite Account of Macau, in 2018, tourism-related industries contributed 50.6% to the total GVA with an amount of MOP 221.2 billion (USD 27.7 billion), while the gambling sector specifically contributed MOP 199.1 billion (USD

24.9 billion), which is approximately 90% of the tourism GVA (Government of Macao Special Administrative Region Statistics and Census Service, 2019a, 2019b). Although Macau has been well-known for its gambling features and the gambling industry has contributed significantly, the Macau government decided to reconstruct itself from a mono-typed tourism destination, based on casinos and gaming, to a multidimensional international integrated tourism destination (Macao Government Tourism Office, 2017). In 2012, Macanese gastronomy was incorporated as part of the intangible cultural heritage by the Macau government and in 2017, Macau was designated with the UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy classification (Macao SAR Government Portal, 2017). Since then, the local government has put in a substantial effort to promote local gastronomy and has implemented a four-year action plan to promote Macanese cuisine.

The main objective of this research is to understand to what extent the recognition of UNESCO Creative Cities of Gastronomy has impacted the image of Macau from the perspective of various stakeholders. More specifically, the first research objective is to investigate how tourists (demand side) perceive Macau, and the second objective is to explore how the related industry representatives (supply side) promote or project Macau's gastronomy. The last research objective is to compare the data collected from these two perspectives, to identify any existing image gaps and congruency between the perceived and projected destination image of Macau.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Cognitive-Affective-Conative Model*

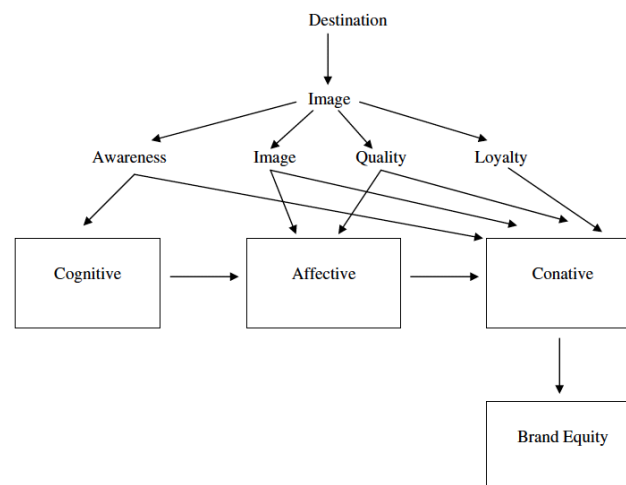
The image of a destination is crucial, because, it directly affects the travel decisions of tourists.

It is important to note that there are two aspects of destination image, the perceived image, which is an image that the supply side creates or maintains, and the projected image, which is the demand side's perception of a destination based on their knowledge and experience. According to Gartner (1993), there are three dimensions in the image formation process: cognitive, affective, and conative. The cognitive component refers to the intellectual and perceptual attributes which relate to an individual's belief and knowledge of the destination (Agapito, Oom do Valle, & da Costa Mendes, 2013; Gartner 1993; Pike & Ryan, 2004). The affective component comprises an individual's feelings and emotions toward a destination (Lai, Khoo-Lattimore, & Wang, 2019; San Martín & Rodríguez del Bosque, 2008), and the conative component refers to the behavioural actions, or the attitudes that influence peoples' future actions (Konecnik & Gartner, 2007;

Tasci & Gartner, 2007; Gartner 1993).

Within tourism research, the cognitive-affective-conative model is used extensively to understand destination image (Konecnik & Gartner, 2007; see also Lee, Song, Lee, & Reisinger, 2017; Woosnam, Styliadis, & Ivkov, 2020). Further, a recent study by Lai, Khoo-Lattimore, & Wang, (2018) suggests that there is an imbalance of cognitive-affective-conative image studies from the tourists' and hosts' perspectives, with a much larger number of studies investigating destination image from the tourist standpoint only. Hence, this study aims to examine all three destination image components from both the demand and supply sides.

### *Consumer-Based Brand Equity for Tourism Destination*



**Figure 1. Creation of Brand Equity for a Destination Brand (Konecnik and Gartner, 2007).**

Brand equity refers to a set of brand assets and liabilities that connects to the brand name and or symbol (Aaker, 1992). This concept was initially utilised in the fields of finance for assessing and measuring the value of a brand, then it was adopted by the marketing industry which used this concept to understand consumer's perspectives of a brand, and, as a result, the model is commonly known as Consumer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE). Later, Konecnik (2006) applied the CBBE model in the tourism context. Since then, a substantial number of studies have adopted this model to better understand destination brand equity (Gartner &

Ruzzier, 2011; Gómez & Molina, 2012; Horng, Liu, Chou, & Tsai, 2012; Konecnik & Gartner, 2007).

There are four dimensions within the CBBE relating to tourism destinations; brand awareness, brand image, perceived quality and brand loyalty. Brand awareness refers to the initial step and recognition stage of a brand (Aaker, 1992). Brand image consists of any association that relates to the brand and which can assist consumers to distinguish one destination from another (Keller, 1993). While perceived quality involves the perceived value of a brand, differentiating it from competitors and capturing the attention and interest of the consumers

and thus, providing the reason to purchase (Aaker, 1992; Oh, 2000). Lastly, brand loyalty implies the level of attachment to the destination and usually refers to the behavioural dimension. (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Purposely, this study will follow the conceptual framework proposed by Konecnik and Gartner (2007), a framework that combines the CBBE for tourism destination model with the cognitive-affective-conative model to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how tourists perceive a destination from various components. For illustrative purposes, this conceptual framework is shown in Figure 1.

## PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

To answer the research objectives, this study will adopt a concurrent mixed methods design. For the qualitative phase, semi-structured interviews will be used to explore brand equity of Macanese gastronomy tourism from the supply side perspective (representatives from government departments and the culinary industry, specifically, Macanese cuisine) in order to gain an understanding of the projected image. Snowball sampling and purposive sampling will be used to reach the target participants and the sample size for this phase will depend on data saturation. Hence, data collection and analysis will happen simultaneously and the proposed data analytical technique for this phase is thematic analysis.

For the quantitative phase, an on-site survey will be implemented to investigate the relationship between perceived brand equity of Macanese gastronomy tourism using the dimensions from the cognitive-affective-conative model, and the CBBE model for tourism destination and travel intentions from the demand side perspective (tourists). This survey will target tourists who are travelling in Macau during the data collection period, aged 18 or above. A disproportionate stratified purposive sampling approach will be adopted. Regarding the sample size and analysis for the quantitative component of this study, the proposed data analytical technique to be used is Structural Equation Modelling. Notably, Bentler and Chou (1987) suggest a ratio value of 5 to 10 individuals per parameter is recommended for obtaining a suitable significant test. Lastly, the findings from

the qualitative phase (supply side) will be compared to the results from the quantitative phase (demand side) to gain a better understanding of the perceptions of the destination image of Macau as a gastronomic destination from these different stakeholders.

