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Exploring Minority Sense of Belongingness and Satisfaction in U.S. Hospitality Programs: An Examination of Departmental Cultural Climate.

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The purpose of this study was to examine minority student perceptions of belonging within the academic department context. Specifically, this paper explores hospitality perception of cultural climate within their department using the Sense of Belonging Scale. Students representing thirteen universities across the U.S. were surveyed and results indicated that sense of belonging is positively related to departmental satisfaction. Results also highlighted the benefit of minority role models for both minority and majority students. Hospitality programs can use these findings to strengthen recruitment and retention efforts of minority students and increasing overall cultural awareness. Future research and limitations are also discussed.

KEYWORDS: minority students, culture, belonging, satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

It is human nature to want to belong. For minority students, their sense of belonging can be impacted both positively and negatively by the cultural climate within the institution (Carter, 2006). Cultural climate can be defined as, “a part of the institutional context that includes community members’ attitudes, perceptions, behaviors, and expectations around the issues of race, ethnicity, and diversity” (Hurtado, Griffin, Arellano, & Cuellar, 2008, p. 205). When the cultural climate of an institution is one that is flexible and responsive to the needs of the student body, students will feel more like active stakeholders (Hinton & Seo, 2013). In other words, students will feel as if they belong. Hinton and Seo (2013) argued that universities should become acculturated to their students rather than students acculturating to the institution. However, many times an undue burden is placed on students to connect to the campus culture, while minimizing the institutions responsibility to understand the student’s culture (Museus, Palmer, Davis, & Maramba, 2011). To further explore the impact of cultural climate on minority students, a goal of the current study will be to examine the sense of belonging that minority hospitality student’s experience in an academic setting.

Many of the negative experiences reported by minority students in relation to university climate occur at Predominately White Institutions (PWI) (Carter, 2006; Chavous, Rivas, Green, & Helaire, 2002). Carter (2006) reported that debilitating minority status stressors are those that undermined the students’ academic confidence and originate from the social climate of the institution. Chavous et al. (2002) found that minority students felt “hypervisible” and perceived a hostile cultural climate. Students experiencing these events reported lower academic adjustment and performance, feelings of alienation, and are less likely to persist to graduation (Chavous et al., 2002). These feelings of alienation can affect a student’s sense of belongingness within the university community, which also may lead to departure decisions (Pittman & Richmond, 2008). On the other hand, Carter (2006) found students at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) felt engaged, accepted, encouraged, and a sense of belonging. The current study will examine if perceived belonging differs between minority-serving institutions (including HBCUs) and PWI's.

Much of the literature examining cultural climate focuses on concept in the university context (Casado & Dereshiwsky, 2007; Costen, Waller, & Wozencroft, 2013; Freeman, Anderman, & Jensen, 2007) though most of the student's academic and social time is within their major department. Costen et al (2013) found that there may be an inconsistency between feelings of connection at the departmental and institutional level. Casado and Dereshiwsky (2007) highlighted that departmental clubs and organizations can play a part in helping minority students to feel comfortable within the institution. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine minority student perceptions of belonging within the academic department context. Specifically, this paper explores hospitality student's perception of cultural climate within their department using the Sense of Belonging Scale. (Byrd, 2014). To accomplish this purpose, the current study has three objectives: (1) identify if departmental climate can be evaluated through sense of belonging; (2) determine if aspects of sense of belonging can individually and collectively impact departmental satisfaction; and (3) explore if student/university characteristics impact the relationship between sense of belonging and departmental satisfaction.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sense of Belongingness

Sense of belongingness has historically been focused on examining adolescents with much of the research conducted in primary and secondary schools (Byrd, 2014). Pittman and Richmond (2008) however indicated that there is support for examination of the concept at the post-secondary level with an emphasis on college student perceptions. This support however is based on how students feel about themselves and not the actual behaviors of students (Pittman & Richmond, 2008). Sense of belongingness can be defined as "the experience of personal involvement in a system or environment so that persons feel themselves to be an integral part of that system or environment." (Hagerty, Lynch-Sauer, Patusky, Bouwsema, & Collier, 1992, p. 173). In other words, a student's perceived level of social belongingness can be positively impacted by interpersonal relatedness and both social and academic support (Hoffman, Richmond, Morrow, & Salmone, 2002). In contrast, previous literature highlights a negative perception of cultural climate that can negatively influence minority students sense of belonging (Museus, Nichols, & Lambert, 2008). Hurtado and Carter (1997) also found that hostile climates negatively affected the level at which minority students felt they belonged to the campus community.

Previous literature indicates there is a positive relationship between high perceptions of belongingness and academic achievement, however few studies have examined the potential associations between belongingness and motivation (Freeman et al., 2007). Pittman and Richmond (2008) assert that belongingness may be an important factor when examining a student's ability to adjust to a new environment. This is supported by Read, Archer and Leatherwood (2003) who found that minority students who did not feel as if they belonged might be deterred from entering post-secondary education programs due to feeling out of place.

Underlying factors that comprise belongingness include: commitment to the institution, commitment by the individual to work with the setting, and the perception that one's abilities are being recognized (Pittman & Richmond, 2008). Freeman et al. (2007) surveyed 238 college freshman and found that students with a stronger perception of university belonging reported a greater degree of involvement on campus. Students with a higher level belongingness also perceived more faculty-based caring and support (Pittman & Richmond, 2008). Research shows that involvement on campus, and perceived support from faculty, may lead to higher levels of persistence among students (Astin, 1984; Pittman & Richmond, 2008). Students lacking a good perception of belongingness, and who are less involved, may experience both stress and emotional distress (Pittman & Richmond, 2008). Hoffman et al. (2002) indicated that, "the greater a student's sense of belonging to the university, the greater is his or her commitment to that institution (satisfaction with the university) and the more likely is that he or she will remain in college" (p. 228).

The study of belongingness has also diverged into the study of social connectedness and affiliation. Social connectedness can be defined as "the degree of interpersonal closeness that is experienced between an individual and his/her social world as well as the degree of difficulty maintaining his/her world" (Costen et. al, 2013, p. 16). Lee and Robbins (1995) state that, "a person struggling to feel connected begins to feel different and distant from other people. He or she may find it hard to accept social roles and responsibilities, leading the person into greater isolation" (p. 233). In 2008, Allen, Robbins, Casillas and Oh conducted a study in which they evaluated the effect of social connectedness on third-year college student retention. They found that social connectedness had a direct impact on the retention of students, after academic preparation was controlled (Allen et. al., 2008; Hurtado et. al., 2008).

The concept of affiliation examines person-to-person aspects of belongingness, rather than to an institution or organization (Pittman & Richmond, 2008). Lee and Robbins (1995) conceptualize affiliation as establishing peer relationships and functioning more comfortable with those who are similar. Freeman et al. (2007) found that these interpersonal interactions can have an additive effect and influence the overall perception of the environment. In other words, the interactions with peers, faculty, and staff may all affect a student's perception of belonging (Hoffman et al., 2002). A student who does not develop positive interpersonal interactions (affiliations) may find it uncomfortable to engage in group activities (Lee & Robbins, 1995).

Minorities in Hospitality Education

Few studies over the past few decades have addressed and evaluated minority students' experiences in hospitality education (Bosselman, 1994; Costen et al., 2013; Jaffé, 1990). Researchers concluded the overall number of minority students enrolled in hospitality education was low (Stanton (1989) and recruitment and retention practices were in a fledgling state (Jaffé (1990). Bosselman (1994) examined 14 hospitality programs and found minority retention and recruitment practices to be insufficient. Bosselman (1994) presented two strategies for increased recruitment and retention of minority students:

More industry role models are needed for young minority students.

Increasing the number of minority faculty and graduate students.

Frater, Howe, and Murray (1997) found that minority students are not only leaving home for an unfamiliar setting, but they must also enter an alien social and physical environment. Findings presented by Frater et al. (1997) complement Bosselman's (1994) stance and furthers the assertion that faculty play a large role in the transition of minority students to college (Antonio, 2002; Carter, 2006; Jones & Williams, 2006; Pittman & Richmond, 2008).

From a student perspective, Deale and Wilborn (2006) examined the stereotypes held by hospitality students against those of other races and ethnicities. They found negative stereotypes were present among all students surveyed and these stereotypes were representative of particular racial and ethnic groups. Bradford and Williams (2008) examined the perceptions of hospitality management among minority students through qualitative data collected from 6 focus groups at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). They found that none of the students had been recruited to the hospitality major by industry representatives or family members. In fact, 80% of the participants were recruited by a friend already studying hospitality management. After evaluating students' perceptions of different aspects of the industry, the authors concluded:

Students are aware that their race may determine 1) What jobs they are offered in the hospitality industry, 2) How rapidly they will be promoted, 3) How society views them as individuals, 4) How society views an entire race when that particular race is found in low-level jobs in large numbers or perception of an industry. 5) pay scale (p. 19).

Wen and Madera (2013) examined the perceptions of barriers to hospitality careers among minority students. Barriers included workplace discrimination, access, and job search barriers. The authors surveyed 82 undergraduate students with 71% identifying as an ethnic minority. The findings indicate that minority students perceive greater career barriers than Caucasian students (Wen & Madera, 2013). They concluded that hospitality education must do a better job dispelling this image by inviting guest lecturers and industry presentations that present career opportunities for minority students (Wen & Madera, 2013).

Based on this review of literature, the concept of academic satisfaction was used to explain commitment to the institution (Hoffman et. al., 2003) and persistence to degree attainment (Allen et. al., 2008). In the same way, sense of belonging for minority students was found to be influenced by the perceptions of cultural climate (Carter, 2006). Therefore, to understand the impact of cultural climate on degree attainment within the academic program, this study examines the influence of sense of belonging on departmental satisfaction.

METHODOLOGY

The current study is classified as cross-sectional quantitative research. The study used a modified version of Hoffman et al.'s (2002) Sense of Belonging Scale and items from the Cultural Attitudes and Climate Questionnaire (Helm, Sedlacek, & Prieto, 1998) to examine the effect of sense of belongingness on minority student's satisfaction within the hospitality department. In addition, a goal of this study was to determine if perceptions of belongingness differed between student characteristics and university characteristics. For example, the current research addresses if differences exist between MSI's and PWI's when evaluating belongingness.

Design of the Study

The design of this research was a non-experimental study and collected quantitative data. Data were collected via online questionnaires from current hospitality education students with an emphasis on collecting data from minority students. Minority students were defined as "any member of a non-European ethnic group who is an American citizen yet whose cultural experiences is one of exploitation and oppression because of the United States government and U.S. corporate interests" (Washington, 1996, p. 71). While minority perceptions were the central focus of the study, previous research showed that there are few minorities enrolled in hospitality programs nationwide (Hornsby & Scott-Halsell, 2015). In addition, differences between majority and minority students are well established in the greater academic discussion, however few hospitality studies purport these differences. As such, data was collected from both minority and majority students. The goal was to determine student perceptions of departmental climate and belongingness in conjunction with their perception of departmental satisfaction.

Instrumentation

The survey was administered via Qualtrics online survey software. The first page of the survey included the informed consent sheet as prescribed by the IRB. The first section included items from the Sense of Belonging Scale (SBS) (Hoffman et al., 2002). The questionnaire development was a component of a multistage exploratory mixed methods design. Coefficient alphas were also calculated for each of the constructs, or in this case factors, identified. These results are as follows: Perceived Peer Support, Perceived Faculty Support/Comfort, Perceived Classroom Comfort, Perceived Isolation, and Empathetic Faculty Understanding. All factors reached the standard of .70 and were included in the current study.

The second section included items that addressed student satisfaction from Cultural Attitudes and Climate Questionnaire (CACQ). Five items were included. The third and final section included questions pertaining to demographic information such as age, gender, and ethnicity. Other questions in the section asked participants if they had a minority mentor faculty member within the department or from the hospitality industry. The final question asked participants to provide their university email address. From their address, institutional type was determined. The instrument was evaluated by a team of subject matter experts and then piloted with 120 students enrolled in a basic food preparation course. After minor changes and adjustments to wording, the questionnaire was administered.

Population and Sampling

The target population for this research was minority students enrolled in four-year hospitality programs across the United States. A random sample university was garnered from the list of universities that had once had an active NSMH chapter. Due to a low response rate from the original sampling of universities, a more purposive sample was drawn from universities with hospitality undergraduate programs to gain a larger pool of possible students.

In total 40 institutions were approached in two phases. The initial twenty included a convenience sample of universities where NSMH chapters had previously been active or were currently active. No response was received from eleven universities, two institutions declined to participate and seven institutions agreed to distribute the survey. A second phase of requests was then sent to an additional twenty purposively sampled institutions for participation in the study. No response was received from thirteen universities, one institution declined to participate, and six institutions agreed to distribute the survey. In total, 13 universities (32.5%) contacted agreed to distribute the survey to their student body. After the initial email was sent including the survey, a reminder email was sent two weeks later. At the conclusion of data collection, 268 students open the link while 169 completed the survey leading to a 63.1% completion rate. After an incomplete response was removed, 168 usable responses were analyzed. The researcher determined that the statistical methods used to analyze data would range from simple independent t-tests to regression analysis. Based on sample size calculations and a desired statistical power of .8, a sample greater than 140 participants was deemed enough for detection of an effect with the most stringent data analysis method.

