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# Competitiveness of Istanbul as A Tourism Destination for Luxury Market

Ozen Kırant Yozcu[1]

**Abstract**
This study aims to evaluate concept of luxury within the tourism destination competitiveness framework. In today's world, where tough competition is prevalent, tourism destination competitiveness bears enormous significance to increase market share. In parallel, luxury is increasingly important and which has been referred to in various tourism fairs held throughout 2016.The study tries to weave together these two concepts; that is the conception of luxury with the idea of destination competitiveness (and the determining factors that it embodies).Through this combination, the study has generated a questionnaire for the evaluation of Istanbul as a luxury tourism destination. The results indicate that although Istanbul rates high in terms of endowed resources, created resources and demand, its competitiveness stands low in terms of situational conditions, supporting factors and tourism destination management. The results also help identify weak links such as security issues, political structure, and destination management, and help encourage the sector to analyze these issues that would eventually contribute to the increased competitiveness of Istanbul as a luxury destination.

**Keywords:** Luxury Management, Tourism Destination Management, Istanbul

## Introduction

In today's saturated markets where competitiveness is harshly experienced, one of the most difficult and principal tasks fulfilled by sector managers is that of preserving and sustaining tourism destination competitiveness. The power of competitiveness posed by a tourism destination increases by the extent to which all of its alternative tourism products and attractiveness are conveyed to potential markets in detail.

The main purpose of this study is, first of all, to analyze and inquire on the conception of luxury within destination management with direct reference to destination competitiveness. Reports from the tourism sector indicate that the market shares of luxury brands are expected to rise. Because of the recent increase in luxury brands' investments in this city, Istanbul is chosen as the domain of the study. Various aspects of destination competitiveness have been studied in the literature, but without reference to a holistic perspective focusing on the conception of luxury. So this study tries to examine the relative importance of luxury drivers in the evaluation of tourism destination competitiveness.

In the literature review, the concept of luxury management and a definition of luxury are provide together with the factors that determine what luxury is and what it is not. In examining the topic of destination competitiveness this study follows the model developed by Dwyer and Kim (2003), taking a perspective of Istanbul as a luxury destination. A descriptive analysis of the results provides an indication concerning the factors that are the most important in determining the competitiveness of Istanbul as a luxury tourism destination.

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**Literature Review**

Deriving from the Latin root "luxus", the concept of luxury has a variety of meanings. Throughout the history of humanity, luxury consumption has existed in different ways, and just like in modern societies, it has had an important role in Ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome (Berry, 1994). In terms of contemporary marketing, luxury describes a special layer in almost all categories of services and products. (Dubois et al., 2005:115).

Luxury has become a frequently used word in our daily lives. It has been estimated that by 2020, the luxury market will grow by 3-4%, and its total income will reach 280 billion Euros (D'Arpizio et al., 2016). There are two reasons behind this growth. Firstly, many brands are aware of the fact that luxury positioning directly influences the competitiveness of the brand. Secondly, when most of the consumers hear about or think of these products, services and experiences, they directly associate them with the trait of being luxury, thus they develop a positive attitude towards the brand (Chevalier & Mazzalovo, 2012).

When term luxury is considered, many definitions arise, including that of Langer and Heil (2013), according to whom, luxury is an element that possesses the qualities of being hedonistic, rare, difficult to obtain and use, of strengthening the social status and of making people go through a unique experience. The key terms associated with luxury are: price, rarity, exclusivity, perfection, history, art, time and dreams (Kapferer & Bastien, 2015: 85).

Wiedmann and Henning (2013), make the definition of luxury with reference to six different approaches: In the first approach, "luxury" is perceived as including inaccessible services, products and experiences; e.g. special jet planes, private islands allocated to single persons, yachts, etc. The second approach defines luxury as "my personal luxury", and in contrast to the above-mentioned approach, evokes not always a product but usually a moment or experience that is truly sincere in nature. For instance, for a businessman that works extremely hard, taking a short vacation break in an exotic destination is luxury. Thirdly, "luxury" is a highly subjective concept. The concept of subjectivity implies the absence of obligation, and includes high price, prestige, status, personal connections, high quality and a hedonistic experience regardless of performance. Fourthly, "luxury sector" indicates the brands and companies that are considered by their peers as manufacturing and marketing luxury products or services. Whether the consumers find a specific brand a luxury or not, is not significant at this point. What is important is whether the brand is accepted as a luxury brand by other companies, as well. For instance, the perception aroused by the brand Armani may change from consumer to consumer. However, the Colbert Committee in France admits that it is a luxury brand. The fifth approach takes luxury within the framework of Luxury Market, and the sixth approach views it as a Luxury Strategy.

When another definition of luxury is taken into consideration, it may be seen that luxury is analyzed at three levels (Chevalier & Mazzalovo, 2012): *Inaccessible luxury* may include handicrafts or models uniquely manufactured for specific users within a single unit. An example is Rolls Royce cars. *Intermediary luxury* refers to the expensive imitations of individual models. For example, although haute-couture dresses may be classified under the title of inaccessible luxury, their imitations are included in this category. *Accessible Luxury* is used to mention all the products manufactured in plants and ateliers in large numbers or masses, such as perfumes, shoes, etc.

Langer and Heil (2013) have listed the following arguments as a starting point to better grasp some significant viewpoints concerning the literature on the concept of luxury. First of all, luxury has hedonistic and appealing functions, which find their roots in the creation of taste and tolerance. Luxury adds facility, comfort and unique experiences to our lives. Luxury establishes contact among individuals and elite social groups. Luxury is related to income and culture, and is therefore equal to the social status within the society. Luxury is regarded as a need for the obligatory continuation of luxury, and is in fact desired. The perception of luxury is influenced by interrelated dimensions such as quality, very high prices, shortage, aesthetics, material, history, etc.

While studying luxury, in order to create a perception of luxury, the existence of certain traits is necessary to identify which products or services are perceived as luxury and what differences a luxury item should have compared to a normal item. These traits are explained as the factors defining luxury. These factors may stand as the preconditions of luxury or may be related to the effects that luxury creates. Moreover, an important precondition while making the right strategies for luxury marketing is a better understanding of certain luxury drivers that shape companies' strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Starting from this point of view, Langer and Heil (2013), studied luxury drivers in four dimensions. First one is product related dimension and it is divided into three categories such as, quality and aesthetics, the purchase situation, consumption situation of luxury. Second one is the socially related dimension that is related to cultural and social frame. Third one is segment related dimension refers to consumer segments. Last one is related to awareness and equity pertains to product and brand awareness.

In addition to the factors that define what luxury is, one question remains to be answered: what is the perspective on which, luxury should be based. Langer and Heil (2013) refer to the requirement of certain traits to maintain a perspective of luxury, that include qualities such as being unique, difficult to find, overly expensive, special, attractive and rare.