## EXPECTED FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

The study outcomes will contribute both theoretically and practically. From a theoretical perspective, this study will address the literature gap in which there is a lack of research that has applied the cognitive-affective-conative model in understanding destination image from various stances. Furthermore, this study aims to explore the relationship of gastronomy tourism and destination image using the cognitive-affective-conative model and CBBE for tourism destination model, with reference to a city that has recently been awarded with the UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy title. Hence, the expected outcomes will contribute theoretically and broaden the current literature regarding the impact of gastronomic tourism on destination image.

From a practical perspective, the results of this research can assist the local government, DMO and related tourism sectors to understand how tourists perceive Macau as a gastronomy destination. Additionally, this study aims to explore the context from a range of stakeholders, thus, the results will assist the local government to evaluate the current marketing strategies and further adjust and improve future destination marketing and development.

## REFERENCES

- Aaker, D. A. (1992). The value of brand equity. *The Journal of Business Strategy*, 13(4), 27-32. doi:10.1108/eb039503
- Agapito, D., Oom do Valle, P., & da Costa Mendes, J. (2013). The cognitive-affective-conative model of destination image: A confirmatory analysis. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 30(5), 471-481. doi:10.1080/10548408.2013.803393
- Bentler, P. M., & Chou, C. (1987). Practical issues in structural modeling. *Sociological Methods & Research*, 16(1), 78-117. doi:10.1177/0049124187016001004
- Gartner, W. C. (1993). Image formation process. *Journal*

- of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 2(2-3), 191-216. doi:10.1300/j073v02n02\_12
- Gartner, W. C., & Ruzzier, M. K. (2011). Tourism destination brand equity dimensions: Renewal versus repeat market. *Journal of Travel Research*, 50(5), 471-481. doi:10.1177/0047287510379157
- Gómez, M., & Molina, A. (2012). Wine tourism in Spain: Denomination of origin effects on brand equity: Wine tourism in Spain. *The International Journal of Tourism Research*, 14(4), 353-368. doi:10.1002/jtr.868
- Government of Macao Special Administrative Region Statistics and Census Service. (2019a). *Macao in Figures*. Retrieved from [https://www.dsec.gov.mo/getAttachment/19c634de-4f83-4c21-8d48-993c3fc51c17/E\\_MN\\_PUB\\_2020\\_Y.aspx](https://www.dsec.gov.mo/getAttachment/19c634de-4f83-4c21-8d48-993c3fc51c17/E_MN_PUB_2020_Y.aspx)
- Government of Macao Special Administrative Region Statistics and Census Service. (2019b). *Visitor Expenditure Survey*. Retrieved from <https://www.dsec.gov.mo/en-US/Statistic?id=404>
- Horng, J., Liu, C., Chou, H., & Tsai, C. (2012). Understanding the impact of culinary brand equity and destination familiarity on travel intentions. *Tourism Management*, 33(4), 815-824. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2011.09.004
- Keller, K. L. (1993). Conceptualizing, measuring, and managing customer-based brand equity. *Journal of Marketing*, 57(1), 1-22. doi:10.2307/1252054
- Knollenberg, W., Duffy, L. N., Kline, C., & Kim, G. (2020). Creating competitive advantage for food tourism destinations through food and beverage experiences. *Tourism Planning & Development*, 1-19. doi:10.1080/21568316.2020.1798687
- Konecnik, M. (2006). Croatian-based brand equity for Slovenia as a tourism destination. *Economic and Business Review for Central and South-Eastern Europe*, 8(1), 83-108.
- Konecnik, M., & Gartner, W. C. (2007). Customer-based brand equity for a destination. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 34(2), 400-421. doi:10.1016/j.annals.2006.10.005
- Lai, M. Y., Khoo-Lattimore, C., & Wang, Y. (2018). A perception gap investigation into food and cuisine image attributes for destination branding from the host perspective: The case of Australia. *Tourism Management*, 69, 579-595. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2018.06.033
- Lai, M. Y., Khoo-Lattimore, C., & Wang, Y. (2019). Food and cuisine image in destination branding: Toward a conceptual model. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 19(2), 238-251. doi:10.1177/1467358417740763
- Lee, H., Song, H., Lee, C., & Reisinger, Y. (2017). Formation of festival visitors' environmentally friendly attitudes: Cognitive, affective, and conative components. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 22(2), 142-146. doi:10.1080/13683500.2017.1381668
- Macao Government Tourism Office. (2017). *Macao Tourism Industry Development Master Plan*. Retrieved from <https://masterplan.macaotourism.gov.mo/home-en/index.html>
- Macao SAR Government Portal. (2018). 2018 Macao Year of Gastronomy officially kicks off Forges ahead as a Creative City of Gastronomy. Retrieved from <https://www.gov.mo/en/news/88728/>
- Oh, H. (2000). Diners' perceptions of quality, value, and satisfaction: A practical viewpoint. *The Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 41(3), 58-66. doi:10.1177/001088040004100317
- Pike, S., & Ryan, C. (2004). Destination positioning analysis through a comparison of cognitive, affective, and conative perceptions. *Journal of Travel Research*, 42(4), 333-342. doi:10.1177/0047287504263029
- San Martín, H., & Rodríguez del Bosque, I. A. (2008). Exploring the cognitive-affective nature of destination image and the role of psychological factors in its formation. *Tourism Management*, 29(2), 263-277. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2007.03.012
- Tasci, A. D. A., & Gartner, W. C. (2007). Destination image and its functional relationship. *Journal of Travel Research*, 45(4), 413. doi:10.1177/0047287507299569
- Woosnam, K. M., Styliadis, D., & Ivkov, M. (2020). Explaining conative destination image through cognitive and affective destination image and emotional solidarity with residents. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 28(6), 917-935. doi:10.1080/09669582.2019.1708920
- World Tourism Organisation. (2020). Why Tourism? Retrieved from <https://www.unwto.org/why-tourism>
- World Tourism Organisation. (n.d.a). Tourism and Culture. Retrieved from <https://www.unwto.org/tourism-and-culture>
- World Tourism Organisation. (n.d.b). Gastronomy.

Retrieved from

<https://www.unwto.org/gastronomy>

Yoon, Y., & Uysal, M. (2005). An examination of the effects of motivation and satisfaction on

destination loyalty: A structural model. *Tourism Management*, 26(1), 45-56.

doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2003.08.016

# THE DETERMINANTS OF REAL-TIME VIRTUAL TOUR ON CUSTOMER'S SATISFACTION AND BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS: THE CASE OF MYREALTRIP'S GUIDED TOURS IN SOUTH KOREA

**Marina Angelova**

*Dongguk University, Gyeongju, Korea*

**Namhyun Kim**

*Dongguk University, Gyeongju, Korea*

## INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic was unexpected and caused unprecedented damages to countries and societies all around the world. In attempt to restrain the spread of the virus many countries announced "lockdown" and restricted travels, therefore causing a big shock to many industries. UNWTO (2020a) reports that tourism is one of the sectors most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Because of the pandemic from 100 up to 120 million jobs are at risk and the financial loss from the drastic reduction of export of tourism is expected to be between 910 billion and 1.2 trillion US dollars (UNWTO, 2020b).