RESULTS

Of the 168participants, 82.1% were female, 16.7% were male, and two respondents (1.2%) identified as transgender. Of the respondents, 31.5% were classified as minorities and the remaining 68.5% as non-minorities. A closer look at the minority respondents identifies 20.8% as African American, 26.4% as Asian/Pacific Islander, 30.2% as Hispanic,11.3% as Native American, and 11.3% as Multiracial. Respondents were asked if they had minority role models within their hospitality faculty or the hospitality industry. Only 27.4% of respondents indicated that they did have a minority faculty role model and a slightly higher percentage (32.7%) indicated having a mentor in the industry. Upon further examination, it was discovered that 41.5% of minority students had faculty role models while only 20.9% of non-minority students felt as if they had a minority role model within their department. This was also true with industry role models as 50.9% of minority students reported having a role model while only 24.3% of non-minority respondents reported the same. When the data was examined via institutional type, the data indicated 53.3% of students at minority-serving institutions (MSIs) had a faculty minority role model while only 24.8% of respondents at predominately white institutions (PWIs) reported having a minority role model on their faculty. Further, 66.7% of respondents at MSIs reported having a minority role model in the industry while 29.4% of respondents reported the same. *Tables 1 and 2* present the results of the respondents' demographic characteristics in detail.

Before assessing the relationships of the above demographics data with the constructs Sense of Belonging Scale, a confirmatory factor analysis was conducted. Model fit of the original measurement model was poor (cmin/df=1.744, p<.001; CFI= .913; GFI=.776; SRMR=.060; RMSEA=.067; PCLOSE=.001). After errors were allowed to correlate, and items containing low loading factors were removed, model fit moderately increased (cmin/df=1.533, p<.001; CFI= .944; GFI=.824; SRMR=.053; RMSEA=.057; PCLOSE=.136). Results of these modifications can be found in *Table 3*. Compared with the standards presented by Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson and Tatham (2006), the final measurement model had moderate fit.

Both convergent and discriminant validity were evaluated. Convergent validity is assessed by the correlation among items in the same factor or constructs (internal consistency). Poor convergent validity may identify a need for more factors to create more consistency between items. Both composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) estimate were used to test the internal consistency of the model. All estimates were generated using IBM SPSS AMOS version 20.

Table 1: Respondents' Demographic Profile

		Frequency (n)	Valid Percentage (%)
Gender			
	Female	138	82.1
	Male	28	16.7
	Transgender	2	1.2
Minority Status			
	Minority	53	31.5
	Non-Minority	115	68.5
Race			
	African American	11	6.5
	Asian/Pacific Islander	14	8.3
	Hispanic	16	9.5
	Native American	6	3.6
	Caucasian	115	68.5
	Multiracial	6	3.6
Institutional Type			
	Minority-Serving Institutions	15	8.9
	Predominately White Institutions	153	91.1
Faculty Minority Role Model			
	Yes	46	27.4
	No	122	72.6
Industry Minority Role Model			
	yes	55	32.7
	no	113	67.3

Table 2: Comparisons of % within Demographic Categories

	Institutional Type	
	MSI	PWI
Faculty Minority Role Model		
Yes	53.3	24.8
No	46.7	75.2
Industry Minority Role Model		
yes	66.7	29.4
no	33.33	70.6
Minority Status		
Minority	86.7	26.1
Non-Minority	13.3	73.9

	Minority Status	
	Minority	Non-Minority
Faculty Minority Role Model		
Yes	41.5	20.9
No	58.5	79.1
Industry Minority Role Model		
yes	50.9	24.3
no	49.1	75.7

**further analysis of data split by gender is not presented due to homogeneity. **further analysis of data split by race is not presented due to low responses per category.*

Table 3: Measurement Model with Modification Iterations

Measure	Threshold	Original	Modification 1	Modification 2
cmin/df	<3 good	1.744	1.669	1.533
P-value	>.05	.001	.001	.001
CFI	>.95 great, >,90 traditional	.913	.918	.944
GFI	>.95	.776	.787	.824
AGFI	>.80	.734	.747	.786
SRMR	<.09	.060	.059	.053
RMSEA	<.05 good, .05-.10 moderate	.067	.065	.057
PCLOSE	>.05	.001	.002	.136

*Modification1: errors allowed to correlate; Modification 2: three items removed from PFS factor

Both convergent and discriminant validity were evaluated. Convergent validity is assessed by the correlation among items in the same factor or constructs (internal consistency). Poor convergent validity may identify a need for more factors to create more consistency between items. Both composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) estimate were used to test the internal consistency of the model. All estimates were generated using IBM SPSS AMOS version 20.

Composite reliability and average variance extracted estimates were calculated using formulas presented by Fornell and Larcker (1981, p. 45). They are as follows:

$$CR = (\Sigma\lambda)^2 / (\Sigma\lambda)^2 + \Sigma\theta$$

$$AVE = \Sigma\lambda^2 / (\Sigma\lambda^2 + \Sigma\theta)$$

In the formula “λ” is the standard factor loading and “θ” is the variance for each loading (variance is calculated by taking 1 minus the square of each loading). It is recommended that each of the CR indices be above .70 (Bagozzi, 1980) and each of the AVE scores exceed a cut off .50 (Fornell & Lacker, 1981). ***Table 4*** shows the results of the convergent validity analysis and findings identify that each of the factors presented exceed the minimum levels presented in the research.

In addition to convergent validity, discriminant validity was also evaluated. Discriminant validity assess if the factors within the model are measuring different constructs. This can be evaluated by examining the correlations between the different factors. Brown (2015) suggests that any correlation between factors of .850 and above would indicate poor discriminant validity.

Table 5 presents the correlation matrix between all but one pair of factors correlate below the .850 level. The correlation between perceived faculty support and empathetic faculty understanding exceeds this standard and upon further analysis of collinearity statistics, multicollinearity does exist. However due the theoretical importance of each variable, neither was removed. Future research should gain a larger sample to better differentiate between the individual effects of each variable.

Table 4: Results of Measurement Model and Convergent Validity Analysis

Construct and Items	Std. Loading	SMC	CR	AVE
Perceived Peer Support			0.91	0.57
PPS1	0.85	0.72		
PPS2	0.74	0.54		
PPS3	0.84	0.71		
PPS4	0.75	0.56		
PPS5	0.81	0.65		
PPS6	0.65	0.42		
PPS7	0.75	0.56		
PPS8	0.65	0.42		
Perceived Faculty Support			0.8	0.57
PFS1	0.78	0.6		
PFS2	0.69	0.45		
PFS3	0.8	0.63		
Perceived Classroom Support			0.93	0.76
PCS1	0.82	0.67		
PCS2	0.87	0.75		
PCS3	0.94	0.89		
PCS4	0.87	0.75		
Perceived Isolation			0.87	0.63
PIS1	0.72	0.52		
PIS2	0.72	0.51		
PIS3	0.91	0.82		
PIS4	0.82	0.67		
Empathetic Faculty Understanding			0.81	0.52
EFU1	0.81	0.65		
EFU2	0.73	0.54		
EFU3	0.65	0.42		

**SMC= squared multiple correlation; CR= composite reliability; AVE= average variance extracted*

Table 5: Construct Correlations for Discriminant Analysis

Construct	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. PPS	1					
2. PFS	0.714	1				
3. PIS	-0.665	-0.512	1			
4. EFU	0.592	0.916	-0.327	1		
5. PCS	0.625	0.748	-0.412	0.563	1	
6. DSAT	0.477	0.61	-0.287	0.695	0.474	1

Regression analysis

Correlation, linear regression, and multiple regression analysis were conducted to examine the relationship between departmental satisfaction and student perceptions of belonging within the department. Then the relationship between the various latent variables of belongingness and departmental satisfaction were evaluated. *Table 6* summarizes the descriptive statistics and analysis results.

Results indicate a positive and significant correlation between overall belongingness and departmental satisfaction, meaning students with higher perceptions of belongingness have higher levels of departmental satisfaction. These results are mirrored for four of the five latent variables with one variable (the reverse coded “perceived isolation” variable) being negatively correlated with departmental satisfaction.

Table 6: Regression Analysis of Latent and Composite Variables on the Criterion

Variable	mean	std. dev.	correlation with DSAT	B	Beta
DSAT	4.280	.625			
PPS	3.433	.735	.517	.053	0.062
PCS	3.686	.808	.507	.892	1.154*
PFS	4.280	.638	.664	-3.830	-3.913*
EFU	4.037	.588	.753	3.665	3.450*
PIS	1.628	.977	-.314	-.413	-0.646*
Belonging	3.297	.411	.655	.994	0.655*

The linear regression conducted between overall belongingness and departmental satisfaction led to a significant regression model (R2 = .429, F(1,166) = 124.733, p<.001). The multiple regression model with the five latent variables also produced a significant regression model (R2 = .818, F(5,162) = 146.051, p<.001). “Perceived classroom support”, and “empathetic faculty understanding” had significant positive regression weights, indicating students with higher perceptions of these variables had higher levels of departmental satisfaction.

Consistent with the correlation tables, the reverse coded variable “perceived isolation” had significant negative regression weights indicating a positive relationship between departmental satisfaction and the non-reverse coded variable. As perceptions of isolation increase, so does satisfaction with the department. “Perceived faculty support” however had significantly negative weights (opposite sign form correlation with the criterion) indicating that after accounting for other variables, those students with higher perceptions of faculty support were expected to have lower levels of departmental satisfaction (suppressor effect). “Perceived peer support” did not contribute to the multiple regression model.

Independent Sample T-tests

To determine if a statistical difference was present between respondent or university characteristics and the latent variables of the Social Belongingness Scale, a series of independent sample t-tests were conducted. Analysis indicates that there is statistical difference between levels of isolation between minorities and non-minority students. Minority students feel less isolation (M=1.85) than their non-minority counterparts (M=1.53; t=1.990, p<.05, d=.226).

Results also indicate that students who attend MSI have higher perceptions of peer support (M=3.85) than students who attend PWIs (M=3.39; t=2.345, p<.05, d=.435). Examination of the effect size of this relationship (d=.435) indicates a moderate effect that would be reasonably visible to the naked eye. Literature supports these findings stating MSI have a more congenial atmosphere, while the promotion of individualistic tendencies can be found at PWIs (Carter, 2006; Museus et. Al., 2011). Most of the statistical difference found in this set of analyses was found between students who had a minority mentor in the hospitality industry and those who did not. Students who had a minority mentor in the industry had significantly higher perceptions of classroom support (t=2.218, p<.05, d=.23), faculty support (t=2.617, p<.01, d=.24), empathetic faculty understanding (t=2.748, p<.01, d=.24), and overall sense of belongingness (t=3.464, p=.001, d=.25) than their counterparts. No difference was found when examining individual race categories, gender, or institutional type.

Discussion

In order to evaluate the objectives in this study, the sense of belongingness scale (Hoffman et al., 2002) was selected as an appropriate survey tool. However, after the initial confirmatory factor analysis, issues of fit arose with one factor, perceived faculty support. Upon further analysis of the content, the variable contained questions addressing faculty support both academically and socially. Items which addressed the social nature of faculty support (a construct that was already being addressed in the “empathetic faculty understanding” variable) were removed and model fit was increased.

The first objective was to determine if departmental climate can be evaluated through sense of belonging. This was achieved by modified the SBS to address departmental climate rather than university climate. After being evaluated by faculty and piloted with hospitality students, the modifications were deemed acceptable.

Confirmatory factor analysis also supported the modification of this questionnaire by producing good fit. Questions that may have been confounding after the modification were removed to produce greater model fit.

The second objective was to determine if aspects of sense of belonging can individually and collectively impact departmental satisfaction. Results indicate the answer is yes on both accounts. Findings from the regression analysis indicate an increase in overall sense of belonging is consistent with an increase in departmental satisfaction. The objective also took a more granular approach to the different aspects of belongingness which were partially supported. The variables "perceived classroom support" and "empathetic faculty understanding" both had positive regression weights. This means the more comfortable students felt speaking in the classroom the more satisfied they were with the program. Likewise, the more they felt faculty would understand if they had a nonacademic issue, the more satisfied they were with the program. These findings are consistent with previous literature that identified support and understanding from faculty can lead to persistence among students (Astin, 1984; Pittman & Richmond, 2008). In contrast however, perceived faculty support had a negative relationship with departmental satisfaction. One possible reason for this is that questions in this section addressed students need for academic support from faculty and students who may feel as if they need more help (i.e. the work is too difficult) may be less satisfied with the department. Another interesting variable was perceived isolation. This variable had a negative regression weight although the correlation departmental satisfaction was weak. It is possible that connection to peers within the department has little to do with a student's satisfaction with the department. In other words, students did not seem to judge the department by the actions of their peers. This is further supported by the non-significant regression weight of the variable "perceived peer support."

The third objective was to explore if student/university characteristics impact the relationship between sense of belonging and departmental satisfaction. The results indicated there is support for differences based on these characteristics. In examining minority status, minority students had a lower level of perceived isolation than their non-minority counterparts, although there was no difference in their overall sense of belongingness or their satisfaction with the department. As stated before, it may be that connection to peers within the department is not a factor in the evaluation of belongingness or satisfaction with the department. Further, the finding that minority students have lower levels of isolation are in direct conflict with the greater body of research on the topic (Carter, 2006; Chavous et. al., 2002; Locks, Hurtado, Bowman, & Oseguera, 2008; Pittman & Richmond, 2008). One possible reason may be that minority students form tight-knit groups with like individuals within the department which reduces feelings of isolation. Students may find a sense of belongingness within self-selected subgroups of the department. When examining institutional type, only perceived peer support was found to be significantly different between MSIs and PWIs, with students at MSIs having a higher-level perceived peer support. Based on previous literature, this finding is not surprising. MSIs have placed an importance on connection with other students to strengthen a cultural community that PWIs do not have as a part of their mission or focus.