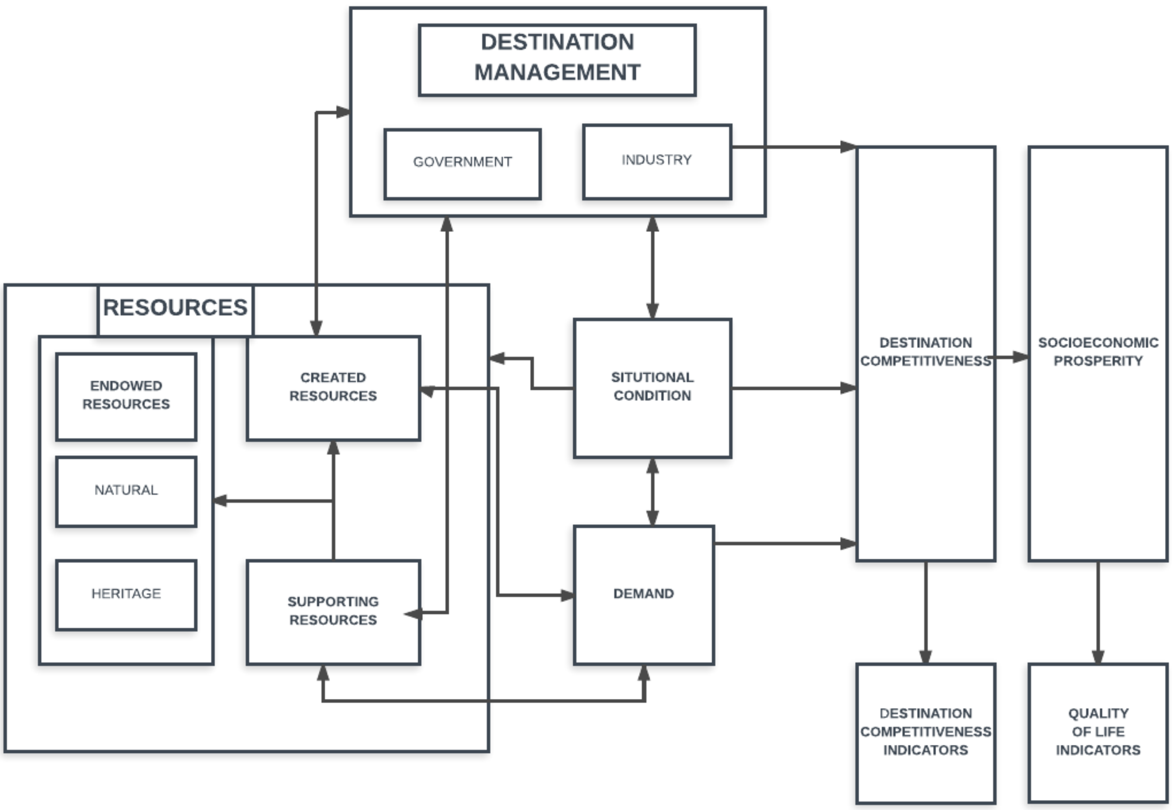
Despite an increasing number of articles on the topic of luxury consumption, there is a scarce research that is specifically focused on luxury in tourism destination. Due to the rising significance of the concept of luxury in the marketing of destinations, and social media coverage of the destinations by the consumers who frequent these places, this study attempts to analyze the concepts of luxury and tourism destination competitiveness together. Luxury consumption is increasing in volume; luxury accommodation services and luxury destination tourism are among the services that increase luxury consumption (Karamehmet & Aydın, 2015). The 2015-2016 ITB World Travel Trends Report also indicates the fact that the market share of luxury is predicted to rise, especially in the field of hotel management (ITB Report, 2016:6).

Despite the extant literature on destination competitiveness, the integration of luxury destination characteristics has been neglected. The model argued by Dwyer and Kim (2003), a model formerly implemented in the literature, has been chosen as the basic framework of this study, only to be applied with the perspective of luxury destination. This model, has also been empirically implemented in Korea and Australia (in 2001) and in (2004) and its methodology was applied to evaluate the tourism competitiveness of Slovenia (Gomezelj & Mihalic, 2008:295). It has therefore been used in this study for the case of Istanbul.

The power of competitiveness posed by various destinations is connected to the idea that certain experiences and services, which are considered significant by tourists within that specific destination, are offered to the tourists in a better way when compared to the ones offered in other destinations (Dwyer & Kim, 2003). Competitiveness is also defined as the capability of a destination to preserve its status within the market and to ensure its own development in a certain period of time (D'Hauteserre, 2000). In addition, competitiveness also expresses the ability of the destination to maintain its status against the competitors in the market, and to generate products that enrich its value with the purpose of preserving the sustainability of its resources (Hassan, 2000). Tourism destination competitiveness, on the other hand, is a broader term that includes the quality factors that determine price differences, efficiency levels of certain variables in the tourism sector and the attractiveness of the tourism destination (Dwyer et al., 2000:9). There are also environmental, economic, social, cultural, political and technological dimensions of tourism destination competitiveness. (Richie & Crouch, 2003: 2)

Numerous academics have studied tourism destination competitiveness and have thus provided various data on the subject, for example Richie and Crouch (1993), Keyser and Vanhove (1994), Evans and Johnson (1995), Hassan (2000), Kozak (2001), Mihalic (2000). For instance, Mihalic (2000) has studied destination competitiveness using an original perspective based on environmental factors and outcomes.
Many other studies that offer different perspectives have been carried out on the subject. For instance, Chacko (1998) has studied the issue focusing on destination positioning, whereas Buhalis (2000) gave primary importance to destination marketing and Dwyer et al. (2000) to price competitiveness (Crouch, 2010: 2). Kozak and Rimmington (1999) have offered both a qualitative and a quantitative perspective while analyzing destination competitiveness, with an emphasis on the number of tourists and the growth of tourism incomes in terms of quantitative factors, and on the classification of tourists' likes and dislikes in terms of qualitative ones. They have also listed the factors leading to the most positive results for the case of Turkey. In a similar manner, Kayar and Kozak (2010) have identified 13 factors that affect tourism destination competitiveness and have compared the competitiveness of Turkey and EU Countries.
In addition to the studies carried out on the subject, a variety of argumentations providing models and theories on destination competitiveness have also been made. An example is that of Richie and Crouch (2003), who offered the latest version of a conceptual model related to destination competitiveness. This model consists of 5 main groups and identifies a total of 36 symbols for destination competitiveness (Crouch, 2010:2). The groups are as follows: Destination policy, planning and development, Destination Management, Core Resources and Attractions, Supporting factors and resources, Qualifying and Amplifying Determinants. The latest version of the model developed by Dwyer and Kim (2003) is studied as follows:

**Figure 1:** Main Elements of Destination Competitiveness




**Source:** Dwyer and Kim (2003: 378)

As displayed in Figure 1, the model stands as a combination of the academic studies mentioned above, especially that of Richie and Crouch (1993, 2000), but also bears significant differences in some vital aspects. For instance, in the model suggested here, “demand" is regarded as a determining factor and plays a critical role in decision-making in destination competitiveness. Furthermore, the competitive power of a specific destination is not the final phase in the process of the development of national policies but more of a tool used for improving the socio-economic wealth of societies (Dwyer & Kim, 2003).