The outbreak of the COVID-19 brought about major changes in the tourism industry and in tourists' perceptions, behavior, motivation, needs and preferences. In order to survive and prepare for the future, the tourism industry has to comprehend these changes in great details and adjust to them as quickly as possible. Researches related to the COVID-19 and the tourism industry are actively being conducted (Bae & Chang, 2020; Choi & Kim, 2020; Gössling, Scott, & Hall, 2020; Hong, 2020; Kock et al., 2020; Sibi, Arun, & Ashraf, 2020; Sigala, 2020). However, most studies are comprehensive and more specific results are needed. As travels have been restricted for more than a year now, at-present people's desire for travel, especially abroad, is very big. At the same time the risk perception is high and health, safety and hygiene are considered as most important factors when choosing how and where to travel (H. Lee, 2020). For this reason, some of the most notable new concepts that are currently being applied in a lot of industries, including the tourism one are "untact"

(non-face-to-face) and "ontact" (face-to-face online). The tourism industry is currently putting forward a relatively new travel product that can satisfy people's desire for both travel and safety - real-time virtual trips. The greatest difference from traditional travel products is that the whole trip is proceeded online. The travel product is drawing bigger popularity all around the world. However, hardly any research papers on this topic can be found. As the pandemic prolongs and travels are highly restricted more and more people search and try different alternatives that can temporarily substitute traveling (H. Lee, 2020). Therefore, finding out more about the new travel products, one of which is real-time virtual trips, that people have interest in and use, should be one of the top priorities for researchers and practitioners in the industry.

The main purpose of this study is to draw out determinants of the real-time virtual tours and examine their effects on customer's satisfaction and behavioral intentions. Doing a research on the real-time virtual tours is expected to bring about great academic and practical implications, because tourism organizations and companies will be able to learn and therefore adjust to the current situation. They will be able to produce better products that meet their customers' needs, as well as make predictions about tourists' future behavior and prepare in advance for it. The study will focus on South Koreans who have bought and experienced at least one real-time virtual tour offered on <https://www.myrealtrip.com/>.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1. Real-time virtual tours

As the pandemic prolongs a large number of

people all around the world including South Koreans have become very interested in “online traveling” as they use it as a way to relieve their desire for travel. The range of “online travel” is wide. Live and non-live streaming videos, VR/Walk video, even watching promotional videos etc. can be considered as online travel (H. Lee, 2020). Media contents for example on YouTube can also be included as a part of the “online travel”. Because of the pandemic, in order to survive the low-demand of overseas travel packages travel agencies came up with a more specialized product - real-time or live virtual tours.

The real-time virtual tour is defined as a service that allows indirect participation in travel through two-way communication with the tour guides in real time (Kim, 2020). They are similar to tourism media contents that have been available up until now. The greatest difference is the goal. Most tourism media contents were usually used for promotion purposes and the access to them was free, live virtual tours on the other side are contents made for sale. This study only focuses on the real-time virtual tours since they are a relatively new product that gained greater attention after the COVID-19 pandemic depended further. Therefore, there is still a great lack of relevant research on real-time virtual tours.

This kind of online travel experience service is provided mainly by travel platforms like Airbnb, Tours by Locals, and MyrealTrip which is the only provider in South Korea. The elements that the tours include are real-time hosting, two-way communication with the tour guide, and video/VR video. Real-time virtual tours are available for overseas and domestic destinations. There are two main types of real-time travel products that are being offered on the platform. First, the tour guide is in a studio and is presenting videos and photos as he/she explains about the place in real-time (the so-called ‘studio live’). Second, the tour guide is at the place and gives a tour around it live in real-time. This study will include both and examine the moderating effect of the type of tour.

The utilization of these real-time of tours all around the world is becoming more diverse. Real-time virtual tours are being presented in cinemas (Lee, 2021). used for school trips and education, trips for company’s employees (incentive

tours) and so on. Therefore, in the future the market is expected to expand even further (Choi, 2020; Oh, 2021). For this reason, research on the topic of real-time virtual tours is highly needed.

## ***2. Real-time virtual tour and the dual process model***

On one hand, the real-time virtual tour is a new type of guided tour. One of the significant differences from traditional guided tours is the way the tour is conducted. Real-time virtual tours are online, non-face-to-face. Viewed from a different perspective, the real-time virtual tour is a new type of tourism media content. It can be easily compared with for example tourism video contents on YouTube. For this reason, in order to draw out the attributes of the real-time virtual tours this study referred to previous studies from an online information acceptance and e-commerce perspective, related to different types of information contents.

Smith and DeCoster (2000) state that usually in their daily lives people use "quick-and-dirty" approaches through which they can obtain logical answers easily and efficiently, while sometimes when are highly motivated and given the time and opportunity, people put in greater efforts and think more deeply. Researchers in social and cognitive psychology have developed models based on these two general lines. The way of thinking influences the formation, enhancement and change of individuals’ attitudes. Petty and Cacioppo (1984)’s Elaboration likelihood model (ELM) and Chaiken (1980)’s Heuristic-systematic model (HSM) are two representative models and they have similar mechanisms. HSM argues that individuals can process messages through systematic process and heuristic process. ELM suggests two main routes for processing information. One is the central route, which stands on the content of the message and involves analytical and cautious processing. It is relevant to the systematic process of HSM. The other is the peripheral route, which processes incoming information using simple empirical cues. It is a concept similar to the heuristic process. Teng, Khong and Goh (2015) stated that when it comes to predicting changes in consumers’ behavior on the account of marketing messages on social media the most suitable model is the ELM. In addition, ELM proposes that the information quality is processed through the central route, while



information source's credibility - through the peripheral route. In the tourism context Choi (2020), Chung, Han and Koo (2013), Ha and Lee (2018), and others have applied the ELM in their researches and proved that information quality and source credibility has a significant effect on behavioral intentions. Based on these and other prior researches this study will use information's quality and source's credibility as the determinants of the real-time virtual tour.