Most interesting were the statistical differences between students who had a minority mentor and those who did not. Findings indicated those students who had minority industry role models were more comfortable in the classroom presenting and speaking, and more willing to ask a faculty member for help if they were struggling. In addition, they had had higher perceptions of faculty understanding when it came to issues outside of the classroom and had a higher overall sense of belongingness than those students who did not have a minority industry role model. It is possible that students with a minority mentor are being directed to be more engaged in the classroom and with their faculty to prepare them for their future career. It may also be that those students who sought a minority mentor in the hospitality industry may have a higher drive to seek out help.

Conclusion and Implications

The purpose of this study was to evaluate student perceptions of belongingness within the hospitality context and these findings were generally positive. The indication that departmental satisfaction is impacted sense of belonging highlights persistence to graduation is not just based in the academic success of the student. Instead programs and administrators must also be sensitive to the social and cultural temperature of their department. Further, the lack of statistical difference between minority and majority students when evaluating climate indicates that a program with a high cultural intelligence can be beneficial to all students. This is further supported when examining the importance of minority role models.

The authors hypothesized that the presence of minority role models would have a positive impact on minority students. It was however surprising to realize that the presence on minority role models also have a positive impact on majority students. For hospitality programs lacking cultural awareness or sensitivity, it is recommended that these programs increase the contact opportunities students have with minority mentors. This can be accomplished through:

1) Increased minority guest speakers within the classroom
2) Increased minority role model participation within student organizations
3) Increasing internship opportunities at hospitality firms with high level of minorities in managerial positions.

By increasing contact with minority industry role models, hospitality administrators may be able to increase the number of minority students who feel as if they belong within the hospitality department and eventually persist to the hospitality industry. In turn, these minority students may become minority mentors and begin the process anew.

The study also highlighted that minority students do feel a lower level of isolation within the department, but that these lower levels do not influence student's perceptions of satisfaction. To examine the impact of the student perception of climate within major department, the current study unintentionally does not take into consideration the impact of external factors. While the questionnaire was modified to focus on the hospitality program, it may not have controlled for other university resources adequately.

Another possible reason for this may be the impact of NSMH. While the current study did not ask participants identify if they were members of the organization, over 50% of the universities included in the study had active chapters. It is possible then that NSMH provided a community for minority students in hospitality management programs that led to lower perceptions of isolation. In any case, future research should further examine the construct of isolation to determine why it is positively related to departmental satisfaction and provide a deeper explanation of the differences between minority and majority students.

Finally, the study supported the notion that there is a high level of minority peer support at minority-serving institutions such as HBCUs. These institutions benefit from the critical mass of minority students who share a similar lived experience. It may never be possible for PWIs to benefit from this peer to peer minority support present at HBCUs, but incremental progress can be made through the retention and recruitment of minority students. Hospitality programs and administrators should strive to recruit highly qualified students that are diverse in thought, culture, race, and ethnicity. While solely a worthy pursuit, not just as a benefit to minority students. As indicated earlier, increased exposure to different cultures is a benefit to all.

Limitations and Future Research

As with most research conducted with human subjects, the current study is not free of limitations. The largest of these limitations is that of sample size. While found to be appropriate for statistical analysis, for these results to be generalized across hospitality higher education a larger sampling of the population may be necessary. In addition, a larger sample of minority students may yield more substantive results especially between the different racial categories. Future research may examine a snow-balling methodology to gain the critical mass of minority students to determine is differences between minority and majority students exist.

A second limitation of this study was the analysis of self-reported data from a closed-ended question survey instrument. Future research should incorporate a mixed-methods approach to understanding this phenomenon to collect data with deeper meaning and understanding. Finally, due to questionnaire distribution techniques, response bias may have been a limitation of this study. Questionnaires were distributed through administrators at each individual institution. While students were assured that the results would be kept private, some students may have been reluctant to share their true feelings about their satisfaction within the department. Future research should attempt to make direct contact with participants to remove some of this stress.

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Analyzing Medical Tourism Pull Factors: A Korean American Perspective of the Homeland

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ABSTRACT

This study was to explore critical pull factors impacting Korean Americans' intention to seek medical treatment in South Korea. Multiple regression analysis was used to analyze medical characteristics (cost, service quality, physician quality, facilities and access), and touristic characteristic (food, accommodation, shopping, attractiveness, and security) on intention to take a medical trip to South Korea. The results showed that: Cost, service quality, and facilities impacted Korean American's intention to seek treatment in the homeland. Food, accommodation and security were important to Korean American medical tourists seeking to take a medical trip to South Korea. Significant differences were found regarding cost between experienced and potential Korean American medical tourists to South Korea. The findings of this study will help South Korean medical tourism interest, as well as enhancing the knowledge of the healthcare specialist in both the United States and South Korea.

KEYWORDS: Medical Tourism, Medical Tourism Hospitality, Healthcare Services, Healthcare Access, Korean American.

INTRODUCTION

The globalization of healthcare has heralded a new form of tourism termed health tourism. Within health tourism, medical tourism is now among the fastest-growing sectors and is becoming one of the most lucrative hospitality sectors for many destinations countries (Han & Hyun, 2015; Heung, Kucukusta & Song, 2011). Reluctantly, many countries are now endeavoring to make legal and practical plans to serve this new sector. According to Heung et al., (2011), reduced transportation costs, higher incomes, knowledge and technology transfer, and competitive prices, all favor travel to distant countries for medical reasons.

Similarly, the need for high-quality healthcare services has grown significantly in recent years, which has led to an increasing number of countries promoting medical tourism. Accordingly, the medical tourism market is currently a $60 billion industry and is forecast to grow by 20% every year (Singh, 2008). A more recent study by Reuters posited that the Global Medical Tourism Market was worth USD $19.7 billion in 2016 and estimated to be growing at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 18.8%, to reach USD 46.6 billion by 2021 (Reuters, 2017). Many countries have therefore seized the opportunity that medical tourism affords. Asia presently constitutes the most important medical tourism region (Connell, 2006)

In a bid to tap into this emerging market, in 2009, the South Korea government designated the medical tourism industry as a new economic growth engine and revised the Medical Law to allow hospitals to market themselves to foreign patients (International Medical Travel Journal, 2009). Since then, the number of foreigners who come to South Korea for medical treatment has steadily increased and reached approximately $208 million earning in 2012 (Shim, 2013). Oh, Jun and Zhou (2014) indicated that most US patients seeking healthcare services in South Korea are Korean Americans.

In making the decision to return to the homeland to access medical care, Korean Americans cited numerous barriers such as accessing health care information and services in the United States, language barriers, and lack of health insurance (Oh et al., 2014). Medical tourists also indicated that decisions were based on cost-effectiveness, convenience, quality and advanced technologies in favoring South Korea medical services. Moreover, the growing demand for health supplements, vitamins, and other health services (such as laser eye surgeries, cosmetic surgery, and weight loss surgery) are not well covered by American healthcare insurance. The gap between the competencies of current American health insurance and delivery system and the need for better healthcare services is still immense (Oh et al., 2014). In these circumstances, the demand-supply gap has thus encouraged Korean Americans to go abroad to look for better quality and less expensive medical treatments.

The emerging literature on medical tourism has focused on the general concept of medical tourism, and only a few studies have focused on medical tourism in a Korean context, notwithstanding that the fact that South Korea constitute one of the major players in the medical tourism arena. Furthermore, there remains a lack of a systematic stream of research concerning Korean Americans participation in this fast-emerging sector of the industry.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study, therefore, was to investigate critical pull factors influencing Korean Americans’ intention to seek medical treatment in the homeland.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition

Although medical tourism boomed recently and rapidly, many researchers have continued to use the term 'health tourism' to cover all forms of health-related tourism (Garcia-Altea, 2005).

Connell (2006) suggests that it seems more useful to differentiate 'medical tourism' as one involving specific medical interventions. Carrera and Bridges (2006) were the first to conceptualize, distinguish, and clearly define the two phrases 'health tourism' and 'medical tourism." Health tourism is defined as the organized travel outside one's local environment for the maintenance, enhancement, or restoration of the individual well-being in mind and body. Medical tourism, as a subset of health tourism, is defined as "the organized travel outside one's natural healthcare jurisdiction for the enhancement or restoration of the individual's health through medical intervention" (Carrera & Bridges, 2006, p. 1).

Specifically, the research objectives were (1) to whether medical characteristics: cost, service-quality, physician-quality, facilities, and access, and (2) touristic characteristics: food, accommodation, shopping, attractiveness, and security impacted Korean Americans' decision to visit South Korea for their medical treatment. A third objective of the study was to assess differences between experienced and potential Korean American medical tourists and their intention to engage in medical tourism in South Korea.

The literature concerning medical tourism definition mainly focuses on global trends. For example, Cortez (2008) describes medical tourism as a phenomenon of people from different countries traveling for medical services to other countries. Bookman and Bookman (2007) describe it as the sale of highly advanced technical medical care for visitors from other countries that results in medical tourism, which nomenclature 'tourism' has been largely neglected. As a result, there is little research considering both the terms 'medical' and 'tourism."

Medical Tourism in South Korea

Having passed the law of the foreign patient legislation in 2009, South Korea has positioned itself as a host country that provides health care services for foreigners. According to International Medical Travel Journal (2014), South Korea government and private entities have come together to promote the country's healthcare facilities and services to foreigners by way of the Council for Korea Medicine Overseas Promotions (CKMOP). Resultantly, the number of healthcare facilities registered to serve these international patients have grown at an alarming rate of 24.8% in 2009 to 2010, with approximately 2000 hospitals and clinics serving patients in 2011 (Oh et al., 2014). Medical tourism figures from South Korea's Ministry of Health and Welfare indicating an increase in the number of foreign medical tourists to more than 364,000 in 2016, up 23% from 2015, with revenue growth of over 200 million South Korean won in 2016 compared to 2015 (International Medical Travel Journal, 2018). According to Yu, Lee, and Noh (2011), South Korea has medical technology on par with the most advanced countries, expert medical practitioners and hospital facilities. Strengths of the South Korea medical tourism industry include the strong competitiveness in terms of medical service quality, an increasing number of general foreign tourist, the high intention of visiting South Korea from potential medical tourists' hospitals engaging in overseas marketing activities, advanced medical technology and facilities (Korea Medical Tourism Association, 2008). South Korea is therefore poised as a catalyst for continued growth in medical tourism.

Medical Characteristics

As medical technology moves far ahead globally, there are now many medical care choices on the cosmopolitan market for patients, with medical tourists selecting a large variety of required and elective procedures. These consist of health maintenance, prevention, and screening activities (Bookman & Bookman, 2007). Medical tourism involving complex elective surgeries such as cancer treatment, cardiac, neurosurgery, cosmetic, dental, orthopedic, hip-replacement, spinal fusion, transplant and reproductive through to long-term care is increasingly appealing to a large global market of health care consumers (Blyth & Farrand, 2005).

Sarwar, Manaf, and Omar (2012) developed a conceptual framework for medical tourism emphasizing various factors impacting medical tourist travel intentions. They identified cost, quality, access to certain treatments, availability of treatment types, and advertising as the most important factors that played a role in medical tourists' intention to visit a specific country. First, the price differential for various medical procedures and desire to reap cost advantages is the primary motivation for medical tourism (Marlowe & Sullivan, 2007). Scholars, such as Connell, (2006), Gray and Poland (2008), and Ormond (2011) also supported that the main factor that drives health tourists to seek treatment is the low cost. Moreover, service quality has also become a critical factor in decisions to seek medical tourism services (Sarwar, Manaf & Omar, 2012). Grhonroos (1990), described service quality with two dimensions in health care: technical or mechanical quality, and serviceable or functional quality. Mechanical quality is measured by technical equipment and other related diagnostic systems for treatment. On the other hand, quality care is measured by the service offer of staff, nurses, administrations and most importantly the doctors towards the patient and their assistants. Carman (2000) also indicated that the hospital service includes care from nurses, physicians, and outcomes from treatment. He defined service quality as a "global judgment or attitude relating to the overall excellence or superiority of the service" (Carman, 2000, p. 340). Another researcher (e.g., Panchapakesan, 2013; Wang, 2012) also suggested that medical quality is a significant aspect of medical services.

Access, rather than cost has also been a major factor for the increase of medical tourism (Spar, 2005). Patients generally seek medical care abroad for one or two reasons: either they do not have access to a treatment, or they cannot afford it in their own country (Cortez, 2008). Lack of access, either because the technology is not available, or is prohibited or illegal in the origin country, can result in medical tourism (Connell, 2006). Based on the literature, it is expected that:

Hypothesis 1: A positive evaluation of medical characteristics will increase the intentions of Korean Americans to participate in medical tourism in South Korea.

Touristic Characteristics

Panchapakesan (2013) provided a conceptual framework for touristic characteristics in medical tourism. In this conceptual model, security, accommodation, attractiveness, the taste of food, and enjoyment were the primary factors that significantly affected the loyalty intentions of medical tourists.

Food has become one of the most important attractions as tourists seek new and authentic experiences and alternative forms of tourism (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999). According to Nield et. al.'s (2000) research, food quality, a variety of dishes, standards for food service, and overall meal experience are major attributes that are considered by medical tourists. Moreover, accommodations are also a very important part of the touristic characteristics (Lagiewski & Myers, 2008). Since medical tourism involves a form of travel to a foreign location, there is often demand for some form of accommodation in the hospital or in a hotel at the destination. Furthermore, according to Connell's (2006) study, it is common for another relative to accompany the patient and, therefore, the accompanying person or entire family need to stay at selected destinations for the duration of the medical treatment.

The attractiveness of a destination is often referred to by customers in terms of the destination's ability to satisfy their needs (Vengesayi, 2010). The attractiveness of a destination has a massive impact on determining a person's intentions to visit, perceptions of benefits and motivations, and the duration of stay (Henkel et al., 2006). Attractions are the primary elements of destination appeal and are essential reasons why future visitors choose one destination over another (Crouch & Ritchi, 1999).