Dwyer and Kim (2003) categorize the resources into two groups: ***Endowed resources*** and ***Created resources***. ***Endowed resources*** are the resources used by members of the society and are classified into two groups. The first one is Natural Resources such as lakes, beaches, facilities posed by the climate, etc., whereas the second ones are Cultural and Heritage resources, including handicrafts, traditions, cuisine, etc. ***Created resources*** contain tourism infrastructures, shopping centers, theme parks, special events, etc. In the model presented here, ***Supporting resources*** include factors such as accessibility in destination, accommodation services and service quality. ***Endowed and Created Resources*** are each allocated their own box, as is ***Supporting Resources.*** The other categories included in the model developed by Dwyer and Kim (2003) is the following: ***Situational Conditions:*** The location of the destination, price competition, security, microenvironment and global (macro) environment. ***Destination Management:*** Destination Management companies, destination marketing management, planning and development, human resources management, environmental management.

This study adapted from the model of Dwyer and Kim (2003) and Langer and Heil (2013) to luxury destination competitiveness. Table 1 given below shows possible integration of both model. Luxury drivers which are related to product and experience, social, segmentation and awareness and equity have been tried to match each factor of endowed resources, created resources, supporting factors, situational factors, demand and destination management factors of the model.

**Table 1:** Integration of Luxury Drivers and Destination Competitiveness Factors

| Luxury Drivers | Factors of Destination Competitiveness |
|---|---|
| Product and experience related to:<br>• Quality and aesthetics.<br>• The purchase situation of a luxury.<br>• The consumption situation of a luxury. | Artistic and architectural features<br>Heritage sites and Museums<br>Cleanliness<br>Traditional arts & handicrafts<br>Attractiveness of climate for tourism<br>Unspoiled nature<br>Amusement/ Theme Parks<br>Nightlife<br>Airport efficiency / quality<br>Local tourism transportation efficiency/ quality<br>Quality of shopping facilities<br>Special events/festivals<br>Conference/congress/ business events<br>Gambling possibilities<br>Air ticket prices from major origin markets<br>Accommodation prices<br>Developing and promoting new tourism product |

*Table continued on the next page*

| | |
|---|---|
| Socially related: Luxury drivers are related to the cultural and social frame. | Tourist guidance and information<br>Government co-operation in development of tourism policy<br>Public sector recognition of important of sustainable tourism development |
| Segment related: Luxury drivers are related to consumer segments. | Diversity of shopping experience<br>Food service establishments variety / quality<br>Accommodation variety/ quality<br>Variety of Cuisine<br>Health/ medical facilities to serve tourists<br>Destination has clear policies in social tourism (disabled, aged) |
| Awareness and equity related<br>Luxury drivers are related to product and brand awareness. | Financial institutions and currency exchange facilities<br>Telecommunication systems for tourists<br>Accessibility of destination<br>Political stability<br>Security /safety<br>Price of destination relative to other competing destinations<br>International awareness of destination<br>Overall destination image<br>Level of co-operation (eg. Strategic alliances) between firms<br>Development of effective destination branding<br>Destination vision reflecting community values<br>Educational structure/profile of employees in tourism<br>Destination vision reflecting tourist values |

**Research Methodology**

Based on the above discussions, the survey has been developed by using some questions from the research of Dwyer and Kim (2003) that could be a destination competitiveness factor in luxury drivers. The reason why Istanbul has been chosen as a case in this study, is the cultural structure of Istanbul, in addition to the fact that it embodies a wide range of world-famous luxury hotel brands, the existence of luxury restaurant brands playing significant roles in food and beverage sector, and its being frequented by celebrities known worldwide, who especially visit Istanbul upon their arrival to Turkey. Also, Cetin and Walls (2016) have stated that the accommodation industry in Istanbul is becoming world famous for the ambiance and service attributes it offers. Many hotels in Istanbul have been awarded by travel magazines and travel organizations and therefore, analyzing luxury hotels in Istanbul can be considered relevant. At this point, a specific question inevitably comes to mind: "To what extent does the luxury perspective bear significance on the destination competitiveness of Istanbul?"

***Data Collection***
With the purpose of finding an answer to the question mentioned above, first of all, travel agencies and/or destination marketing companies that promote Istanbul in international markets and platforms were searched and inquired. The club named "Lux in Turkey", the initial and primary establishment in the field of luxury tourism in Turkey, was contacted. The enclosed meeting held by the Club in February 2016 was attended by the researchers with this purpose in mind. This event included the participation of 130 international tourism sales and marketing agency executives with special expertise in luxury. A survey was administered to the event attendees during this two days event. The questions were prepared in English, since the majority of participants had an international background. These questions were delivered through a survey and administered face to face. A total of 37 valid questionnaires (30% of attendees) were collected.

***Data Analysis***
The data collected from the questionnaire results was analyzed by using SPSS. The first part of the questionnaire consisted of a total of 39 questions based on a Likert scale (5 being very high competitiveness, 1 being very low competitiveness). While interpreting the phrases in the questionnaire, the participants (executives from the tourism sector) regarded Istanbul as a luxury destination in terms of its competitiveness. Although all participants had already been working in luxury tourism, before they began answering the questions, they were asked to read the above-mentioned definition put forth by Langer and Heil (2013): "luxury is an element that possess the qualities of being hedonistic, rare, difficult to obtain and use, and of strengthening the social status and making one go through a unique experience". The demographical qualities enquired in the questionnaire were age, gender, educational status, position at work, and the length of time spent working in the tourism sector.

**Results and Discussions**
The reliability of the measure used in this study was determined by the calculation of the Cronbach Alfa (α) coefficient. Overall the reliability of the scale was high (α=0, 95).
The assessment of the demographical part of the research indicates that the 67,2% of the participants were female and 32,4% was male. 82, 4% of the participants was made up of undergraduates, whereas 11,8% had their master or PhD degrees. 89,7% was in managing positions in the travel industry whereas 10,3% was employees in the tourism sector. The participants have worked in the tourism sector for an average of 15 years.
In the questionnaire, the questions being asked on destination competitiveness were categorized in groups, therefore providing the opportunity to make descriptive analyses. The groups in the research, following Dwyer and Kim (2003), were titled as Endowed Resources, Created resources, Supporting Resources, Situational Conditions, Demand and Destination Management. The results of the analyses carried out for each group are explained in the following tables.

**Table 2:** Endowed Resources

| | **Mean[1]** | **Std. Deviation** |
|---|---|---|
| Artistic & Arch | 4.42 | .554 |
| Heritage & Museums | 4.65 | .538 |
| Cleanliness | 3.58 | .841 |
| Traditional arts & Handicrafts | 4.33 | .676 |
| Attractiveness of Climate | 4.24 | .723 |
| Unspoiled Nature | 3.50 | 1.02 |
| **Endowed Resources[2]** | 4.14 | .477 |

[1] 1=very low competitiveness; 5= very high competitiveness,[2] Mean is calculated with 6 variables.

As indicated in Table 2, a detailed analysis of the competitiveness of Istanbul with a perspective of luxury will lead to the result that the highest endowed value is made up of heritage and museums that belong to this destination. Artistic, architectural factors and the effect of climate also play a significant role. Nevertheless, the fact that the proportion of unspoiled nature has rated the lowest is also intriguing. When the general assessment of endowed resources is taken into consideration, it may be concluded that the competitiveness is high, with a rate of 4.14, in the overall competitiveness of Istanbul, viewed from the perspective of luxury.