Information quality represents the quality of information itself (Jun & Kang, 2013). A variety of dimensions of information quality are used in previous researches. While Shuang (2013) suggested vividness, appropriate amount, reliability, relevance, guidance and interactivity as dimensions of information quality of EWOM, Filieri and McLeay (2014) put forward timeliness, understandability, relevance, accuracy, added value, and completeness. Choi (2020) used relevance, timeliness, completeness/appropriate amount, and vividness to measure the information quality of YouTube videos. The mentioned researches proved that the information quality overall had a significant effect on information adoption, which could lead to favorable behavioral intentions. Source credibility is the endorser's positive characteristics which can enhance the level of acceptance and persuasion (Ohanian, 1990). Adapting Ohanian (1990)'s source credibility's model, which measures source's credibility in terms of trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness, prior researches examined influencers' and political figures' source credibility and its effect (Li & Yin, 2018; Wiedmann & von Mettenheim, 2020). Choi (2020) measured the Youtuber's credibility with expertise, trustworthiness and familiarity, which is based on homogeneity and favorable impression. Source credibility in this study's context is the credibility of the tour guide the travelers feel. Hence, it is necessary to consider attributes of the tour guide for tourism satisfaction. Previous studies show that service quality and satisfaction with package travels with tour guides depend greatly on the performance of tour guides (Geva & Goldman, 1991; Salazar, 2015). Geva and Goldman (1991) studied the satisfaction of the travelers in guided tour and stressed on the importance of the tour guide, who has to maintain the quality of the tour and keep

the participants satisfied. Salazar (2005) suggested that the guide's service quality is vital for achieving tourist satisfaction. Main attributes to assess the role of the tour guide are knowledge, skill, personality (Mehmet & Zafer, 2016). Jin, Cho, and Choi (2019) evaluated the tour guide's service quality by drawing out determinants from the dimensions of service quality, suggested by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988): professionalism, likeability, empathy, reliability, and responsiveness.

### **3. *Enjoyment***

Perceived enjoyment can be defined as the extent that service users perceive enjoyment regardless of the performance and outcome while using contents (Davis, Bagozzi, & Warsha 1992). Lee (2019) stated that through tourism video contents the social media users perceive beauty and enjoyment and furthermore these aesthetic and hedonic responses induce information sharing behavior as a result. Prior researches such as Ha and Stoel (2009) have included perceived enjoyment in the technology acceptance (TAM) model and proved that perceived enjoyment serves as a mediator in the relationships that information quality has with perceived usefulness and attitude, both ultimately enhancing favorable behavioral intentions. In addition, Chung et al. (2013) applied the ELM and found out that the credibility of the online community's source of information affects perceived enjoyment and the perceived enjoyment affects the user's behavioral intentions. Choi (2020) confirmed that perceived enjoyment plays a mediating role in the relationship between source credibility and satisfaction.

### **4. *Customer's satisfaction and behavioral intention***

Tse and Wilton (1988) consider satisfaction as "the consumer's response to the evaluation of the perceived discrepancy between prior expectations and the actual performance of the product (service) perceived after consumption" (p.204). Therefore, satisfaction is formed by comparing the customers' expectations before experiencing the product/service and his/her perception after the consumption. Researchers such as Campo and Yagüe (2009) and Chang (2008) confirmed that satisfaction is vital in achieving success in many tourism sectors. It positively affects attitude and behavioral intentions. In this study

satisfaction will be viewed and analyzed as a single dimension.

Prior researches show that customer experience is related to intentions. Ardani et al. (2019) stated: "High service quality often leads to favorable behavioral intentions while a low service quality tends to lead to unfavorable intentions" (p.86). Olorunniwo and Hsu (2006) asserted that although the direct effect of service quality on behavioral intention is significant, the indirect effect (with satisfaction playing a mediating role) is a stronger driver for the behavioral intention in the context of the service industry. This study will use customer's satisfaction as a mediator between the determinants of the real-time virtual tours and behavioral intentions. Base on prior research (Zeithaml, Berry & Parasuraman, 1996; Casaló, Flavián, & Guinalíu, 2010) behavioral intentions will include intention to repurchase, intention to recommend and last but not least - intention to make a real visit to the destination.

## PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

The hypothesizes and the model that the study proposes:

- H1: Information quality has a positive effect on enjoyment.
- H2: Tour guide's credibility has a positive effect on enjoyment.
- H3: Enjoyment has a positive effect on customer satisfaction.
- H4: Information quality has a positive effect on customer satisfaction.
- H5: Tour guide's credibility has a positive effect on customer satisfaction.
- H6: Customer satisfaction has a positive effect on behavioral intentions.
- H7: Type of tour moderates the relationship among determinants and customer satisfaction
  - H7-1: Type of tour moderates the relationship between information quality and enjoyment.
  - H7-2: Type of tour moderates the relationship between tour guide's credibility and enjoyment.
  - H7-3: Type of tour moderates the relationship between information quality and customer satisfaction.
  - H7-4: Type of tour moderates the relationship between tour guide's credibility and customer satisfaction.

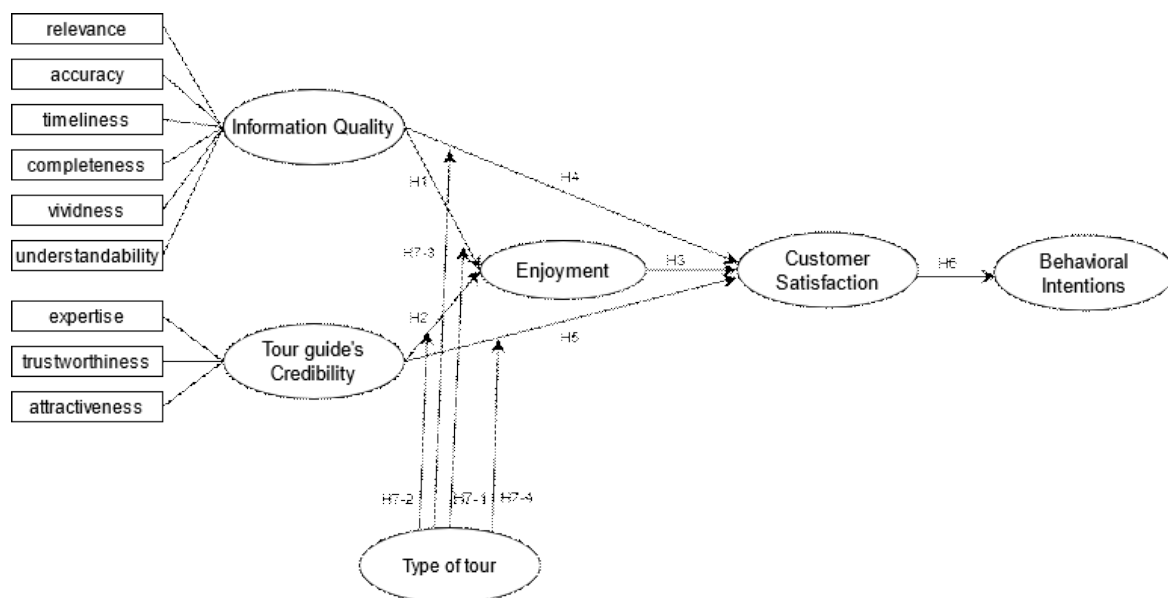


Figure 1. Research model

The research will examine the direct and indirect (through the mediator - perceived

enjoyment) effect of information quality and tour guide's credibility on customer satisfaction. The

relationship between satisfaction and behavioral intentions will be verified as well. In addition, the moderating effect of the type of tour will be investigated. Information quality consists of six variables (relevance, accuracy, timeliness, completeness, vividness, understandability) with 18 items all together (Choi, 2020; Filieri & McLeay, 2014; Jiang & Benbasat, 2007; Lee & Lehto, 2013). Tour guide's credibility consists of three variables (expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness) with 3 items each (Choi, 2020; Zhang, et al. 2017). Enjoyment consists of 4 items (Koufaris, 2002; Moon & Kim, 2001) and customer satisfaction will be measured with 4 items (Choi, 2020; Oliver, 1981). Intention to repurchase will be measured by 4 items (Algesheimer et al. 2005; Zeithaml et al. 1996) Intention to recommend will be measured by 3 items (Zeithaml et al. 1996). Demographic characteristics will be also included.