Favorable and satisfying development of tourism lie~~s~~ in the three fundamental principles of peace, safety, and security (Mansfeld & Pizam, 2006). If the medical tourist destination is not seen as safe, it is almost impossible to keep up with the competition for future visitors as they are not willing to travel to an unsafe destination. According to Pizam (1999), the precarious acts in tourism destination consist of civil or political unrest, crime, riots, war, and terrorism. Based on these backgrounds, the following hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 2: Positive evaluations of touristic characteristics impact the intentions of Korean Americans to seek medical care in South Korea.

It has been overwhelmingly identified that the traveler's choice of a given vacation destination relies largely on the favorableness of his or her image of that destination (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Bernini & Cagnone, 2013). Based on this theory, the present study indicates that there are differences between those who have engaged in medical tourism to South Korea and those who have no experience of medical tourism to South Korea. Therefore, the following hypothesis is framed.

Hypothesis 3: Significant differences exist between experienced and potential Korean American medical tourists regarding medical and touristic characteristics

The conceptual framework in ***Figure 1*** illustrates the hypothesized model to be tested.

METHODOLOGY

The present study was empirical in nature and utilized a cross-sectional design with the aim of making a generalization from a sample of Korean Americans. Based on the literature reviewed and theoretical framework, the study was carried out to assess how medical and touristic characteristics influenced Korean Americans' intention to pursue medical treatment in South Korean. The items utilized on the survey instrument were adapted from prior research studies, coupled with some revisions to fit the current research context. The questionnaire was first written in English and then translated to Korean by a professional translator for ease of understanding.

Measures

A self-reported questionnaire containing close-ended questions using a 5-point Likert scale was used. The survey instrument included medical characteristics items, touristic characteristics items, and demographic items. Survey procedures were deemed ideal for the research study as surveys are considered one of the foremost means of social investigation (Czaja & Blair, 2005) further stated that to make use of statistical methods such as hierarchical regression and multiple regression, researchers must use survey data to test hypotheses and study relationships between variables.

To measure medical characteristics, this study used 15-items with five dimensions (cost, service-quality, physician-quality, facilities, and access). Research participants were asked to indicate their responses on a 5-point scale with anchors from extremely unimportant (1) to extremely important (5). Similarly, in assessing touristic characteristics, a 15-item scale measuring food, accommodation, shopping, attractiveness, and security levels were used. Participants again were asked to indicate their responses on a 5-point Likert scale.

Choice intention contained three statements, also on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = extremely unlikely and 5 = extremely likely). The study adopted questions from Martin et al.'s (2011), the questions were "How much are you likely to really visit South Korea for your medical tourism in the future," "I am confident about arranging a medical tour to South Korea," and "How strongly are you likely to recommend South Korea to others positively for their medical tourism." The final section of the survey included general socioeconomic factors, such as gender, age, marital status, education level, and annual household income.

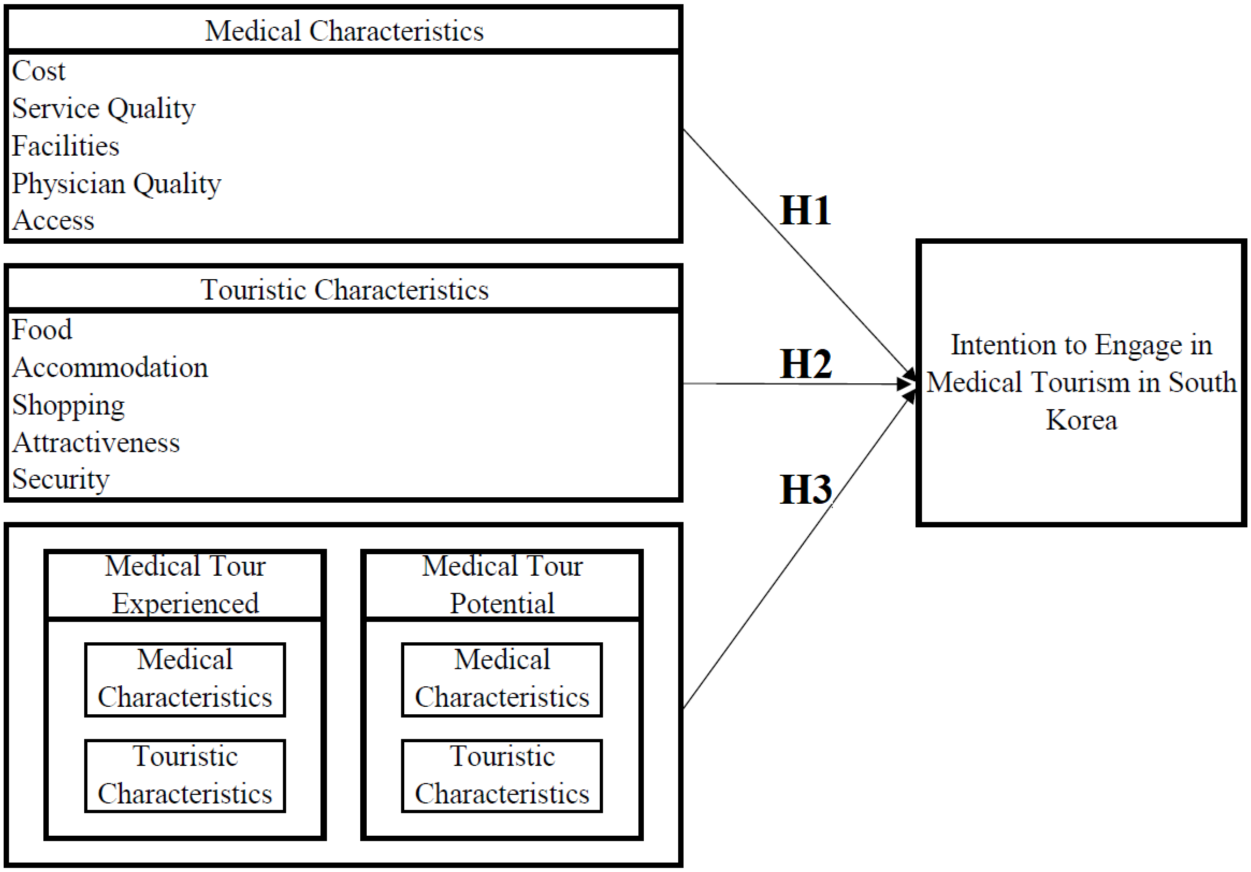
Data Collection and Analysis

According to the U.S Census 2000, 96% of Korean Americans live in the metropolitan areas in the United States. The Washington, D.C. metropolitan area ranks third with the highest Korean American population after the Los Angeles and New York metropolitan areas (Yu et al., 2002). To eliminate confusing or biased items; in the beginning stage of the survey, a pilot test was conducted with eighteen selected Korean American students. Based on the feedback from the pilot test, necessary modifications were made to the questionnaire. The survey questionnaires were then distributed in eight Korean American protestant churches in Northern Virginia. Intercept surveys were also administered to locations frequented by Korean Americans, such as Korean supermarkets and Korean restaurants in the Washington D.C. metropolitan area in 2016 and 2017.

As a result of the inadequacy of the first sample, data collection had to be conducted twice. The first survey was conducted from October 28 to November 20 in 2016, however, the response rate was low, thus necessitating a second data collection period from February 18 to April 10, 2017. Of the 221 questionnaires collected, 14 were not usable. Therefore, a total of 207 questionnaires were coded for data analysis. A dichotomous screening question was used to determine whether respondents had engaged in medical tourism: "Have you been to South Korea for the purpose of medical tourism?" Those who answer "Yes" were classified as experienced medical tourists and those who answered "No" were classified as potential medical tourists. Among the usable questionnaires, based upon the first screening question, 96 respondents (46.4 percent) were experienced, medical tourists. Data was compiled and calculated with SPSS Windows 22.0.

Figure 1

Research Model



RESULTS

This study sought to determine how variance in the intentions of Korean Americans to seek medical tourism in South Korea could be predicted by variance in medical characteristics (cost, service-quality, facilities, physician-quality, and access) and touristic characteristics (food, accommodation, shopping, attractiveness, and security).
The demographic profile of the respondents is presented in ***Table 1.***

Among the sample, 59.4 percent were female (*N*=123) and 40.6 percent were male (*N*=84). The age group of the respondents consisted of 10.6 percent twenties (*N*=22), 20.8 percent thirties (*N*=43), 22.7 percent forties (*N*=47), 37.7 percent fifties (*N*=78), and 8.2 percent over sixties (*N*=17). For medical tourism experience, 46.4 percent (*N*=96) have been to South Korea for getting medical treatments, as compared to 53.6 percent (*N*=111) have been not yet.

In terms of marital status, 71.5 percent of respondents were married (*N*=148). Most respondents also held undergraduate degrees, (68.1%), followed by high school graduates (18.9%), and postgraduate degrees (10.1%). Regarding annual family incomes, 5.8% earned less USD 25,000, 38. 2% earned between USD 50,000~ 74,999, 29.4 % earned between USD 25,000~49,999 with the remaining 26.6% earning more than USD 75,000.

A review of the means, standard deviations, and medians for all the variables related to influencing factors are illustrated in Table 2.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N=207)

	Response	Number	Percentage
Gender	Female	123	59.4 %
	Male	84	40.6 %
Age Group	20s	22	10.6 %
	30s	43	20.8 %
	40s	47	22.7 %
	50s	78	37.7 %
	Over 60s	17	8.2 %
Medical Tourism Experience	Yes	96	46.4%
	No	111	53.6%

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of Variables (N=207)

Variables	*M*	*Mdn*	*SD*	*Min*	*Max*
Medical Characteristics					
Cost	4.51	4.67	.30	1	5
Service Quality	4.48	4.33	.38	1	5
Facilities	4.52	4.67	.33	1	5
Physician Quality	4.57	4.67	.27	1	5
Access	4.39	4.33	.36	1	5
Touristic Characteristics					
Food	4.48	4.33	.39	1	5
Accommodation	4.45	4.33	.40	1	5
Shopping	4.46	4.33	.29	1	5
Attractiveness	4.51	4.67	.32	1	5
Security	4.54	4.67	.40	1	5

Mean Value: 1=Extremely Unimportant, 3=Neutral, 5=Extremely Important

Multiple regression analysis was conducted using the five factors of medical characteristic and the intention to take medical tourism to South Korea. A regression analysis indicated that 32% of the variance in the intentions of Korean Americans to seek medical tourism in South Korea could be predicted by variance in the five medical predictor variables, F (5, 201) = 18.72, p<.001. Analysis of regression coefficient indicated that cost predicted the greatest variance in Korean American's intention to take a medical tourism to South Korea [β =.57, *t* = 7.21, *p* < .001], followed by service-quality [β = -.32, *t* = 5.25, *p* < .001], then facilities [β = -.19, *t* = 2.61, *p* < .05]. After accounting for the other variables, however, physician-quality [β = -.06, *t* = -0.91, *p* > .05] and access [β = .12, *t* = 1.76, *p* > .05] did not account for significant variance in the intentions of Korean Americans to engage in medical tourism in South Korea (***see Table 3***). Therefore, based on the results of multiple regression analysis, hypothesis l was partially supported. To test the relationship between the five factors of touristic characteristics and the intention of Korean Americans to take medical tourism to South Korea, multiple regression analysis was also conducted. As presented in ***Table 4***, the coefficient of determination (R^2) was 0.49, indicating that 49% of the total variance for the evaluation of intention is explained by the touristic factors.

The three factors of touristic characteristics, security [β = .35, *t* = 4.73, *p* < .001], accommodation [β = .21, *t* = 3.25, *p* < .05], and food [β = .14, *t* = 2.26, *p* < .05] had a significant positive impact on the intentions of Korean Americans to seek medical treatment in South Korea. On the other hand, shopping [β = -.98, *t* = -1.91, *p* > .05] and attractiveness [β = .15, *t* = 2.08, *p* > .05] were not statistically significant. According to the results of the multiple regression analysis, Hypothesis 2 was also partially supported.

To test for significant differences between experienced and potential Korean American medical tourists' intentions to seek medical treatment in South Korea, a t-test was utilized. As seen in ***Table 5,*** the only cost showed a significant difference (*p* < .05) between the two groups when they consider a medical trip to South Korea.

According to the mean value of each group, the cost was more important for experienced medical tourists (*M* = 4.57) than those who had not visited (*M* = 4.47). However, there was no significant difference for both groups when they consider security (*p*=.90), facilities (*p*=.42), accommodation (*p*=.18), service quality (*p*=.09), and food (*p*=.06). Consequently, H3 was also partially supported.