**Table 3:** Created Resources

| | **Mean[1]** | **Std. Deviation** |
|---|---|---|
| Amusement/theme parks | 3.06 | 1.105 |
| Nightlife | 4.14 | .713 |
| Airport efficiency/ quality | 3.95 | .815 |
| Local tourism transportation efficiency/ | 3.94 | .826 |
| quality | 4.39 | .688 |
| Diversity of shopping experience | 4.29 | .667 |
| Quality of shopping facilities | 4.06 | .649 |
| Special events//festivals | 4.09 | .742 |
| Conference/congress/business events | 4.31 | .624 |
| Tourist guidance and information | 4.46 | .605 |
| Food service establishments | 4.70 | .463 |
| variety/quality | 2.96 | 1.224 |
| Accommodation variety/quality | 4.31 | .668 |
| Gambling possibilities | 4.09 | .519 |
| Variety of cuisine | | |
| **Created resources[2]** | | |

[1] 1=very low competitiveness 5= very high competitiveness,[2] Mean is calculated with 13 variables.

Regarding the competitiveness of Istanbul through a perspective of luxury, the highest rate is the variety and the quality of accommodation facilities. This rate was followed by the success of food services, shopping facilities and nightlife. At this point, it is clear that the main goal of this study and the drive it is based on are supported by the results. Lack of theme parks has also been mentioned by sector professional during the study. In addition, insufficiency of airports and public transportation has also been emphasized. The two questions inquiring both issues have been assessed on a scale lower than 4. Also gambling possibilities have been commented inadequate as gambling is restricted in Turkey. As the created resources are assessed and Istanbul’s competitiveness is viewed through the lens of luxury, the results show that competitiveness is high, with a rate of 4.09.

**Table 4:** Supporting Resources

| | **Mean[1]** | **St. Deviation** |
|---|---|---|
| Health/medical facilities | 3.97 | .850 |
| Financial institutions& currency exchange | 3.82 | .834 |
| Telecommunication systems | 3.89 | .900 |
| Accessibility of destination | 4.36 | .683 |
| Security/safety | 3.47 | 1.05 |
| **Supporting resources[2]** | 3.87 | .667 |

[1] 1=very low competitiveness 5= very high competitiveness [2] Mean is calculated with 5 variables

As for the Supporting Resources examined in Table 4, the accessibility of the destination has been assessed as the highest. Although security rates the lowest (with a rate of 3.87), upon the assessment of the supporting resources as a whole, it would be concluded that it only rates a bit lower than the other factors affecting Istanbul's competitiveness evaluated through the perspective of luxury.

**Table 5:** Demand Conditions

| | **Mean**[1] | **St. Deviation** |
|---|---|---|
| International awareness of destination | 4.22 | .866 |
| Overall destination image | 4.22 | .898 |
| **Demand conditions**[2] | 4.21 | .803 |

[1] 1=very low competitiveness 5= very high competitiveness, [2] Mean is calculated with 2 variables

As for awareness of the destination and its image (which are the prerequisites of demand) indicated in Table 5, the general rate is more than 4. The results gathered from the sector professionals have indicated that Istanbul is perceived as a luxury destination and as a destination carrying the image of being a luxury destination.

**Table 6:** Situational Conditions

| | **Mean**[1] | **St. Deviation** |
|---|---|---|
| Political stability | 3.29 | 1.100 |
| Air ticket prices | 4.14 | .762 |
| Accommodation prices | 3.94 | .791 |
| Price of destination relative to other competitors | 4.11 | .820 |
| **Situational conditions**[2] | 3.87 | .671 |

[1] 1=very low competitiveness 5= very high competitiveness,[2] Mean is calculated with 4 variables

Table 6 displays the assessment of situational conditions for the competitiveness of Istanbul, and the results illustrate that political stability rates the lowest. However, when the pricing in Istanbul is assessed, Istanbul rates high in competitiveness in terms of prices, compared to its competitors such as Italy, France, Dubai and Spain. These competitors have also been asked by open-ended questions in the survey. In a thorough analysis of situational conditions as a whole, the results indicate that the competitiveness of Istanbul rates lower than other groups with an average of 3.87, again with a perspective of luxury.

**Table 7:** Destination Management

| | **Mean**[1] | **St. Deviation** |
|---|---|---|
| Government co-operation in development of tourism | 3.72 | 1.054 |
| policy | 3.82 | .917 |
| Public sector recognition of importance of sustainable | | |
| tourism development | 3.56 | .914 |
| Destination has clear policies in social tourism | 3.93 | .998 |
| Level of co-operation between firms | 4.09 | .588 |
| Development of effective destination branding | 4.26 | .666 |
| Developing and promoting new tourism product | 4.00 | .756 |
| Destination vision reflecting community values | 3.97 | .605 |
| Educational structure/profile of employees | 4.18 | .635 |
| Destination vision reflecting tourist values | 3.93 | .630 |
| **Destination management** [2] | | |

[1] 1=very low competitiveness 5= very high competitiveness, [2] Mean is calculated with 9 variables

In terms of destination management, Table 7 illustrates that sector professionals have evaluated Istanbul with a rate below 4. They have particularly responded to the phrase "Istanbul has clear policies in social tourism" on the lowest scale. This, in fact, is evidence indicating that the tourism policies of the sector are being closely followed by foreign markets.

**Conclusion**

In order to grasp the notion of tourism destination competitiveness in the best possible way, all the factors having an effect on competitiveness should be taken into consideration. Although scholars have long been categorizing a variety of fields among factors affecting competitiveness, luxury as a factor affecting competitiveness has been neglected. It should be noted that this study does not approach the issue focusing on luxury consumers. The main element in the study that distinguishes it from other academic studies is the fact that specific executives of tourism agencies, who engage in the sales and marketing of Turkey -primarily Istanbul- in foreign markets, have assessed the competitiveness of Istanbul as a tourism destination seen through the perspective of luxury. Therefore, the results of the survey also bear major significance for WTM (World Travel Market) 2030 Global Trends Report, as it runs parallel to the trend implying that the interest in luxury is here to stay (World Travel Market, 2016:41).

When the competitiveness of Istanbul is closely examined, it may be concluded that the city's cultural heritage, historic monuments and museums are vitally important. Istanbul is an attraction for tourists with its hotels, cuisine, and food service quality and services it offers. In addition to these nightlife is charming. Shopping centers and shopping malls that embody worldwide brands especially on the increase in recent years, have also affected competitiveness of Istanbul positively. Festivals and concerts have also made the city more attractive in foreign markets. Attractiveness of climate also means luxury especially for Russian market. Istanbul has been determined accessible and air tickets prices are capable to compete with other competitors. The perception of Istanbul as a luxury destination, and its having a luxury image, has also been mentioned by the sector executives who took part in the study. Nevertheless, some critical issues, which arose from the study, need to be discussed. These are; the quality and efficiency of Istanbul's airports (and the contrast they create when compared to the luxury image that the city has), security issues, protection of the environment and cleanliness. Turkey's political stability has been tracked by foreign market critically and our political stability should be considered with perception management. Like political stability, destination management factors should be taken into consideration with the perspective of brand management.