Data will be collected by an online survey to customers who have bought and experienced at least one real-time virtual tour through MyrealTrip. Data will be analyzed by frequency test, confirmatory factor analysis, and reliability test. To test and hypotheses structural equation modeling will be used.

## THEORICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The research is expected to bring the following implications: First, the concept of real-time virtual tours will be detailized and information about one of the travel products that people actively purchase and experience during the COVID-19 period will be outlined. Second, by finding out what are the determinants in the real-time tours that customers consider as the most important, researchers and practitioners in the industry will be able to understand the customers' new behavior brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. The study's result will present what customers' current demands are. In order to enhance customer satisfaction, which will consequently result in attracting and retaining customers, companies that offer real-time virtual tours will receive directions on how to improve their current products and develop better ones, that meet the customers' current needs and expectations. In addition, by exploring the customers' behavioral

intentions, the effect of real-time virtual tours or in other words the results they bring about will become verified. Future researches will be able to confirm or dismiss the predictions that will be presented in this study. Last but not least, the study will provide the base for future researches that will examine real-time virtual tours in much greater details.

## REFERENCES

- Algesheimer, R., Dholakia, U. M., & Herrmann, A. (2005). The social influence of brand community: Evidence from European car clubs. *Journal of marketing*, 69(3), 19-34.
- Ardani, W., Rahyuda, K. K., Giantari, K., & Sukaatmadja, P. G. (2019). Customer Satisfaction and Behavioral Intentions in Tourism: A Literature Review. *International Journal of Applied Business & International Management*, 4(3), 84-93.
- Bae, S.Y. & Chang, P. J. (2020). The effect of coronavirus disease-19 (COVID-19) risk perception on behavioral intention towards 'untact' tourism in South Korea during the first wave of the pandemic. *Current Issues in Tourism*, March, 1-19. DOI: 10.1080/13683500.2020.1798895
- Casaló, L. V., Flavián, C., & Guinalfú, M. (2010). Determinants of the intention to participate in firm-hosted online travel communities and effects on consumer behavioral intentions. *Tourism management*, 31(6), 898-911.
- Campo, S. & Yagüe, J. M. (2009). Exploring Non-linear Effects of Determinants on Tourists' Satisfaction. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 3(2), 127-138.
- Chaiken, S. (1980). Heuristic versus systematic information processing and the use of source versus message cues in persuasion. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 39(5), 752-766.
- Chang, J. C. (2008). Tourists' Satisfaction Judgments: An Investigation of Emotion, Equity, and Attribution. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research*, 32 (1), 108-134.
- Choi, J. C. & Kim, Y. M. (2020). A study on the analysis of the effects of covid-19 on the perception changes in tourism and leisure activities. *Journal of Tourism and Leisure Research*, 32(7), 159-177.
- Choi, S. J. (2020). Influence of tourism contents quality on Youtube and source credibility on perceived

- enjoyment, user satisfaction and behavioral intention. *Journal of Tourism Sciences*, 44(3), 123-145.
- Chung, N. H., Han, H. J., & Koo, C. M. (2013). A comparative analysis of usage motivation and tourism information search behavior in online travel community using elaboration likelihood model. *Journal of Tourism Sciences*, 37(5), 219-240.
- Davis, F. D., Bagozzi, R. P., & Warsha, P. R. (1992). Extrinsic and intrinsic motivation to use computers in the workplace, *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 22(14), 1111-1132.
- Filieri, R. & McLeay, F. (2014). E-WOM and accommodation: An analysis of the factors that influence travelers' adoption of information from online reviews. *Journal of Travel Research*, 53(1), 44-57.
- Geva, A. & Goldman, A. (1991). Satisfaction measurement in guided tours, *Annals of Tourism Research*, 18(2), 177-185.
- Gössling, S., Scott, D., & Hall, C. M. (2020). Pandemics, tourism and global change: a rapid assessment of COVID-19. *Journal of Sustainable tourism*, 29(1), 1-20.
- Ha, D. H. & Lee, H. R. (2018). A study on the effects of online tourism community characteristics on information usefulness, positive emotion and continuous use intention: impact of elaboration likelihood model. *International Journal of Tourism Management and Sciences*, 33(1), 163-183.
- Ha, S. & Stoel, L. (2009). Consumer e-shopping acceptance: Antecedents in a technology acceptance model. *Journal of Business Research*, 62(5), 565-571.
- Hong, K. O. (2020). College students' domestic travel preferences during the coronavirus pandemic: with application of conjoint analysis. *Journal of Tourism Management Research*, 24(5), 819-841.
- Jiang, Z., & Benbasat, I. (2007). Research note—investigating the influence of the functional mechanisms of online product presentations. *Information Systems Research*, 18(4), 454-470.
- Jin, J. S., Cho, S. B., & Choi, H. J. (2019). The impacts of attractiveness of travel destination and guide service quality on customer satisfaction and option choice. *Korean Journal of Hospitality & Tourism*, 28(5), 245-256.
- Jun, B. H. & Kang, B. G. (2013). Effects of information quality on customer satisfaction and continuous intention to use in social commerce, *The Korean Society of Computer and Information*, 18(3), 127-139.
- Kim, C. H. (2020, June 21). Avoid Covid-19 and go on an online overseas travel... "Real live virtual tour" open. *Asia Economy*. Retrieved from: <https://www.asiae.co.kr/article/2020062110291535211>
- Kock, F., Nørfelt, A., Josiassen, A., Assaf, A. G., & Tsionas, M. G. (2020). Understanding the COVID-19 tourist psyche: The evolutionary tourism paradigm. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 85, [103053]. DOI: 10.1016/j.annals.2020.103053
- Koufaris, M. (2002). Applying the technology acceptance model and flow theory to online consumer behavior. *Information systems research*, 13(2), 205-223.
- Lee, D. Y., & Lehto, M. R. (2013). User acceptance of YouTube for procedural learning: An extension of the Technology Acceptance Model. *Computers & Education*, 61, 193-208.
- Lee, I. H. (2020, September 1). Travel Trends that Covid-19 changed: go on an overseas trip while being "stuck at home" (ft. tips for live virtual tours). *Huffpost*. Retrieved from: [https://www.huffingtonpost.kr/entry/coronavirus-overseas-trip\\_kr\\_5f4c9343c5b697186e38172a](https://www.huffingtonpost.kr/entry/coronavirus-overseas-trip_kr_5f4c9343c5b697186e38172a)
- Lee, H. (2020, July 27). Post-Corona Tourism Trends. *Hotel and Restaurant Magazine*, July Issue. Retrieved from: <https://hoteltrend.tistory.com/1604>
- Lee, R. S. (2019). The effect of the characteristics of video tourism information on the aesthetic, hedonic response and information sharing behavior of information users. *Journal of Tourism and Leisure Research*, 31(2), 87-106.
- Lee, S. M. (2021, February 23). "Overseas trip at the cinema"... CGV, industry's first "Live virtual tour" held. *The Chosun Ilbo*. Retrieved from: [https://www.chosun.com/entertainments/entertain\\_photo/2021/02/23/3A3NWLVRV27M4ZDIJELD7NCQLSA/](https://www.chosun.com/entertainments/entertain_photo/2021/02/23/3A3NWLVRV27M4ZDIJELD7NCQLSA/)
- Li, Z. & Yin, Y. (2018). Attractiveness, expertise and closeness: The effect of source credibility of the first lady as political endorser on social media in China. *Global Media and China*, 3(4), 297-315.
- Mehmet, Y. Ç. & Zafer, Ö. (2016). Role of tour guides on tourist satisfaction level in guided tours and impact on re-visiting Intention: a research in