Table 3

Relationship between Medical Characteristics and Intention (Regression analysis)

Variable		***B***	***SE B***	***β***	***t***	***p***
Cost		.72	.10	.57	7.21	0.00***
Service Quality		-.33	.06	-.32	5.25	0.00***
Facilities		-.08	.09	-.19	2.61	0.01*
Physician Quality		-.23	.09	-.06	-0.91	0.37
Access		.12	.07	.12	1.76	0.08
R^2	.32					
F	18.72					
p	0.000					

**P*<0.05, ***P*<0.01, ****P*<0.001

Table 4

Relationship between Touristic Characteristics and Intention (Regression analysis)

Variable		***B***	***SE B***	***β***	***t***	***p***
Food		.14	.06	.14	2.26	0.03*
Accommodation		.20	.06	.21	3.25	0.01*
Shopping		-.13	.07	-.98	-1.91	0.58
Attractiveness		.17	.08	.15	2.08	0.39
Security		.34	.07	.35	4.73	0.00**
R^2	.49					
F	38.75					
p	0.000					

**P*<0.05, ***P*<0.01

Table 5

Results of t-test between Experienced and Potential medical tourists

Variables	Experienced (*N* = 96)		Non-Experienced (*N* = 111)		*t*	*P*
	M	***SD***	***M***	***SD***		
Medical Characteristics						
Cost	4.57	.28	4.47	.31	2.44	.02*
Service Quality	4.43	.42	4.52	.33	-1.71	.09
Facilities	4.54	.31	4.50	.34	.81	.42
Touristic Characteristics						
Food	4.42	.48	4.53	.28	-1.94	.06
Accommodation	4.41	.39	4.49	.40	-1.33	.18
Security	4.54	.40	4.53	.41	.13	.90

*$P<0.05$
Mean Value: 1=Extremely Unimportant, 3=Neutral, 5= Extremely Important

DISCUSSION

Despite the significant growth in medical tourism globally and specifically in South Korea, not much is known about the critical factors impacting Korean Americans' decision to seek medical treatment in their home country.

The major objective of this study, therefore, was to investigate the factors that impacted Korean American' intention to seek medical treatment in South Korea. Specifically, the study examined the importance of medical characteristics (cost, service quality, facilities, physician quality, and access) and tourist characteristics (food, accommodation, shopping, and security) on Korean Americans' intention to seek medical treatment in the homeland. In this empirical study, a sample of Korean American medical tourists was collected from the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. Multiple regression analysis was conducted which yielded several significant findings.

Based on the results of this study, cost, service quality, and facilities were significant factors impacting Korean Americans' intentions. This is in line with a study by Han and Hyun (2015), who found that cost and service quality were important to international medical tourists to South Korea. Physician-quality and access were not considered as crucial influencing factors by most respondents in this study when they choose medical tourism to South Korea. A plausible reason could be that Korean Americans already knew about the credibility of South Korea's health system. In their study of Korean American women's perception of medical tourism in South Korea, Oh, et, al., (2014), respondents believed that the Korean medical services, and doctors, and medical technologies were superior to that of the US. Similarly, it could be that Koreans being native had trust in the staff and the clinics and hospitals. In line with a study by Han and Hyun (2015), trust in staff and clinic were found to have a favorable impact on international medical tourist revisit intention to South Korea.

Also, knowing the location of prominent hospitals and clinic that offered services could have had an impact on results. Furthermore, touristic characteristics associated with visiting South Korea, such as shopping and attractiveness, did not play much of a role in a medical trip to South Korea. On the other hand, security, accommodation, and food were found to have an important and positive effect on Korean American's intentions to take medical tourism to South Korea. This underscores the notion that in taking a medical trip, while the main emphasis is on medical care, the tourism aspects are given importance, as well by most Korean Americans.

While cost was important for both experience and potential Korean American medical tourist, the difference was found between groups. Experienced Korean Americans rated the importance of cost higher than their potential counterpart. This is understandable as having experienced the situation you are better able to make decisions, unlike individuals who have not had a similar experience using the service.

IMPLICATION

The present study makes a couple of contributions to the growing medical tourism literature and particular to practitioners involved in the medical tourism field in South Korea. Since little is known about the key elements of Korean American medical tourists' intention to visit the home country or their medical treatment, this study has attempted to provide a deeper insight into these growing phenomena and can impact future planning. South Korea should continue to position itself as an affordable alternative that is cemented on high-quality medical care. The cost had the greatest impact on both Korean American who had visited prior and those who may visit soon. This was also found to be true in other research studies highlighted in the literature. Similarly, the friendliness, efficiency, and care for patients were very important to respondents, as such training in service quality and patient care should be ongoing to ensure that service standards are maintained. This should also include the maintenance and upkeep of facilities and as well as the quality of the treatment. The South Korean medical tourism stakeholders should ensure that marketing campaigns capture the touristic offering such as availability of food establishment, convenient and affordable accommodations which are in secured areas. Many patients may need a vacation like an environment for recuperating after procedures as many procedures tend to require rest and relaxation as well as for housing relatives who accompany the patients on these medical trips. Marketing campaigns should be done on a consistent basis with US tourism entities, as well as medical institutions and specialists focusing on benefits to be gained from undertaking a medical trip to the homeland. Researchers found that advertising impacts intentions. South Korea should ensure that the national campaigns include medical tourism to include medical and touristic offerings. The findings of this study help in understanding the basic relationships among influential factors as well as to enhance the knowledge of the healthcare specialists in both the United States and South Korea.

LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The current study has some limitations that need to be taken into consideration. First, this study used convenience sampling. Convenience sampling method may create bias in the sampling and data collection process. Secondly, data were collected only from the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. As a result, the sample may not represent the overall population of Korean Americans in the United States. Therefore, a future study could utilize a sample drawn from all the regions of the United States and apply a probability sampling method.

Lastly, there could be other factors that may influence the intentions of Korean American medical tourists but are not included in the present study. Factors such as the word-of-mouth (WOM) and psychological distance may also play a significant role in the decision-making process. Therefore, future studies could employ more influencing factors or conduct an in-depth interview with experienced and potential medical tourists to identify other pertinent factors.

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Motor Sport Event Attendee Profile: The Case of NASCAR, Daytona Beach

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Abstract

This exploratory study examined the profile of attendees to the 2017 NASCAR event in Daytona Beach, Florida, by gender, geographic origin, attendance history and average expenditure. Results from the chi-square test of association showed that there was a significant association between gender and attendance history. Although roughly equal proportions of men and women reported attending more than five years, women were more likely to report that they had attended three years or less compared to men. There was also a significant association between attendance history and amount spent, with greater expenditure among those who had attended for more years.

KEYWORDS: NASCAR, Daytona, Attendee Profile, Motorsports, Segmentation

INTRODUCTION

The economic impact of any sporting event depends on its ability to stimulate new spending in the community and the greater the number of spectators attracted from outside the area, the greater the increase in net new spending an event will generate (Baade & Matheson, 2000). According to Florida Sports Foundation (2017), The National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing, Inc. (NASCAR)-sanctioned automobile races, which usually take place in January, February and July and generate $922 million in economic impact from non-resident visitors' expenditures in the state of Florida. "Speed Week", a series of racing events leading up to the Daytona 500, has a total Volusia County Florida economic impact of roughly $254 million, according to the Daytona Beach Area Convention & Visitors Bureau (2014). Further, in a bid to make Daytona Beach a more desirable destination, the Speedway rolled out $400 million in upgrades in 2017. Daytona International Speedway's total economic impact generated by the ongoing operations in Florida is almost $1.6 billion annually and generates over $645 million in labor income each year for Florida residents. This translates to over 18,000 permanent jobs for Florida residents result directly or indirectly from the operations of International Speedway Corp. and Daytona International Speedway.

Problem Area

The foci of much of the research investigating tourist markets have mostly centered around comparing the relative economic impact that tourist groups have as well as different purposes of visit or different geographic origins. (Etzel & Woodside 1982; Liu, 1986; Keown, 1989; Uysal and McDonald, 1989; Uysal, Pomeroy, and Potts, 1992). However, in motorsport event attendance, evaluations on attendee profile research is scanty at best.

Purpose of Study

The primary purpose of this exploratory study was to examine the profile of attendees to the 2017 NASCAR event in Daytona Beach, Florida, by gender, geographic origin, attendance history and average expenditure.

Research Justification

Firstly, sport events (such as the Daytona NASCAR 500) are big businesses and destinations in the United States such as Indianapolis and Charlotte are competing fiercely to host them. This is done because of the money they generate, as well as the marketing value they contribute to the destination. Secondly, according to Saayman et al. (2006) one method cannot be singled out as the only method of determining total economic impact since many factors influence spending patterns. Therefore, other factors such as age, gender, income, nationality, number of visits can also be used. Hence this study focuses on age, gender, frequency of attendance, geographic origin to gain a good indication of the value and amounts generated by the event.

Finally, gaining a true understanding of visitor spending and the factors that influence the amount that certain visitors spend at a destination are an essential input in the measurement of tourism on the economic impact of a tourist destination.

Definition of Motor Sports

Motor sports is defined as competitive racing by equivalent machines on a frequent basis on designated tracks and circuits organized around series, championships, events and meetings arranged by promoters, circuits and racing clubs at all levels (professional and amateur sport). It is a collection of sports that primarily involve motorized vehicles, and success is often determined by the performance of vehicles.

In recent years, motorsports attendance has grown considerably, with attendance more than triple that of the National Football League, Major League Baseball, National Hockey League and the National Basketball Association. (Gifford, 2006).

About Daytona International Speedway and Daytona Beach

Daytona International Speedway is the home of "The Great American Race" - the DAYTONA 500. Though the season-opening NASCAR Sprint Cup event garners most of the attention - as well as the largest audience in motorsports. The approximately 500-acre motorsports complex boasts the most diverse schedule of racing on the globe, thus earning it the title of "World Center of Racing.” In addition to eight major weekends of racing activity, rarely a week goes by that the Speedway grounds are not used for events that include civic and social gatherings, car shows, photoshoots, production vehicle testing and police motorcycle training. (Brezina, 2017). According to Soskin (2001), tourism is the leading industry in this resort community, accounting for over $1 billion in annual revenues. Additionally, this destination hosts several different annual special events, each attracting a different profile of visitors. However, with a population of 61,000 (US Census Bureau, 2010), and with over one million visitors annually, tourists often outnumber residents, (Soskin, 2001).

While tourism resources in this resort city includes 47 miles of pristine beaches, museums, and parks, the dominant resource appears to be the Daytona Beach International Speedway, which hosts several car racing events. ***Table 1*** identifies the annual calendar of the various special events that take place at this facility. According to Florida Sports Foundation (2017), NASCAR motorsports generate $922 million in economic impact from non-resident visitor expenditures annually. Of the 11,000 total jobs generated, over 9,000 are generated by non-resident visitor attendance at NASCAR events.

Table 1. Example Daytona Beach Sporting Events and Visitor Profile Sporting Event

Month		Visitor Profile
January	ROLEX 24 hr. Race Event	Car racing enthusiast
February	Daytona 500 (NASCAR event)	Car Racing enthusiast
March	Bike Week Daytona (motorcycle race) Spring Break	Motorcycle enthusiasts
July	Pepsi 400/Sprint Cup Series (NASCAR event)	Car racing enthusiasts
October	Biketoberfest motorcycle festival	Motorcycle enthusiasts

Source: ***Daytona Beach Convention and Visitor's Bureau***

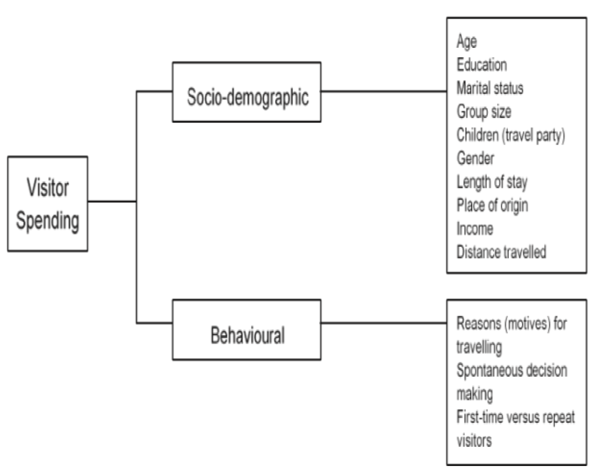
RELATED LITERATURE REVIEW

Demographics and Visitor Spending

The need to understand visitor spending at a destination is well documented as a useful tool for understanding expenditure patterns and ascertaining market segments (Jang *et al.*, 2004). Further, as Saayman *et al.*, (2007) have stated, greater understanding of visitor-expenditure patterns can help event organizers increase the economic impact of events. This point is especially important for sporting events since one of the goals of most sporting events is to make a positive economic contribution to the area where the event takes place. In recent years, the most common variables identified in visitor-expenditure research are shown in *Figure 1* and form part of this research as well. In general, the literature reveals that many socio-demographic variables have had a positive effect on spending at a destination. These include: length of stay (Nogawa et al., 1996; Seiler et al., 2002; Saayman et al., 2007; Saayman and Krugell, 2010); place of origin (Cannon and Ford, 2002; Downward & Lumdson, 2002; Skuras et al., 2005; Saayman & Saayman, 2008; Streicher, 2009; Saayman et al., 2011); income and distance travelled, regardless of whether or not the expenditure for travelling was omitted (Saayman et al., 2007.

A corollary point is that upon examination of studies that have been done on major sporting events, closer analysis of the literature indicates that several authors have focused on the social impacts of specific events. For example, Kang and Perdue (1994) analyzed the impact of the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games, while others such as Ebersohn (1995) reported on the impacts of the 1995 Rugby World Cup in South Africa. A more recent study by Gelan (2003) examined the local economic impact of the British Open. However, to date, an examination of the demographic nature of major events has been grossly neglected in the field of Motorsport events. Most of the research has been conducted in other areas of event management (Henderson, Foo, Lim and Yip, 2010). Additionally, although the literature review to date is replete with certain socio-demographic variables (see Figure 1), the findings of some variables are inconclusive.

Figure 1. Key Determinants in Events



Source: *Saayman and Krugell, 2010*

Segmentation in Sporting Events

Market segmentation is defined as the process of dividing a market into distinct groups of buyers who have different needs, characteristics, or behavior who might require separate products, or marketing programs (Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2010). According to Tsiotsou (2006) the most common approach to segmenting markets is the utilization of demographic variables, such as age, gender, and education.