In conclusion, Istanbul, taken as the first example while studying luxury destination competitiveness, was evaluated by sector professionals who utilize luxury as a marketing tool in foreign markets. This study can be a different perspective for evaluating tourism destination competitiveness. In this study, the luxury concept has been integrated in destination competitiveness for the first time in the literature. This is the first application of this model. It should be developed and applied to other destinations with structural characteristics.

The research was subjected to some limitations; Firstly, the questionnaire was carried out during the process of a business meeting. Secondly, the sector professionals coming from different countries upon an invitation to the event were asked to fill in the questionnaire form in their spare time or coffee breaks. The time restrictions during the coffee breaks and these professionals' general lack of spare time directly affected the size of the sample.

Further research could investigate hotels since they constitute a very important part of the tourism sector and stand as very attractive examples of luxury destinations. The same questionnaire may be administered to top managers of these hotels, this time focusing on aspects of hotel management.

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# Tourist Psychology and Sociology: A Case Study of Hoi An, Vietnam

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**Abstract**
Hoi An, Vietnam is one of the rising UNESCO World Heritage sites which is getting more popular with the rise of an interest in Asian cities as well as more receptive and positive attitudes of Vietnamese government. Although Hoi An proves to be attractive for tourists due to its ancient center, beaches, village life as well as the mountains and other heritage sites nearby, academic works on Hoi An's touristic transformation and potential future possibilities are rare. This article aims to fill this gap by analyzing Hoi An as a dynamic touristic site from the psychological and sociological points of view. Among the themes to be explored through such a conceptualization, tourist motivation, personality differences, tourist perceptions, tourist attitudes, the influence of reference groups and word of mouth over Hoi An tourists' behaviors, family tourism and social group-based tourism for Hoi An, cultural, subcultural and cross-cultural differences among Hoi An tourists and print, social media and in situ advertising about Hoi An would be highly prominent and practical. This case study concludes with a set of recommendations and future directions for Hoi An's tourism authorities and touristic enterprises.
**Keywords:** Hoi An, Vietnam, cultural heritage, and heritage tourism.

## Introduction

Hoi An, a UNESO world heritage site (since 1999) is one of Vietnam's tourism hotspots. Located in Central Vietnam, it is 20-25 km. to Danang which is the 3rd largest city of the country. The urban core of Hoi An consists of ancient wooden buildings that are constructed for residence, trade, congregation and religious purposes. The well-preserved ancient town attracts numerous tourists every year with multiple high seasons due to its mild climate. The town used to be a busy port, but due to the river silt, its significance eclipsed centuries ago. The riverside hosts a number of souvenir shops, cafes, restaurants and museums which are the main attractions of the urban core which is a no-traffic zone in particular time periods with cycling allowed. The town also offers more than an ancient town feeling, with its two beaches (Cua Dai where the luxury resorts are located and An Bang where hotel development is limited), village activities (cycling, fishing, farming etc. at Cam Thanh village area), its mountain (Marble Mountain which is full of temples, caves and scenic views of the beaches and nearby towns), its crafts villages (such as Thanh Ha pottery village which recently inaugurated a pottery museum), nearby heritage sites (such as My Son which was the ancient capital of Cham empire which was a Hindu kingdom much in resemblance with Khmer empire that built Angkor Wat), Cham island which is visited for its reefs although recently they are under threat from excessive tourism activity, Danang which hosts a Cham Museum and Vietnam's only Buddhist museum as well as beaches, mountains, an Asian theme park and panoramic bridges on Han River, and Hue which is another nearby city attracting tourists for cultural heritage as the historical imperial capital.

Historically speaking, Hoi An was considered to be a major port during Cham period and later it consisted of a port, a Chinese quarter and a Japanese quarter (Tunprawat, 2009). The Chinese quarter is what at present mostly constitutes the ancient urban core. The 17th century-built bridge pagoda connecting the Chinese quarter to Japanese quarter is another heritage from those

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heydays, and it is considered to be the symbol of modern Hoi An. It is a structure which simultaneously functions as a bridge and pagoda. It might be considered unique in that sense. The bridge pagoda image appears on Vietnamese banknotes.

Hoi An was the busiest port of Southeast Asia in 16th-18th centuries according to historians (Lockard, 2010). By 18th century however, its significance eclipsed due to Thu Bon River's siltation, as stated above and the maritime trade move to other nearby ports, especially Danang.[2] Currently, Hoi An images are some of the most common pictures in Vietnam tourism brochures (Cooper & Le, 2009). The urban core attracted not only tourists but also Vietnamese entrepreneurs from other cities. Some of the souvenir shops are run by non-Hoianese, while some of the souvenirs are supplied from elsewhere (Trinh, Ryan & Cave, 2014), which is hardly surprising considering Hoi An's openness to other cultures and trade and its historical significance as a meeting place for international maritime traders and world cultures.

In this paper, a number of consumer behavior conceptualizations such as tourists' perceptions and attitudes about Hoi An, tourists' personality differences with regard to Hoi An, the influence of reference groups and word of mouth with regard to travel decisions relevant for Hoi An and the relevance of family tourism and social group-based tourism for Hoi An as well as the relevance of cultural, subcultural and cross-cultural differences in this context, and finally advertising and in-print representations of Hoi An are explored by taking Hoi An as a case study deemed worthy of academic research. Although Hoi An appears to one of the emerging destinations for cultural tourists, tourism research on Hoi An is just a few, that is why this paper was supported by other sources of information as seen in the list of references. Case study analysis is the methodology of the research considering the lack of established academic literature on Hoi An. The aim of this research, in that sense is drawing researchers' attention to Hoi An for future research and supporting political decision makers of Hoi An with analyses and suggestions.

**Hoi An Tourists' Perceptions**

As to tourists' perceptions issues, the first point to consider could be tourists' comparisons. Competing cities and countries could be analyzed. Usually tourists compare expected value and the overall cost of a touristic visit to a particular city. Tourists' budgeting and the match or mismatch between perceived price and perceived value would be considered. In addition, overall price vs. piecemeal price could be a useful distinction. Ditto for travel costs vs. ground costs (ie costs incurred at destination). Another distinction that would be applicable is the cognitive anchors and reference prices (comparison with prices at hometown and other potential destinations).

Hoi An tourists usually visit the town for escape, relaxation motive and cultural interests. Its recognition as a UNESCO world heritage has multiplied the number of visitors in a short time which also led to increase in hospitality capacity and related services. In terms of service quality, intrinsic vs. extrinsic cues (ie features (not) attributed to the inherent qualities of Hoi An or service providers) and Hoi An's image vs. service provider's image and type image (e.g., resort, hostel, 3-star hotel, spa, restaurant etc.) could be considered. In that sense, Hoi An buzzwords to summarize the experience (e.g. memorable, relaxing, pleasing, pleasant, refreshing, satisfactory etc.) may be elaborated to tap tourists' perception. In fact, tourists' perception is strongly associated with the emotions evoked by the destination (Hosany & Prayag, 2013).