- Istanbul. *European Journal of Tourism, Hospitality and Recreation*, 7(1), 40-54.
- Moon, J. W., & Kim, Y. G. (2001). Extending the TAM for a World-Wide-Web context. *Information & management*, 38(4), 217-230.
- Oh, R. R. (2021, February 17). Who wants to go see Prague's night view for only 20 000 Korean won ~. *The Chosun Ilbo*.
- Retrieved from:  
[https://www.chosun.com/economy/tech\\_it/2021/02/17/VMGALGOT7ZB2XMIUAHMu55BJ4A/?utm\\_source=facebook&utm\\_medium=share&utm\\_campaign=news](https://www.chosun.com/economy/tech_it/2021/02/17/VMGALGOT7ZB2XMIUAHMu55BJ4A/?utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=share&utm_campaign=news)
- Ohanian, R. (1990). Construction and validation of a scale to measure celebrity endorsers' perceived expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. *Journal of Advertising*, 19(3), 39-52.
- Oliver, R. L. (1981). Measurement and evaluation of satisfaction processes in retail settings. *Journal of Retailing*, 57(3), 25-48.
- Olorunniwo, F. & Hsu, M. K. (2006). A typology analysis of service quality, customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions in mass services. *Managing Service Quality*, 16(2), 106-123.
- Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V. A., & Berry, L. L. (1988). SERVQUAL: A multiple- Item Scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality. *Journal of Retailing*, 64(1), 12-40.
- Petty, R. E. & Cacioppo, J. T. (1984). The effects of involvement on responses to argument quantity and quality: Central and peripheral routes to persuasion. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 46(1), 69-81.
- Salazar, B. N. (2005). Tourism and Globalization, local tour guiding. *Annals of tourism research* 32. 628-646.
- Shuang, Y. (2013). Effects of information quality and source credibility on eWOM adoption in context of virtual community. In *2013 International Conference on Management Science and Engineering 20th Annual Conference Proceedings* (194-200). IEEE.
- Sibi, P. S., Arun, D. O. P., & Ashraf, M. (2020). Changing paradigms of travel motivations post COVID-19. *International Journal of Management*, 11(11), 489-500.
- Sigala, M. (2020). Tourism and COVID-19: Impacts and implications for advancing and resetting industry and research. *Journal of Business Research*, 117, 312-321.
- Smith, E. R. & DeCoster, J. (2000). Dual-process models in social and cognitive psychology: Conceptual integration and links to underlying memory Systems. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 4(2), 108-131.
- Tse, D. K. & Wilton, C. P. (1988). Models Of Customer Satisfaction Formation: An Extension. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 25, 204-212.
- Teng, S., Khong, K. W., Goh, W. W. (2015). Persuasive communication: A study of major attitude-behavior theories in a social media context. *Journal of Internet Commerce*, 14(1), 42-64.
- UNWTO (2020a). Tourism and Covid-19 - unprecedented economic impacts. Retrieved from: <https://www.unwto.org/tourism-and-covid-19-unprecedented-economic-impacts>
- UNWTO (2020b). The Impact of Covid-19 on Tourism. Retrieved from: <https://webunwto.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2020-08/UN-Tourism-Policy-Brief-Visuals.pdf>
- Wiedmann K. P. & von Mettenheim W. (2020). An adaptation of the source credibility model on social influencers. *AMSWMC 2019: Enlightened Marketing in Challenging Times*, 241-242.
- Zeithaml, V. A., Berry, L. L., & Parasuraman, A. (1996). The behavioral consequences of service quality. *Journal of marketing*, 60(2), 31-46.
- Zhang, J., Ito, N., Wu, W., & Li, Z. (2017). Exploring travel information adoption on social media in the Chinese context: An extended ELM model with users' social presence. *International Journal of Marketing and Social Policy*, 1(1), 41-54.

# PET OWNERS' TRAVEL INTENTION AND PERCEIVED CONSTRAINTS

**Jovana Matijevic**

*Sejong University, South Korea*

**Kiattipoom Kiatkawsin**

*Sejong University, South Korea*

## INTRODUCTION

As a continuously growing and expanding field, tourism has becoming an activity that is not especially available only to humans (Ivanov, 2018). He continues that the assumption that tourism activities are unique to humans should be reconsidered. The rapid expansion of the pet industry represents one of the changes in the field of tourism. Worldwide pet industry market share is estimated to \$190.1 billion in 2018, and it is expected to experience constant growth during the next five years (commontreadco.com, 2020).

Some of the previous studies have shown that even though numerous pet owners are willing to spend money and time on tourism activities with their furry family members, traveling with pets has its challenges – destination restrictions, social barriers, etc. (Carr & Cohen, 2009; Chen et al, 2013; Kirillova et al., 2015; Hung et al., 2016). Theory of planned behaviour (TPB) is often used in many studies and fields when examining people's behavioural intention. TPB is often combined with different dimensions with the intention to improve its predictive power. In the context of pet tourism, research conducted by Peng et al. (2014) examined the theory of planned behaviour model by extending it with attachment dimension, showing that attachment can be observed as a predictor of pet owners' attitude but it does not directly influence the intention to participate in tourism activities. Chen et al. (2013) examined the willingness of pet owners to participate in tourism activities using the constraint-negotiation model and created the perceived pet constraints scale. In spite of the aforementioned research studies, the field of pet tourism still remains fairly unexplored.

Furthermore, the concept of constraints has not been examined in combination with the TPB in the context of pet owners' travel intentions with their pets.