According to Ritchie and Goeldner (1994), economic impact studies in travel and tourism (specifically for a sporting event such as Daytona 500) are undertaken to determine the effects of specific activities on the income, wealth and employment of the residents of a given geographic area. Economic impacts of sporting events have been widely studied. See for example: (Daniels & Norman, 2003; Stevens et al., 2006; Wilson, 2006).

The earliest studies in tourism segmentation were conducted by Pizam and Reichel (1979). They found that US domestic tourists with high expenditure levels on vacation trips were significantly different from US domestic tourists with low expenditure levels based on several variables. More recent studies have been done by Mok and Iverson, 2000, who utilized travel expenditures to segment Taiwanese travelers (light, medium, and heavy) to determine the value of the segmentation technique when marketing the island of Guam.

Another researcher, Snowball (2004) performed a study assessing the usefulness of economic impact study results and the expenditure patterns of visitors to a festival in South Africa.

Sampling and Data Collection

Data was collected by student volunteers who received a short training from the lead surveyor on how to intercept people and obtain completed surveys. All surveyors were trained and required to obtain IRB certification. An on-site questionnaire was administered by intercepting attendees who were 18 years of age or older during the 2017 Daytona NASCAR racing event. Surveys were given to people by random selection to represent the event attendee population. People willing to fill out the questionnaire were given a clipboard, pen, and a survey, employing a convenience sampling approach. Following the development of the questionnaire, an appropriate pilot study was conducted.

Participants were read a script of the research purpose and were told that each survey would last approximately 5 minutes. This (knowledge of the length of the survey) ensured that once a person agreed to participate, they would complete the entire process. A total of 551 parties were contacted and 379 questionnaires were completed, resulting in a 68.78% compliance rate.

Completed questionnaires were entered, cleaned, and checked using SPSS (version 23.0), a statistical analysis software. No documentation of the number of refusals was recorded.

RESULTS

Comparing Daytona 500 attendees by gender, the results indicate that 61% of the respondents were males and 39% were females. ***(Table 2)*** This is not surprising since it is generally known that motor sporting is a male dominated sport.

Comparing involvement in the event, 91% of the respondents were spectators while 5% indicated involvement in volunteering activities surrounding the events. Regarding attendance frequency, the data indicates that most spectators had been attending the event for over 5 years, (47.23%), while 27.18% indicated attendance between 3-5 years. Respondents who indicated attendance from 1-3 years represented 25.59 % of the total population surveyed. Regarding expenditure during the event, approximately 53% reported levels of over $500 during the event period. As expected, most respondents were from out of state (52.77%) while 44.6% were in state residents.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for the sample (N=379)

	N	%
Gender		
Male	231	60.9
Female	148	39.05
Involvement		
Driver or part of team	1	0.26
Event Volunteer	19	5.01
Merchant	3	0.79
Spectator	343	90.50
Sponsor	11	2.90
Other	2	0.53
Attendance		
1-3years	97	25.59
3-5years	103	27.18
>5years	179	47.23
Expenditure		
$100-$200	38	10.03
$250-$300	39	10.29
$350-$400	39	10.29
$450-$500	63	16.62
>$500	200	52.77
Geographic Origin		
Florida	167	44.06
Out-of-state	197	51.98

Results from the chi-square test of association show that there was a significant association between gender and attendance history (X2 (2) =6.38, p=.041). Although roughly equal proportions of men and women reported attending more than 5 years, women were more likely to report that they had attended 3 years or less (31.8%) compared with men (21.7%). ***(Table 3).*** There was also a significant association between attendance history and amount spent, with greater expenditure among those who had attended for more years (X2(8) = 98.85, p<.001). For example, 75.4% of those who had attended more than 5 years spent more than $500, compared with only 23.7% who had attended 1-3 years and 23.7% of those who had attended 3-5 years.

Finally, there was a significant association between state of residence and amount spent; those who were from out-of-state spent more than attendees from Florida (X2(2) =50.12, p<.001). Approximately 60.9% of attendees from states other than Florida reported spending more than $500 compared to 41.9% of those from Florida. In the lowest category of expenditure, 21.6% of Florida residents indicated they spent $100-$200 compared with only 1.0% of out-of-state attendees. Since one cell count was <5, we also obtained Fisher's exact test, which was consistent with the results from chi-square.

Table 3. Results of Chi-Square Analysis

	X2	**df**	**p-value**
Gender x Attendance	6.38	2	0.041
Gender x Expense			not sig
Gender x Region			not sig
Attendance x Expense	98.85	8	<.001
Attendance x Region			not sig
Region x Attendance			not sig
Region x Expense	50.12	4	<.001

Conclusion

The current study examined the nature of attendee segment by gender, geographic origin, attendance history and average expenditure during the 2017 NASCAR event in Daytona Beach, Florida.

The study contributes to the sports tourism and to the growing body of motor sports tourism literature. The study provides an empirical investigation into attendee profile, as well as the spending patterns for small-scale active sport events. The results establish the relationship between attendees' gender, amount spent and attendance history, as well as providing an insight into the association between state of residence and the amount spent at the destination.

The results also provided practical implications for the management and marketing of motor sporting events for destinations (DMOs) and organizers. To better predict and understand visitor spending related to a potential or planned event DMOs can estimate tourist expenditure as determined by these variables. Since Daytona Beach, Florida is a relatively small destination, using these can be an excellent way of raising a profile on the city as well as maximizing marketing efforts for local businesses. In addition, using the results of our research findings can aid lodging and restaurant facilities with forecasting for the upcoming year in terms of staffing for the period with the numbers generated from the survey. Finally, this research can be replicated to other NASCAR events to determine the reliability of the segmentation strategy in identifying "quality" tourists.

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A THREE-YEAR COMPARISON OF THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF A LOCAL FESTIVAL

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Abstract

The festival industry in the City of New Orleans encompasses so much of the city's food, resources and culture. Festivals and special events serve as important attractors for destinations and provide unique experiences for visitors. The purpose of this study is to compare the visitor profile and economic impact of the 2017 Louisiana Seafood Festival (LSF) with the 2016 and 2015 Louisiana Seafood Festival. Results from the study showed that the 2015 LSF had a greater economic impact in tax revenue and total impact spending, however, the 2016 and 2017 LSF had a larger impact in visitor profile travel and event characteristics. Recommendations are developed for organizers of the LSF and festivals in general.

Keywords: *festival, economic impact, travel characteristics, revenue*

INTRODUCTION

The festival industry in the City of New Orleans encompasses so much of the city's food, resources and culture. Festivals can develop social and cultural awareness as well as serve as an economic generator. The purpose of this study is to compare the visitor profile and economic impact of the 2017 Louisiana Seafood Festival with the 2016 and 2015 Louisiana Seafood Festival. The combination of the visitor profile and the economic impact analysis over 3 years will provide the organizers with valuable information to advertise future festivals to attract visitors and will provide the City of New Orleans with valuable information on the revenue potential of this successful festival.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Festival Research

Various studies have been performed on residents' perceptions of tourism impacts of festivals (Andereck, Valentine, Knopf & Vogt, 2005; Chen, 2001; Fredline & Faulkner, 2001; Kim & Petrick, 2005; Ohmann, Jones & Wilkes, 2006; Williams & Lawson, 2001). Knowledge regarding the impacts of festivals on communities is growing and it is important to determine the impacts of the festival on the community (Eraqi, 2007; Gu & Ryan, 2008; Jackson, 2008; Slabbert & Viviers, 2011).

Kyungmi & Uysal (2003) and Gursoy, Kim and Uysal (2004) suggested that research beyond economic impacts and motivations were very few. These studies highlighted the need for a research agenda to consider all three aspects of economic, social and environmental.

The Louisiana Seafood Festival

The Louisiana Seafood Festival (LSF) is a celebration of all the fresh and flavorful seafood from the state of Louisiana including crab, shrimp, oyster, alligator, crawfish and all fin fish. Since 2014, the festival has taken place in the New Orleans City Park Fairgrounds, one of the largest festival venues in the city over Labor Day weekend. The festival is advertised via billboards, website, radio ads and TV promotional spots. The festival also has a large social media following through Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. Since its inception in 2007, the festival was a free event to attendees, however, in 2016, the festival began charging an admission price for the event (Louisiana Hospitality Foundation, 2016).

METHODOLOGY

The Hospitality Research Center (HRC) at the University of New Orleans, with input from Louisiana Hospitality Foundation (LHF), designed the administered questionnaire. The 30-question survey was designed to determine origin, trip characteristics, preferences, sponsor recognition, and demographics of LSF attendees. Surveyors contracted by LHF administered the surveys during the festival weekends. A total of 600, 649 and 650 completed surveys were obtained in 2015, 2016 and 2017, respectively. The completed questionnaires were forwarded to the HRC for data entry and editing.

The HRC analyzed the data using statistical software and tabulated the results. To get more representative results, extreme spending outliers were omitted from the analysis. Responses to open-ended questions were categorized by hand and then organized based upon the most frequent themes that emerged from visitors' comments. Comparisons are presented with results from 2015 to 2017.

The economic impact section contains an analysis of the direct and secondary spending of all out-of-town attendees that would have otherwise not spent these funds in the New Orleans metro economy. Spending of residents and local organizations is not factored into the assessment of the economic impact attributable to LSF, since these funds may have been spent within the local economy in the absence of this event. LHF representatives provided attendance figures of the event, which were used to determine the total economic impact.

RESULTS

Visitor Profile – Travel Characteristics

In 2016, nearly two-thirds (63.0%) of survey respondents at the Louisiana Seafood Festival (LSF) were residents of the New Orleans metro area. The proportion (37.0%) of out-of-town attendees increased substantially over last year's figure (26.2%). In 2017, only 48.3% of the respondents were residents of the New Orleans metro area, which was a significant drop from 2016. Of the local attendees who came to the festival, for all three years the majority came from Orleans Parish and Jefferson Parish. Louisiana (outside the New Orleans metro area) was the most common place of residence for out-of-town visitors to the festival with 12.0% for year 2017. Other top states of residence in 2017 include Florida (7.8%), Texas (7.4%), Illinois (6.5%), California (5.5%), and Mississippi (5.5%) (Figure 1). Illinois has experienced a huge growth when compared to 2015 (0.7%) and 2016 (2.2%).

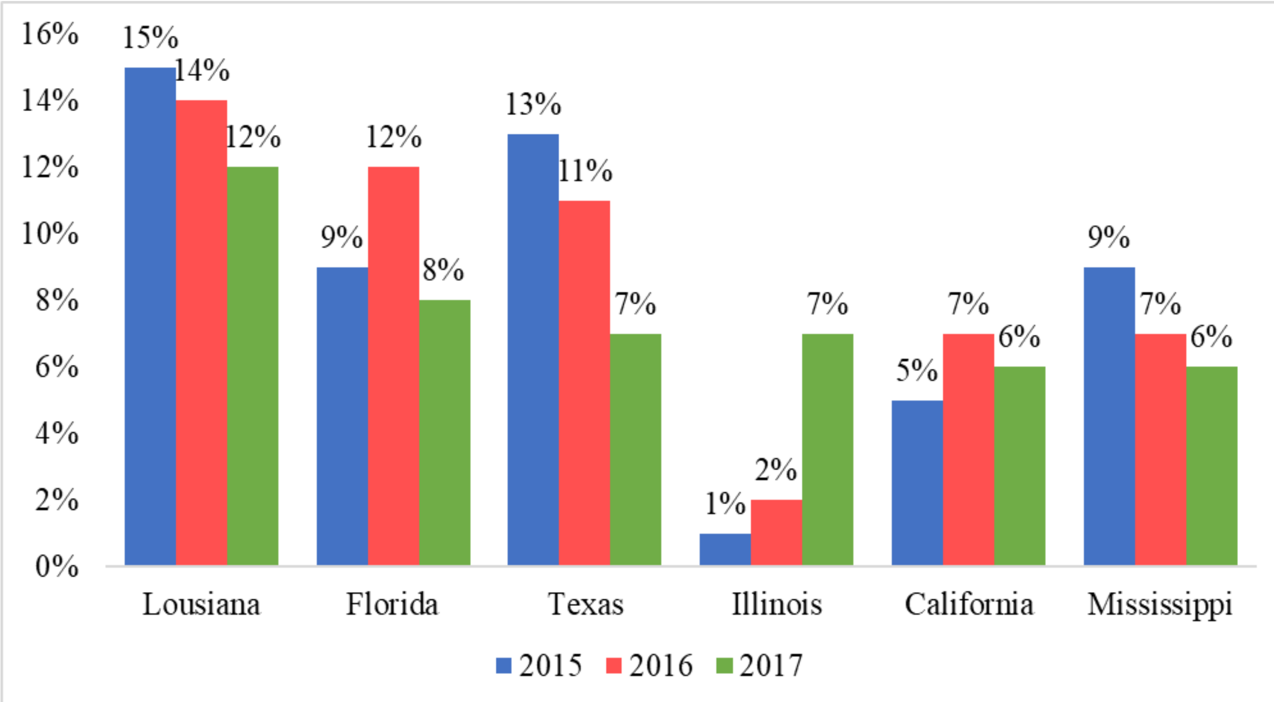

Figure 1: Top States of Residence for Out of Town Visitors

In 2017, the vast majority (89.9%) of out-of-town Louisiana Seafood Festival visitors stayed overnight in the New Orleans area, a slight uptick from 2016 (86.3%) and 2015 (84.6%). Among out-of-town overnight LSF visitors, 46% stayed between three and four days and 29% stayed between 5 to 6 days in the New Orleans area in 2017. While in 2016, 59% of the out-of-town overnight LSF visitors stayed 3 to 4 days and 23% stayed between 5 and 6 days in the New Orleans area. The results indicated that out-of-town overnight LSF visitors tend to stay longer in the New Orleans area. Visitors stayed in the city for an average of 4.6 days in 2017, showing a slight growth from 2016 (4.4 days).