In terms of service providers, cost leaders vs. differentiators in Hoi An (e.g. cheap sidewalk restaurants and coffee shops, budget homestays, affordable shuttles etc. vs. luxury establishments, and others in the middle of the continuum) could be worth investigating. The

[2] It might be a surprise to see that Hoi An's maritime trade paved the way for the formation of an ancient urban core, while that was not the case for Danang which was a port of the modern times.

notion of price-sensitive consumers would be applicable in that sense. The high number of homestays which offer cheaper housing options as well as an insider experience to Vietnamese daily life, family and culture needs to be noted here.
Unlike some other heritage sites, Hoi An is predominantly a holiday destination. Although conferences, courses and team building activities do take place in Hoi An, they are the exception and not the norm.[3] This is an untapped potential for Hoi An residents to consider. Likewise, Hoi An's Phan Chu Trinh University (the only university of the town) can be more active and offer international degree programs to attract international students which may also boost and diversify Hoi An's tourism targeting. Although Hoi An presents excellent venues for conferences and teambuilding activities including a conference ship (a riverside ship-shaped building on the outskirts of the city) potentially interested parties are rarely aware of the facilities that Hoi An would offer. Tourists rarely visit Hoi An for business purposes and this might change with a comprehensive city-image-building campaign.
One of the opportunities matching weaknesses relies on the fact that there are no branded products with Hoi An name. For example, Hoi An ice creams brands could be successful like New Zealand ice creams or Trang Tien ice creams (Hanoi, Vietnam) with the added benefit of promoting the city for touristic purposes. The same idea could be explored for Hoi An tailors which are famous and maybe Hoi An sprays as well. More products could be added. As an example of successful place branding in Vietnam, Dalat wine, strawberry, pea etc. could be mentioned. Somewhat similar to this, although not formally branded is Phan Rang grapes. Convergingly, featured films could be shot at Hoi An as a way for potential visitors to get to know about Hoi An.

**Hoi An Tourists' Attitudes**

The notion of tourists' attitudes involves feeling positive vs. negative about Hoi An and about particular activities such as cooking and handicrafts (lantern making, wood making etc.) classes, swimming, cycling, diving etc. During-service and post-service attribution processes for negative and positive experiences with Hoi An could be relevant here. They can be generic (due to the city as a whole) vs. specific (due to the hotel, e.g. a noisy hotel due to construction). The specific attitude may be reflected in the following way: "I may visit Hoi An again, but I won't stay in this hotel again or in this part of the city."
A research study may be conducted to gather a list of vacation hotspot attributes that are important for the potential tourists (e.g. ease of travel, friendliness of residents, residents' positive attitudes towards tourists, nice weather and climate, attractions, activities, cleanliness, satisfactory accommodation options etc). Likewise, personal and non-personal impediments to traveling to Hoi An can be investigated. We can also focus on the difference between loyal tourists (visiting Hoi An multiple times) and distinctively loyal tourists (Visiting only Hoi An in Vietnam or Central Vietnam).

**Hoi An Tourists' Personality Differences**

Hoi An has a lot to offer for both introverted and extraverted tourists. For introverted tourists, more rustic and pastoral village life options as well as relatively quite beaches and resorts are among the options. Tourists who are not willing to be part of urban noise would be satisfied in Hoi An. For extraverted tourists, Hoi An has a busy center, although peak times need to be considered. The busiest time of the day in the ancient town is by the afternoon until 21:00 or 22:00 as the shops, cafes and restaurants are mostly closed by then. Let us note that the shop owners are usually residents of their shop houses which correspond to a very typical Southeast

[3] A notable exception was the convention to declare Hoi An protocols in 2000 which is the worldwide set of principles for cultural heritage management and conservation (cf. Taylor, 2004). Another exception was the Hoi An International Symposium on the Conservation of Cultural Heritage Sites and International Cooperation (2013) (ICOMOS, 2016).

Asian construction style which combines home and shop functions. By 21:00-22:00 the crowds move to the other side of the river where the enterprises provide services until late and a night market attracts a high number of tourists every night.

Variety and novelty seeking for first-timers and stability and loyalty for returning visitors would be the most relevant personality variables to analyze. Furthermore, the notion of symbolically extended self is applicable in this context. Hoi An as a relaxing tourism destination helps the visitors to feel better. It has the potential to mend fragile egos beleaguered by urban/metropolitan hecticity. Finally, from personality theory point of view, city personification would be an option for Hoi An to consider, as it might be instrumental in reaching greater audiences that might pay a visit to Hoi An.

**The Influence of Reference Groups and Word of Mouth over Hoi An Tourists' Behaviors**

Reference groups such as peer groups (Currie, Wesley & Sutherland, 2008) as well as friends, relatives and other travelers (i.e. the contributors to the relevant forums, social media channels and other websites that we don't personally know) (Murphy, Mascardo & Benckendorff, 2007) are effectively shaping tourists' decision making in terms of destination, travel, hotel, activities choices and related preferences. Relevant research provides evidence for the not surprising link between travel reviews on social media and online booking rates (Ye et al., 2011).

For the notion of reference groups and word of mouth, the influence of Tripadvisor website comments and use of Tripadvisor as the proof of high quality at a number of Hoi An restaurants could be mentioned. As stated earlier, Hoi An's recognition as a UNESCO world heritage site has proven to be particularly influential over the number of visitors. A preliminary search of "Hoi An" on the most relevant top social media sites such as Youtube and Tripadvisor provides full evidence for the influence of electronic word of mouth for Hoi An visits.

**Family Tourism and Social Group-based Tourism for Hoi An**

Age group and gender differences in tourist behavior would be the most relevant for the case study. Nuclear family vs. extended family is a reasonable distinction to consider. Ditto for family life cycle which roughly matches bachelors, honeymooners, newlyweds, parents, married with small children, large family and post-parenthood (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). The so-called 'nontraditional families' (e.g. childless couples, divorced single parents, nesters, lately married couples etc.) need to be considered as well. Furthermore, the differences in family values need to be kept in mind. While some cultures value family ties more than individual, it is the other way around for some other cultures. A pair of notions from urban planning and environmental psychology literature could be applicable as well. They are: child-friendly city and elderly-friendly city conceptualizations which are how Hoi An is perceived by many of the tourists.

**Cultural, Subcultural and Cross-cultural Differences among Hoi An Tourists**

Distinctions such as local vs. international tourists and Asian vs. non-Asian tourists are quite relevant. Lifestyle differences should be noted as well. The key question is: What to do on vacation on home country, and related to the former, what can be done in home country, but not in Hoi An and vice versa? E.g. There is no Western type fast food culture in Hoi An, though the notion of traditional fast food culture is applicable. Sidewalk restaurants as well as brick-and-mortar ones are serving traditional food very fast. There are no McDonalds, Burger King nor KFC. But a regional fast food chicken restaurant (5 Star) just opened. It mostly serves local teenagers but tourists' interest is limited. There is no shopping mall in Hoi An nor supermarket. But Western food is accessible. Thus the cultural differences are not only at abstract levels, but also at daily material levels. The notion of Asia's emerging middle class would be applicable as well for the analysis of Asian and local tourists. Another point to consider would be linguistic barriers between local residents and Anglophone as well as non-Anglophone visitors. The notion of touristic ethnocentrism (looking for an experience similar vs. different to/from what s/he could experience at hometown or home country) would be obviously worth discussing within this context.