Therefore, the goal of this research is to examine the extended model of theory of planned behaviour and constraints, and test its predictive power, as well as, to fill in the existing literature gap and create an opportunity for future research in the field of the tourism industry.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Importance of pets*

Pets are an important element of many families as they offer love, affection, friendship, and companionship to their human family members through emotional connections, and nowadays animals represent much more, as pets are often considered as a member of a family. (Carr & Cohen, 2009). Numerous studies in the field of veterinary and medical science confirmed that the time people spend with their pets, and overall, the human-pet bond, has a variety of health and psychological benefits for both sides (Jacobs Bao & Schreer, 2016; Dashper, 2019). In time humans have, consciously or unconsciously, created highly emotional connections with their pets and assigned the animals more significant roles that go beyond the traditional views of relationships between humans and animals.

Another pointer of the importance of pets in human society is the rapid growth of the pet industry. According to the Common Thread website, the pet industry accounted for \$190.1 billion of market share in 2018 on a global level, and this number is expected to increase to \$269.9

billion by the year 2025. By the end of the 2020, it was estimate that \$75.3 billion will be spent on pets in the United States only, representing one of the biggest market shares. The pet industry in North American region is expected to grow 2.3% within the next 2 years (commonthreadco.com., 2020). Across the U.S., about 85 million families or approximately 67% of households owns as pet, where dogs represent the most common pets with a total of 63.4 million of dogs all over the country (Insurance Information Institute website, 2020).

### *Theory of Planned Behaviour*

The Theory of planned behaviour was created as an extension to the Theory of reasoned action. The central concept of TRA is the intention, which can be defined as an individual's motivation or a desire to make an effort in an attempt to perform a certain behaviour (Ajzen, 1985; Han et al., 2010). TRA assumes that most human behaviours are predictable and volitional since they are under the control of intention, which is a function of two factors - attitude and subjective norm (Ajzen, 1991). Attitude refers to the degree to which a person has a favourable or unfavourable evaluation or appraisal of the behaviour in question" (Ajzen 1991, p. 188), while subjective norms represent the "perceived social pressure to perform or not to perform certain behavior" (Ajzen 1991, p. 188).

The difference between TRA and TPB is that the TPB model incorporates an additional non-volitional factor of perceived behavioural control (PBC), thus expanding the boundaries of TRA (Ajzen, 1991). Perceived behavioural control is an individual's belief about the difficulty of performing certain tasks and the level of control that the individual believes he or she has with regard to these actions. The rationale is that people are less likely to intend to perform a task that they feel is beyond their abilities. Taking pets when travelling requires additional resources (e.g., pet food and carriages) and commitment, it can be inferred that pet owners are likely to evaluate their ability to meet these criteria before deciding to perform this behaviour (Chen, 2013). In previous pet-related studies, scholars have found that owners' attitudes, their beliefs about their ability to overcome potential challenges, and the people around them (e.g., friends, family members, and other participants)

significantly affect dog owners' decisions to include their dogs when they participate in leisure and tourism activities (Carr & Cohen, 2009; Kirillova et al., 2015).

### *Perceived pet constraints*

The theory of constraints has originally been developed with the intention to participation in the leisure activities. Jackson (1993) has defined constraints as "the factors that are assumed by researchers and perceived by individuals to inhibit or prohibit participation and enjoyment in leisure" (p. 273). Chen et al. (2013) developed a pet owners' tourism constraints scale, which will be employed in this study. Perceived pet constraints can be defined as "factors that inhibit pet owners from including their pets in tourism activities and the obstacles that owners encounter when they decide to include their pets" (Chen et al., 2013, p. 208). Furthermore, these perceived constraints can relate to destination barriers (structural constraints), social barriers (interpersonal constraints) and barriers related to pets (specific constraints), such as aggressiveness, overexcitement, etc.

Moghimehfar et al. (2017) proposed that the influence of constraints was one of the antecedents to the original predictors of the TPB, and noted that in contrast to the constraints, perceived behavioural control does not restrain people's behaviour, but instead encourages and positively influences intention.

Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

- **H1:** Constraints negatively influence pet owners' attitude to travel with their pets.
- **H2:** Constraints negatively influence pet owners' subjective norm to travel with their pets.
- **H3:** Constraints negatively influence pet owners' perceived behavioural control to travel with their pets.
- **H4:** Attitude positively influences pet owners' intention to travel with their pets.
- **H5:** Subjective norm positively influences pet owners' intention to travel with their pets.
- **H6:** Perceived behavioural control positively influences pet owners' intention to travel with their pets.

## METHOD

### *Measurement items*

The measurement items used in this study were employed from previous research conducted on pet tourism, the theory of planned behaviour and perceived pet constraints scale (Chen et al., 2013; Peng et al., 2014) accounting for total five variables. The perceived pet constraints will be measured in three dimensions – structural constraints, interpersonal constraints and specific constraints. All the indicators are adopted from previous research mentioned above, and some have been modified in order to fit the context of travelling with pets. Constructs of four variables are based on a seven-point Likert scale and only one, constructs of attitude, consists of seven semantic differential scale items. The responses will range from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), and from 1 (never) to 7 (always).

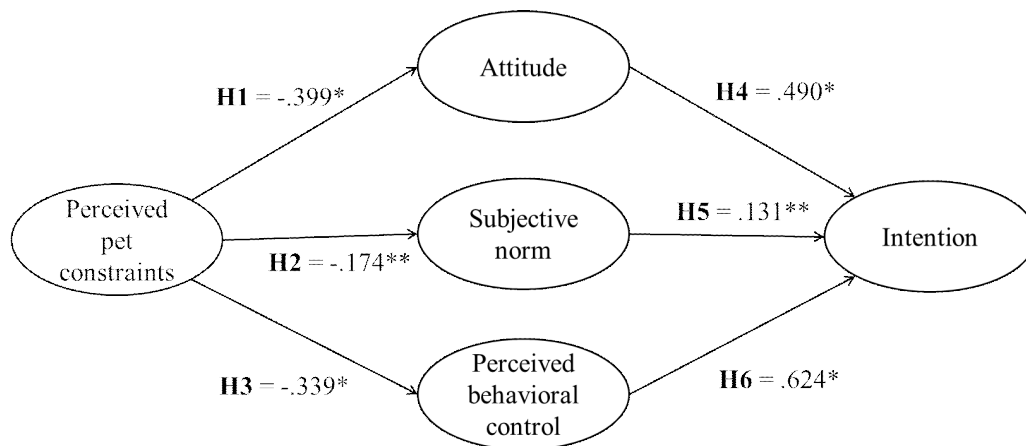
### *Data sampling*

Primary data was collected for the purpose of this research. A self-report questionnaire was prepared using Google Forms and then distributed via Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) platform. Since dogs are the most common pets, dog owners across the United States of America who intend to engage in travelling with their dogs within the next two years or those who have already travelled with their dogs in the past were targeted by the questionnaire. At the beginning of the survey, the participants were required to answer two screening questions: 1) whether or not they own a dog and 2) if they have travelled with their dog before or they intend to do so within the next two years. Participants were then allowed to proceed to the next page only if their answer was affirmative and continue with the rest of the survey.