In 2017, overnight visitors to New Orleans spent an average of four nights in the area, an increase from 3.5 nights reported in past years. The majority (47.0%) of these visitors spent between three and four nights in the city. A majority (67.9%) of overnight visitors stayed in hotels. Another 13.6% stayed with friends or relatives, decreased from 2016 (19.8%) and 2015 (25.8%). About 13.2% stayed in private home rental in 2017, increased from 2016 (5.0%) and 2015 (6.5%).

In 2017, more overnight visitors stayed in paid accommodations than in the previous years (Table 1). In 2017, visitors staying in hotels spent an average of $204 per night per room, increased substantially from the rates reported in 2016 ($146) and 2015 ($149). Close to 71% of visitors spent over $150 per night for a hotel room in New Orleans. Over half (50.9%) of the out-of-town visitors staying in other paid accommodations spent over $150 per night in 2017, increased from 2016 (28.0%). On average, these visitors spent $173 per night, increased tremendously from 2016 ($132).

Table 1: Visitor Accommodations

Response	Percentage 2015 (n=124)	Percentage 2016 (n=202)	Percentage 2017 (n=302)
Hotel	57.3	61.9	67.9
Friends or relatives	25.8	19.8	13.6
Private home rental	6.5	5.0	13.2
Timeshare/condo	4.0	5.9	3.0
Bed and breakfast	3.2	5.4	2.0
Other	3.2	2.0	0.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

In 2017, flying (67.4%) was the most common mode of transportation for out-of-town festival visitors to New Orleans. This figure increased significantly over 2016 (52.1%) and 2015 (40.5%). The number of visitors arrived by personal vehicle has dropped from 2015 (58.8%) and 2016 (45.3%) to 31.1%. Nearly three-quarters (72.5%) of the visitors traveled to New Orleans for the primary purpose of vacation/pleasure, increased from previous years. Only 9.1% of the visitors identified Louisiana Seafood Festival as their primary purpose of visit, significantly decreased from 2016 (26.2%) and 2015 (24.0%) (Figure 2).

In 2017, visitors spent an average of $1,119 during their trip to New Orleans, a significant increase over 2016 ($756) and 2015 ($651). The largest spending categories were meals ($380), lodging ($295), and bars/nightclubs ($158). Visitors to the festival spent more on meals, lodging, bars, recreation, transportation, shopping and gambling in 2017 than they did in both 2016 and 2015 (Table 2 and Figure 3).

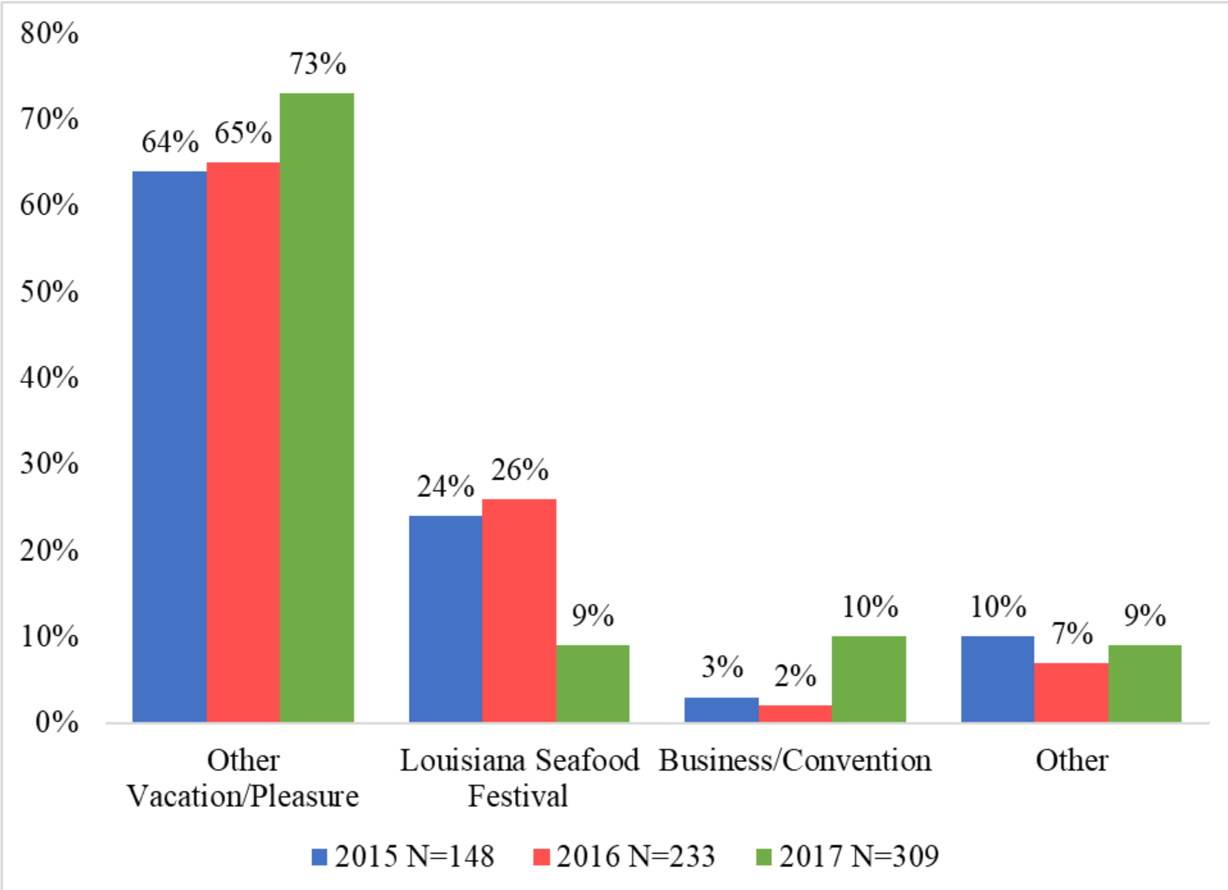

Figure 2: Primary Purpose of Visit

Table 2: Average Individual Visitor Trip Expenditures

Response	2015 ($)	2016 ($)	2017 ($)
Restaurants/meals	228	291	380
Bars/night clubs	95	129	158
Recreation/entertainment	63	67	92
Shopping	72	88	118
Local transportation	44	28	49
Gambling	21	24	28
Lodging	129	129	295
Total	651	756	1119

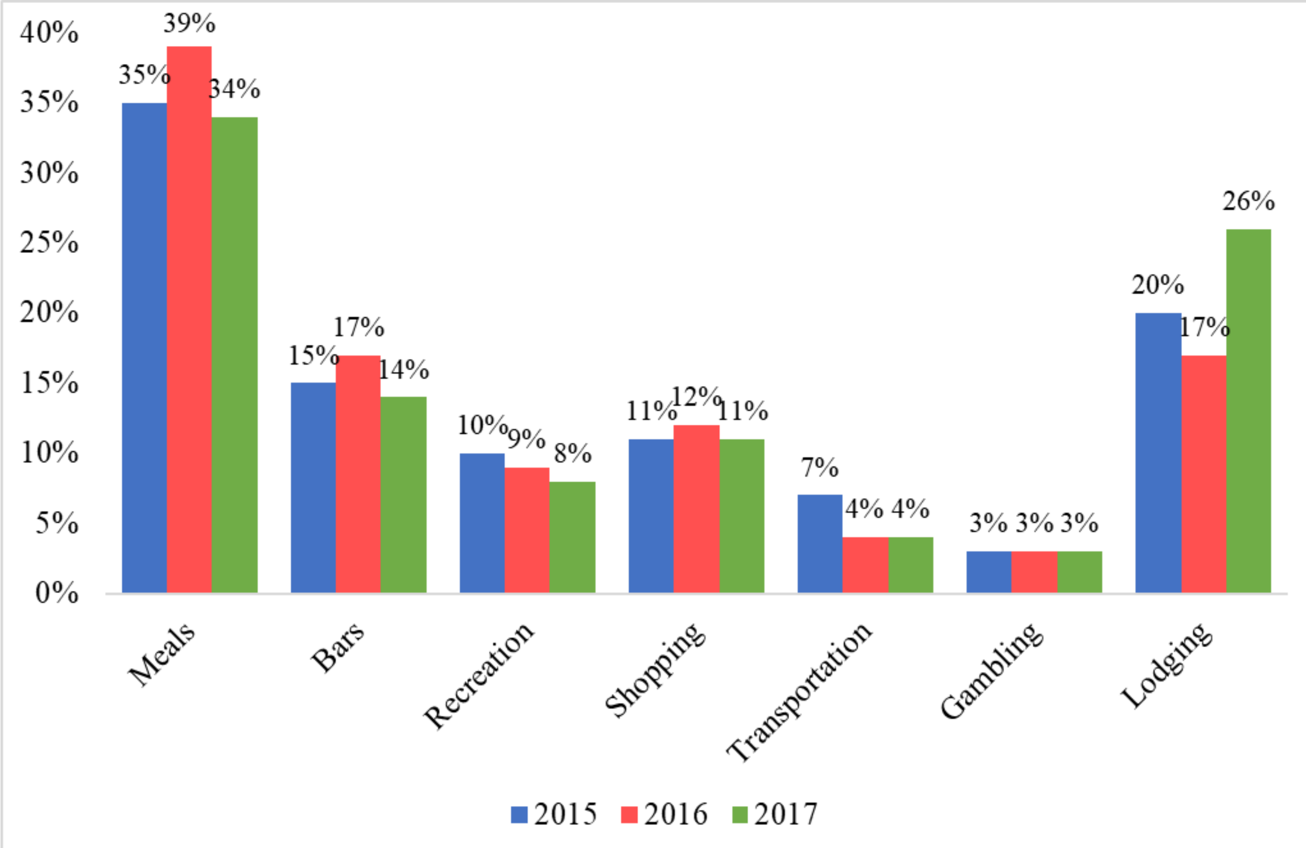

Figure 3: Proportion of Visitor Trip Expenditures

Visitor Profile – Event Characteristics

Nearly three-quarters (76.2%) of the respondents were first-time attendees to the LSF in 2017, an increase from 73.1% reported in 2016 and 68.7% in 2015. Repeat attendees reported increased average festival visits (3.1) in 2017 than in both 2016 (2.1) and 2015 (2.5). About half (52.8%) of repeat attendees had been to the event either once or twice in the past. In 2017, the average party size was 2.7 people, decreased from the average reported in the previous two years (3.1). Nearly three-quarters (72.1%) of festival-goers attended the event in parties of two or three people.

In 2017, the vast majority (86.4%) of attendees planned on spending one day at the LSF, which was like the prior two years. On average, attendees planned on spending 1.2 days at the festival, a slight increase from 1.1 days reported in 2016. Almost 85% of the attendees spent $100 or less at the LSF in 2017. The average daily spending for all attendees was $81, a significant decrease over 2016 ($94) but still higher than 2015 average spending ($59). *Table 3* breaks down and compares attendee expenditures at the event each year.

In 2016, nearly all (98.9%) visitors planned on eating Louisiana Seafood at the festival. In 2017, the most popular foods eaten at the festival were shrimp (64.5%), oyster (56.0%), and crawfish (53.4%). Over half festival attendees indicated food and drinks (58.7%) and music (50.2%) as their favorite aspect of the 2017 Louisiana Seafood Festival. Music has gained more popularity over the previous two years while food and drinks have decreased in terms of attendees' preference. Other popular aspects of the event included location (16.6%) and people (6.1%).

Table 3: Expenditures at the Event

Response	Percentage 2015 (n=594)	Percentage 2016 (n=640)	Percentage 2017 (n=641)
$50 or less	60.6	35.3	43.4
$51-$100	32.8	40.9	41.5
$101-$200	6.1	19.5	13.1
$201 and above	0.5	4.2	2.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Average expenditure	$59	$94	$81

In 2017, respondents indicated their likelihood to recommend the Louisiana Seafood Festival to other people using an 11-point scale (0=Not at all likely; 10=Extremely likely). The average reported recommendation score was 9.2, an increase from 8.9 in 2016. The likelihood to visit results were analyzed using the Net Promoter Score (NPS) model, a customer loyalty metric. In 2017, the Louisiana Seafood Festival had a score of 71.5%, a significant increase from 2016's score of 59.2%. Scores of 50% and above are satisfactory. Close to two-thirds (64.8%) of festival attendees reported an intention to return to the festival next year while in 2016 and 2015, 76.2% and 88.4% of the respondents planned to return, respectively.

Visitor Profile – Demographics

In 2017, 48.1% of respondents had a household income over $100,000, an increase over the 43.5% and 36.3% who reported the same earnings at the 2016 and 2015 festival. Almost three-quarters (73.9%) of the respondents who attended the festival were white, while slightly less than 20% were black. Nearly 60% of the respondents were between 25 and 49 years of age, a decrease over the 63.0% in 2016. Similar to 2016, more than half of the respondents were female (55.4%).

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Direct and Secondary Spending

Estimates of visitors' daily expenditures were derived from survey results. These spending figures represent the expenses of those out-of-town visitors whose primary purpose was to attend the Louisiana Seafood Festival. Comparisons for aggregate figures for overnight and daytrip visitors are presented in ***Table 4.***

Table 4: Individual Daily Expenditures of Louisiana Seafood Festival Attendees

Response	2015 ($)	2016 ($)	2017 ($)
Restaurants/meals	56	65	102
Bars/night clubs	14	29	12
Recreation/entertainment	22	15	16
Shopping	11	27	32
Local transportation	6	6	15
Gambling	8	8	16
Lodging	15	28	45
Total	132	177	238

Based on these individual daily expenditures, estimates can be made of the total direct spending attributable to visitors who came to New Orleans for the Louisiana Seafood Festival. Total direct spending is determined for each expense category as the product of the visitors' average daily expenditure and the total number of out-of-town visitor days and nights. Secondary spending is based on the indirect and induced spending generated from direct spending. For every new dollar of direct spending, additional dollars of secondary spending are generated in the economy. Secondary spending is calculated as a proportion of direct spending using multipliers provided by the United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA).