**Print, Social Media and In Situ Advertising about Hoi An**

Hoi An ads on Hoi An-Danang road which is the main entry to Hoi An (20-25 km.) and at Danang Airport which is the international gateway to Hoi An) usually feature Hoi An tailors, but obviously more could be offered as tailors are not the metonymy that covers the pleasant experiences Hoi An would offer. In this context, comparative advertising that aims to convince the viewers that Hoi An is better than other holiday destinations may harm Hoi An's positive image and even backfire. Thus it is not recommended.

Different segments listed above can be targeted through advertisements. Visual materials matching satisfaction of different age groups, genders, countries, family life cycle, group size and touristic activities might be particularly appropriate.

**Hoi An on Western Newspapers**

In addition to consumer behavior considerations, we can also review the portrayal of Hoi An in Western newspapers. Britain's leading newspaper the Sun views Hoi An as a romantic destination and a food paradise. Affordability is also mentioned (Bennion-Pedley, 2016). No-traffic zone is especially preferred as well as Hoi An's tailors. Cycling around rice fields, agricultural activities and cooking classes were other attractions mentioned. The Guardian lists a beach house from Hoi An among "*top 100 holiday beach houses*" (Dunston, 2014). Another article on 'The Guardian' names Hoi An as the "*Venice of Asia*" (Kotting, 2005). However, the article also criticizes hassling by the peddlers. Considering the fact that more than a decade passed after this article, we can state that hassling problem has mostly been resolved in Hoi An, if not necessarily in other parts of Vietnam.

A reader of the Guardian presents Hoi An as a site of cultural holiday where one can be "*transported back to ancient time*" with its handicrafts and tailors (the Guardian, 2011). A few years back, the Guardian shared an excerpt from Lonely Planet Guides about "*the world's best street food*" (the Guardian, 2012). Hoi An's well known sandwich maker Banh My Phuong was among the listed. My Son was listed among "*five best hidden wonders*" (the Guardian, 2006). New York Times has an early piece about the consequences of tourism over Hoi An (Mydans, 1996). It is a significant article due to its timing. It is more about the future rather than the current situation. Hoi An was said to be lucky to survive the war undamaged. That was only partially the case for My Son, as it was bombed by American forces during the war. There were only 14 hotels in Hoi An in 1996, now in hundreds, not including homestay lodgings. La (2014) offers a portrait of the well-known French photographer Réhahn Croquevielle who lives and runs a restaurant and a guesthouse in Hoi An. In fact, he was conducive to promoting Hoi An through his Vietnamese portrait photographs. In another piece on Los Angeles Times, Danang is realistically presented as a surf city (Ives, 2011). Toronto Star, Canada's top newspaper in terms of circulation views Hoi An as a site where "*culture meets couture*" (Barnard, 2013). Another Toronto Star piece calls Hoi An a "*foodie mecca*", mentions cooking classes and tailors, and recommends "*shrimp-filled "white rose" dumpling*" (Toronto Star, 2013), while earlier pieces are on Hoi An tailors, lanterns, boat rides and five star hotels opening in nearby areas of Hoi An such as the coast from Danang to Hoi An (Cawley, 2009; Pigg, 2007). Hoi An's 'reincarnation' from a deserted port town to a touristic hotspot is mentioned. We see similar themes offered on Australian newspapers (e.g. Clayfield, 2016; Kurosawa, 2015). However we have a higher number of pieces about Hoi An on Australian newspapers which would be explained by its relative proximity to Vietnam compared to UK, US and Canada.

Overall, these portrayals show that Hoi An has a strongly positive image in Western media which will highly support the recommendations listed in the next section. However, more direct links with journalists and especially travel writers would be highly beneficial. Considering the popularity of Hoi An food, food and travel-themed TV stations may be invited for promotion.

**Recommendations and Future Directions**

Hoi An scores high on tourist retention as can be seen in Tripadvisor reviews on Hoi An. Tourists are willing to return. This is a positive point. Hoi An residents are successful in forming emotional bonds with the tourists, rather than transactional bonds which corresponds to one-time only, business-only attitude. Post-service experience, i.e. feelings and thoughts after return is higly positive.

Tourism always requires ingroups and outgroups. Tourist is a displaced person. His/her travels move him/her to locations that are not only different, but also populated with different people. The difference of these people can be at a city level (ie domestic travel) or at a country level (ie international travel). In other words, the tourist is not only exposed to a new land, but also new people. There are social psychological barriers to favor outgroups. It is cognitively less demanding to favor our ingroups, ie people who are similar to us. Thus a city that would like to draw attention of world tourists would be careful to build a social image of its residents which will broadcast the message that "yes we are different, yet we have qualities that you would find favorable." So far, Hoi An is successful in doing this.

Nearly 2 million visitors every year form a shifting but continuous minority of foreigners which leads to provision of many of the services that is the default in the high income countries. The population density of the foreigners in the urban core is quite high to claim that Hoi An has returned to the shining days of its history but of course with lots of changes and a greater audience from diverse backgrounds rather than Chinese and Japanese only. Although Hoi An residents reaped the benefits of tourism with a rise in income, job opportunities and better life standards, it is not true that traditions were preserved as they were, which is quite natural if one keeps in mind that culture and traditions are never frozen, they are dynamic and open to constant change. In that sense, we can call Hoi An as a 'living museum'; the heritage and the traditions are alive in new ways which appears as another positive point for Hoi An's touristic attractions. Tourism always brings change and change is not the antithesis of traditions but a companion to them. Thus the liveliness of Hoi An rather than the traditions would be a more appropriate spring board for Hoi An's promotion activities for touristic purposes.[4]

Place attachment (i.e. sense of belonging to a particular location) is a significant variable for heritage conservation and tourism (Hoang, Brown & Kim, 2015). That is why events not only targeting the visitors but the residents would be useful to forge a stronger local identity for the residents which will also boost tourism outcomes. The local governments' activities to revive the traditional culture such as performances and lantern-only nights every month are laudable in that sense and attractive for visitors as well as residents. More could be added to the list in that direction. In addition to reviving the traditions, it is necessary to revive the cosmopolitan pride of ancient Hoi An. Annually organized Vietnam-Japan Cultural Exchange Festival is a success in that sense.

Nearby attractions such as the Vegetable Village, a genuine authentic village where tourists can engage in agriculture and Silk Village, a traditional theme park featuring all stages of silk production process may be highlighted, and similar experiences may be capitalized on for promotion efforts. Related to this point, the new city development (Hoi An New City) at the entrance of the town (near An Bang Beach) need to be further discussed and analyzed in terms of its likely effects on Hoi An's touristic image.

Postcard images of Hoi An could be expanded to cover more than the Japanese pagoda bridge including the beach, Marble Mountain, Hoi An-Danang resort belt, the islands, the village life

[4] As a side note, the tourists find local market experience particularly fascinating, although the bad smell from the adjacent wet market is much complained, while that it is typical of any Vietnamese local market is noted.

etc., as it would be better if they would match the variety of touristic experiences Hoi An offers. The recent opening of the city museum and its terrace coffee shop are good news as the town needs a larger museum like the new one and a terrace to view the city. Since construction limits to vertical development of the urban core to protect the ancient fabric of the town are applicable, a terrace cafe such as the new one would fill a gap pointed out by some of the visitors.