## FINDINGS

A total of 295 usable responses was collected for analysis. The collected data was analysed using SPSS and AMOS 23 statistics software. Out of the total number of respondents, males account for somewhat over 60%. Most of the questioned dog owners (36.3%) fit into the age group between 31 and 40 years old. More than 60% of respondents hold a bachelor's degree, and over 80% of participants are employed full-time. More than 45% respondents have travelled with their dogs 2 – 4 times within the U.S. mostly on weekend trips. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted to estimate the measurement items' reliability, validity, and the measurement model goodness of fit. Maximum likelihood algorithm was chosen for the estimation process. The model fit was on satisfactory level:  $\chi^2 = 1134.042$ ,  $df = 513$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 2.211$ , CFI = .914, RMSEA = .064. Convergent and discriminant validities were examined and achieved, having all average variance extracted (AVE) higher than .50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). All standardized loading values were larger than .70 ( $p < .001$ ), however, discriminant validity was established between all constructs, except between perceived behavioural control and intention. In order to correct the discriminant validity issue, a further evaluation was carried out by comparing the chi-squares of constraint and unconstraint model, which resulted in difference of 69.408 ( $\Delta df = 4$ ) on a significant level of .001, thus supporting the discriminant validity. Consequently, the Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was used to test hypotheses relationships. SEM results showed that attitude ( $\beta = .499$ ,  $p < .001$ ), subjective norms ( $\beta = .139$ ,  $p < .01$ ), and perceived behavioural control ( $\beta = .625$ ,  $p < .001$ ) significantly influenced intention, confirming H4, H5 and H6. As proposed, perceived pet constraints negatively influenced attitude ( $\beta = -.396$ ,  $p < .001$ ), subjective norms ( $\beta = -.173$ ,  $p < .01$ ), and perceived behavioural control ( $\beta = -.334$ ,  $p < .001$ ), which supported H1, H2, and H3.





**Note 1.** Goodness-of-Fit Statistics for the final model:  $\chi^2 = 1437.086$ ,  $df = 517$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 2.780$ ,  $CFI = .872$ ,  $RMSEA = .078$ .

\* $p < .001$ , \*\* $p < .01$ .

**Figure 1. Results of the structural model**

## CONCLUSION

This research examined the theory of planned behaviour in the context of travelling with dogs. Firstly, this study observed dog owners' intention to travel with their pets. The results show the attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control positively influence pet owners' intention to travel. The owners are more likely to travel with their pets if they have a better attitude towards the trip, if the people whose opinion they value approve of their intention to travel with their pets, and if they believe they have enough control over the action of travelling with their pets. These findings are consistent with the previous literature on TPB. (Alexandris & Stodolska, 2004; Han et al., 2010; Peng et al, 2014; Moghimehfar et al., 2017).

Secondly, this study implemented the theory of planned behaviour with the concept of perceived pet constraints, which has rarely been investigated in the literature. The findings show that perceived pet constraints have negative impact on owners' attitude to travel with their pets, as well as, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control. Similar to Alexandris and Stodolska's (2004) study, constraints had the strongest effect on perceived behavioural control. Pet constraints, such as lack of time or money, dog's behaviour or suitability for the destination, influence on other people who are travelling, and lack of pet-friendly facilities, all

negatively influence owners' perceptions of the degree of control they have over their decisions to travel with their pets. However, in spite of the constraints, if the pet owners' have positive attitude and a social approval of their decision, they will be willing to travel with their pets.

Besides constraints, other theories and dimension are worth exploring in the context of pet tourism, such as, emotional dimensions. Pet tourism is growing field, which will only require more attention in the future.

Some limitations associated with this study should be considered; for example, data collection and setting. MTurk and similar platforms are usually popular with the younger population. In the same regard, MTurk is not equally popular in all available counties, thus using the same method may produce different results.

## REFERENCES

- Ajzen, I. (1985). From intentions to actions: A theory of planned behaviour. In J. Kuhl & J. Beckmann (Eds.), *Action control: From cognition to behaviour* (pp. 290–312). Berlin: Springer-Verlag. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-69746-3\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-69746-3_2)
- Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50, 179–211.
- Alexandris, K., & Stodolska, M. (2004). The influence

- of perceived constraints on the attitudes toward recreational sport participation. *Loisir et Société/Society and Leisure*, 27(1), 197-217.
- Carr, N., & Cohen, S. (2009). Holidaying with the family pet: No dogs allowed! *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 9(4), 290-304.  
<https://doi.org/10.1057%2Fthr.2009.10>
- Chen, A., Peng, N., & Hung, K. P. (2013). Developing a pet owners' tourism constraints scale – the constraints to taking dogs to tourism activities. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 16, 315-324. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.1959>
- Dashper, K. (2019). More-than-human emotions: Multispecies emotional labour in the tourism industry. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 27(1), 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12344>
- Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement errors. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18(1), 39-50.
- Han, H., Hsu, L.T. (J.), & Sheu, C. (2010). Application of the theory of planned behavior to green hotel choice: Testing the effect of environmental friendly activities. *Tourism Management*, 31(3), 325-334.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2009.03.013>
- Hung, K. P., Chen, A., & Peng, N. (2016). Taking dogs to tourism activities: Incorporating attachment into a pet-related constraint-negotiation model. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 40(3), 364-395.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1096348013503992>
- Insurance Information Institute (n.d.). *Facts + Statistics: Pet statistics*.  
<https://www.iii.org/fact-statistic/facts-statistics-pet-statistics#:~:text=Sixty%2Dseven%20percent%20of%20U.S.,year%20the%20survey%20was%20conducted.>
- Ivanov, S. (Eds). (2018). *Tourism beyond humans – robots, pets and Teddy bears*. International Scientific Conference “Tourism and Innovations”, College of Tourism – Varna, Varna, Bulgaria
- Jackson, E. L. (1993). Recognizing patterns of leisure constraints: Results from alternative analysis. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 25, 129-140.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.1993.11969914>
- Jacobs Bao, K., & Schreer, G. (2016). Pets and happiness: Examining the association between pet ownership and wellbeing. *Anthrozoös*, 29(2), 283-296.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/08927936.2016.1152721>
- Kirillova, K., Lee, S., & Lehto, X. (2015). Willingness to travel with pets: A U.S. consumer perspective. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 16, 24-44.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1528008X.2015.966296>
- Moghimehfar, F., Halpenny, E. A., & Walker, G. J. (2018). Front-country campers' constraints, negotiation, and pro-environment behavioral intention: An extension to the theory of planned behavior. *Leisure Sciences*, 40(3), 174-193.
- Peng, N., Chen, A., & Hung, K. P. (2014). Including pets when undertaking tourism activities: Incorporating pet attachment into the TPB model. *Tourism Analysis*, 19(1), 69-84.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.3727/108354214X13927625340235>
- Roberts, R. (2020, April 1). *Pet Industry Growth, Statistics & Trends 2020: A Definitive Ecommerce Marketing Report*. Common Thread.  
<https://commonthreadco.com/blogs/coachs-corner/pet-industry-market>