Total Visitor Spending

The total visitor impact attributed to out-of-town attendees to the 2017 Louisiana Seafood Festival is determined as the sum of direct and secondary spending. Visitors who came to the New Orleans area for the event directly spent about $338,244 ***(Table 5),*** a substantial decrease from 2016 ($578,000). The largest category was for meals, followed by lodging and shopping ***(Figure 4).*** Based on their primary spending, out-of-town visitors generated another $265,438 in secondary spending, again decreased from $467,000 in 2016. Therefore, the total economic impact produced by visitors to the 2017 event was $603,682, a significant drop from $1.05 million in 2016.

Table 5: 2017 Louisiana Seafood Festival Visitor Spending

Response	Direct spending ($)	Secondary spending ($)	Total spending ($)
Restaurants/meals	142,221	114,260	256,481
Bars/night clubs	20,668	16,604	37,272
Recreation/entertainment	25,747	19,372	45,119
Shopping	48,341	37,218	85,559
Local transportation	15,501	17,345	32,846
Gambling	19,792	14,891	34,683
Lodging	65,975	45,747	111,723
Total	338,244	265,438	603,682

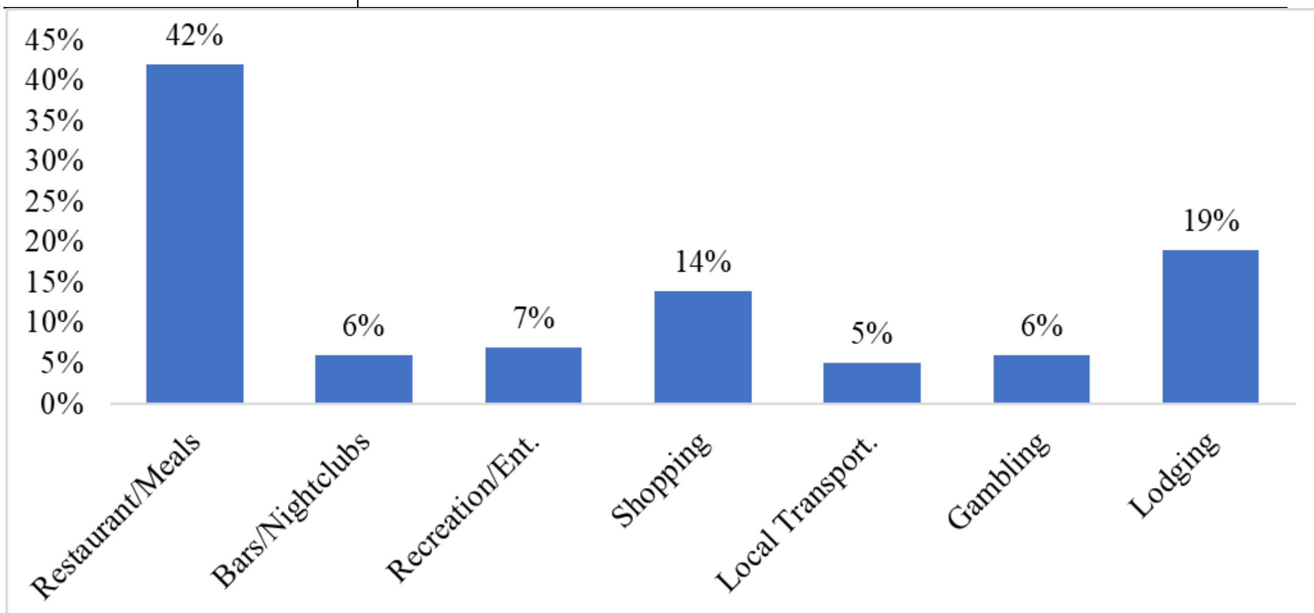

Figure 4: 2017 Proportion of Total Visitor Spending

Table 6 provides a comparison of the Festival's total spending over the three years. In addition, ***Figure 5*** includes a graphical representation of the growth rate of all factors influencing the economic impact. This growth rate is estimated using 2015 figures as a base point. In 2017, the total economic impact decreased 42% compared to 2016 estimates. Changes to the festival location and date caused a shift in the type of attendees. The drop was mainly caused by a decrease in the percentage of out-of-town visitors who were in the city primarily to attend the Louisiana Seafood Festival. The decrease in primary purpose attendees was balanced by increases in the proportion of non-residents, the average daily spending in the New Orleans area, and the slight increase in attendance. As a result, the total economic impact of the Louisiana Seafood Festival in 2017 was a fraction of that of 2016 and 2015.

Earnings and Employment

The direct spending created by visitors to the 2017 LSF also generated earnings or income in the economy. In total, the festival was responsible for generating nearly $175,000 of new earnings in the New Orleans metro area economy, a decrease of 42% over 2016 estimates ($301,000). Direct spending generated by visitors is also responsible for the creation or support of full-and part-time jobs in the economy. Similar to earnings, these jobs are part of different employment sectors, including non-tourism related industries. In total, the 2017 LSF was responsible for the creation or support of about seven full and part-time jobs in the New Orleans metro area economy, a decrease over 2016 estimates (12 jobs). It is important to note that some of these are not new jobs necessarily, but rather existing jobs which are supported by the spending generated by the event.

Table 6: Historical Total Spending (Millions)

Spending (Millions)	2015 ($)	2016 ($)	2017 ($)
Direct spending	0.92	0.58	0.34
Secondary spending	0.75	0.47	0.27
Total spending	1.67	1.05	0.60

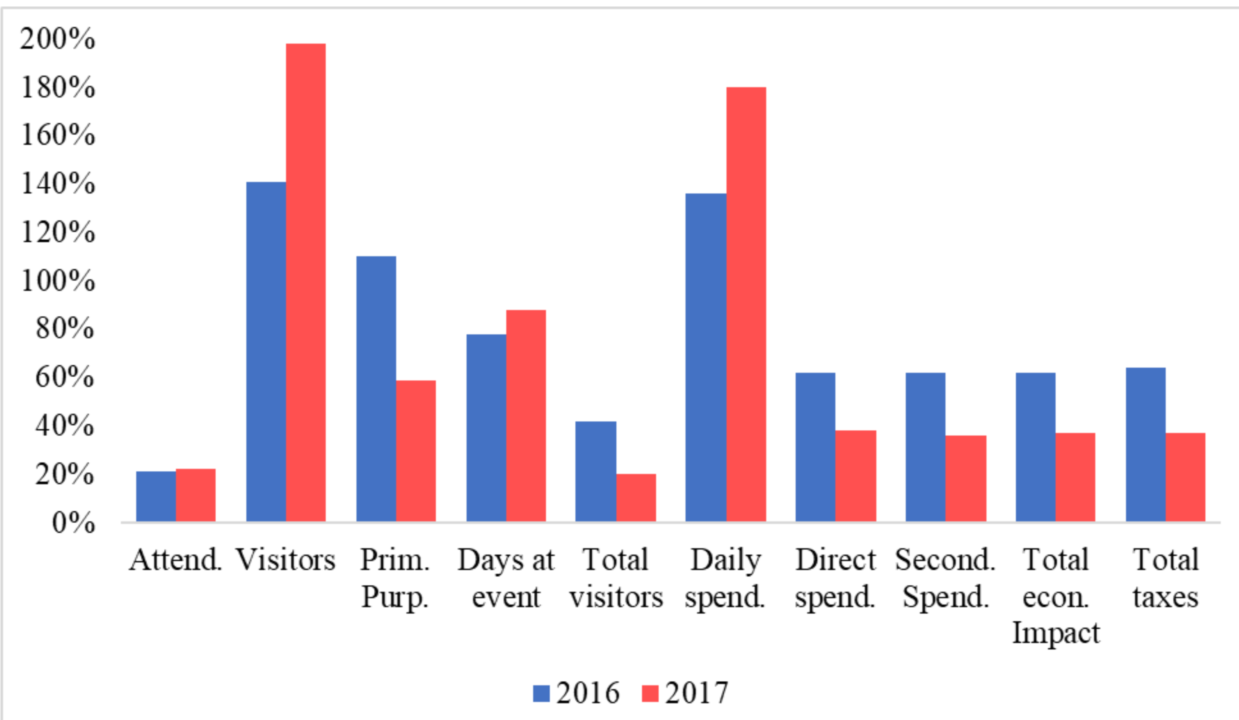

Figure 5: Economic Impact Variables

Tax Revenues

As a result of spending and employment in the New Orleans area created by the 2017 LSF, tax revenues were generated for state and local governments. In total, the state of Louisiana was expected to receive nearly $29,000 in tax revenue from the economic activity produced by the LSF, a decrease from the 2016 estimates ($51,000). In addition to state taxes, local governments in the New Orleans area will raise another $18,000 in tax revenue, a decrease of 47% over 2016 ($34,000). Total tax revenue is the sum of state and local revenues. In summary, the 2017 LSF generated a total of approximately $46,000 in government tax revenue *(Table 7).*

Governmental revenue decreased by about 45% from $86,000 in 2016 to $46,000 in 2017. Even though the total economic impact lagged compared to last year, the larger decrease in tax revenue reflects the changes in spending patterns among out-of-town visitors. Like total spending, the total revenue in 2017 was a fraction of the figures recorded in both 2016 and 2015 *(Table 8).*

Table 7: 2017 State and Local Tax Revenue

Government and tax	Total revenue ($)
State taxes	
Sales taxes	15,178
Hotel taxes	4,667
Excise taxes	2,078
Gambling taxes	4,255
Income taxes	2,604
Total state taxes	28,782
Local taxes	
Sales taxes	14,052
Hotel taxes	3,470
Total local taxes	17,522
Total governmental revenue	46,304

Table 8: Historical Total Taxes (Millions)

Government and Tax (Thousands)	2015	2016	2017
Total state tax revenue	$75	$51	$29
Total local tax revenue	$51	$34	$18
Total governmental revenue	$126	$85	$46

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The 2015 to 2017 LSFs made valuable contributions to the New Orleans metro area economy. In 2015, the festival attracted nearly 56,000 attendees and generated an economic impact of $1.7 million compared to over 12,000 attendees and a generated economic impact of $1.05 million in 2016 and over 12,600 attendees and a total economic impact of $604,000 in 2017. In

2015, this impact was comprised of $0.9 million in direct expenditures and $0.8 million in secondary expenditures compared to $578,000 in direct expenditures and $467,000 in secondary expenditures in 2016 and $338,000 direct expenditures and $265,000 secondary expenditures in 2017. Spending at the event resulted in the creation or support of nearly 20 full-and part-time jobs in 2015. These jobs were projected to create a total of $0.5 million in additional earnings for residents of the New Orleans area. In 2016, spending at the event resulted in the creation or support of about 12 full-and part-time jobs. These jobs were projected to create a total of $301,000 in additional earnings for residents of the New Orleans area. In 2017, spending at the festival resulted in the creation or support of 7 full-and part-time jobs, which further created a total of $175,000 in additional earnings for the New Orleans area.

In 2015, the festival generated a total of approximately $126,000 in tax revenue for state and local governments. Of that total, roughly $75,000 will go to the State of Louisiana, and nearly $51,000 will be claimed by local governments in the New Orleans area. In 2016, the festival generated a total of approximately $85,000 in tax revenue for state and local governments. Of that total, roughly $51,000 will go to the State of Louisiana, and nearly $34,000 will be claimed by local governments in the New Orleans area. While in 2017, the festival generated a total of approximately $46,000 in tax revenue for state and local governments. Roughly $29,000 will go to the State of Louisiana, and nearly $18,000 will be claimed by local governments in the New Orleans area.

The lessons learned from the LSF can assist more than just local festival planners in organizing successful events. Some recommendations for festival organizers in other markets include:

1) Understanding the impact of admission on the event. Many festivals are free for attendees, which requires the organizers to increase the amount of sponsorship to support the event. By implementing a fee for admission, the fess may impact the number of attendees, however, have a positive impact on the travel characteristics for the attendees.
2) Understanding the impact of weather on the event. When selecting an annual date for a festival event, organizers need to consider weather patterns from previous years as well as the seasonality of the location. Understanding the unique weather patterns in a local community will allow for less impact of weather on the event.
3) Understanding the impact of a well-designed marketing plan on the event. Many local festivals have a very aggressive grass roots marketing plan to attract local visitors. However, a festival attracts outside visitors who contribute to the economic impact of the event on a city or destination, the marketing plan needs to have a two- pronged approach. The first approach is grassroots based to develop a local following. At the same time, organizers need to select media outlets to attract targeted outside visitors. This two-pronged approach will ensure the success of the event.

In conclusion, the 2015 LSF had a greater economic impact in tax revenue and total impact spending, however, the 2016 and 2017 LSF had a larger impact in visitor profile travel and event characteristics. The significant difference in attendance from 2015 to 2016 and 2017 may be contributed to weather (rain in 2016) and paid admission in 2016 and 2017. A deeper analysis of the impact of ticket admission versus free admission on the current festival and other festivals may provide additional explanation. Additional research is warranted to garner deeper understanding into the impact of festivals on a local community's economy. The current research along with future research will increase literature in both the academic and practitioner realm.

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