Recently operational new bridge (Cau Cua Dai) which connects the town's beachs with the southern neighboring city which has an untapped potential with its kilometers of sand beaches needs to be analyzed carefully for future development. This new connection allows Hoi An to develop southward in addition to other directions and provides easier access for local tourists from Southern Vietnamese cities. The choice would be among Cua Dai style development (luxury resort developments that are not publicly accessible) and An Bang style development (full public access with a limited number of one- or two-floor buildings and keeping the green cover intact). The completion of the construction of Cam Kim Bridge should also be analyzed beforehand for its likely impact on tourism and economy as a result of ease of transportation.

Another future direction for Hoi An can be redevelopment as a medical tourism site, as it is a well-known destination for health-conscious tourists which are willing to spend their days for mental wellness and stress reduction. Some of the top international hospitals may be drawn to Hoi An's outer areas for health facility development. This will not only complement the wellness services that Hoi An provides, but it may also raise the quality of life for both local and international residents by allowing on-site access to high quality medical services. Currently, both groups need to visit hospitals in Danang for serious health problems. This direction may also increase the number of international people who are willing to retire in Hoi An.

Historically, it should be kept in mind that the shining port city lost its prominence due to a piecemeal natural intervention (silt formation making maritime trade impossible as stated earlier); and as contemporary natural interventions, the current erosion problem at the beach area and flooding problem at the urban core should be taken seriously. Thus, Hoi An Local Government's plans to transform Hoi An to an eco City by 2030 is valuable,[5] but it might be too late.

As a final note, it can be stated that the future development of Hoi An needs more research on the notion of experiential economy and ecologically responsible tourism with regard to the town, as Hoi An residents can reap the benefits of not only ancient urban positioning, but also a green destination designation.

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[5] For more details on Hoi An Eco City, see United Nations Industrial Development Organization, 2012.

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# The Effects of Job Stress and Perceived Organizational Support on Turnover Intentions of Hotel Employees

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**Abstract**
The intention of employees to leave their work negatively affects the service process in hotel businesses. Therefore, various managerial practices are being implemented to increase employees' intention to voluntary continue their work in the businesses. In this study, the effect of the perceived organizational support as a managerial practice and the job stress which is caused by the nature of the work on the intention of the employees to leave their work are examined. The universe of this research is employees who actively work in a 5-star hotel in July 2016, which are located in Izmir. 274 valid surveys were collected by the researchers. Multiple regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses which were developed based on the Social Exchange Theory. The analyses indicated that job stress and perceived organizational support are related to the employees' turnover intention. Moreover, it is determined that job stress increases the employees' voluntary turnover intention even though perceived organizational support reduces the turnover intention. Lastly, theoretical and managerial implications are discussed.

**Keywords:** Job Stress, Perceived Organizational Support, Turnover Intention, Hotel Management, Human Resource Management

## Introduction

High employee turnover rate is considered to be one of the most important problems of the hotel businesses which are continuing their activities in the tourism sector. It is essential to conserve and increase customer satisfaction and maintain qualified employees in the labour market in which it is hard to find employees. Therefore, identifying and abolishing the reasons of turnover intentions of the employees who haven't leave the job legally are among the tasks of the managers and are the topics of many researches.

In hotel businesses where customer-employee relations are intense, there is job stress on the employees depending on the structural characteristics of the work being done. Although it is not possible to eliminate entirely the job stress most of the time, employees who expose to high levels of job stress, can exhibit undesirable attitudes and behaviour towards the organization. This situation causes the employees who are limited with their performance in the organization to voluntarily leave their job, moreover it can also be negatively reflected in the employees' private lives.

Like every employee, employees working in hotel businesses also want to feel that they are valued and appreciated by their organizations. Employees who thinks that they are valued, perceive higher organizational support. According to the Social Exchange Theory, employees who have high perceptions of organizational support will reciprocate by making more contribution to the organization.

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The purpose of this empirical study on employees who are working in hotel businesses is to determine how job stress and perceived organizational support affects turnover intentions. In this context, after summarizing the literature on job stress, turnover intention and perceived organizational support, hypotheses were justified based on the Social Exchange Theory. Later, the hypotheses were tested by presenting the findings of the field research that were conducted in the 5-star hotel businesses operating in İzmir. In the conclusion section, the results of the findings were compared with the literature and the study was completed with the suggestions made for implication.

## Literature Review

### *Job Stress*

Today, expectations of the employees from the organization to carry out the work may exceed the authority and capacity of employees. This situation creates pressure on employees due to reasons related to work. This pressure is expressed as job stress in the literature of organizational behaviour (Mensah et al., 2016). Job stress is defined as a sense of inconsistency between demands from the business environment and individual capacities of the employees in order to fulfil these demands (Colligan & Higgins, 2003; Beheshtifar & Nazarian, 2013). According to European Commission (2002), job stress can be defined as an emotional, cognitive, behavioural structure that affect both the content of work and the organizations in a negative way and cause physiological reactions.

Besides affecting many tasks in the workplace, job stress is considered as one of the variables that affect employee performance. The employees' expectation from life is in accordance with the purpose of establishing a balance in work and personal life, increasing job satisfaction and reducing job stress. Therefore, job stress is being studied as one of the variables that affect the performance of employees in organizations (Christiana & Rajan, 2014). It has been determined in the researches that, job stress causes mental, behavioural and psychological problems and causes organizational problems in the workplace (Beheshtifar & Nazarian, 2013; Folera & Folerai, 2016) as well as stimulating working health problems to proceed and causes increase in mistakes made in organizations and speech problems and decrease of motivation and performance (Banerjee & Mehta, 2016; Folera & Folerai, 2016).

The physical effects of job stress on workers in the organization are occurred as unbalanced blood pressure, high cholesterol levels, muscle tension, diabetes, hypertension, ulcer, headache, substance dependence and clinical depression whereas psychological effects are depression, anxiety, pessimism and anger (Colligan & Higgins, 2003). The personality traits that individuals are influencing their ability to cope with stress and affect their behaviour against stressful situations. Furthermore, while job stress negatively affects employee satisfaction and self-esteem (Ekienabor, 2016; Yang et al., 2016), employees' perceptions of organizational support leads job stress to decrease (Turunç & Çelik, 2010; Lambert et al, 2016; Kang & Kang, 2016).

### *Turnover Intention*

Turnover intention is defined as the thought, frequency and power of the employees' thoughts about leaving their workplace (Tett & Meyer, 1993; Tongchaiprasit & Ariyabuddhiphongs, 2016). Aggravation of working conditions in organizations and expectation of working over capacity of the employees by their organizations, affect employees in a negative way. Hence, employees, who are unhappy and stressed in their organizations, intention to leave their work.

There are many factors that affect the intention to leave work in organizations. These factors arise because of the nature of the work that the employees do and the organizations which they are affiliated with. Conflicts in the organization, uncertainty, low job satisfaction (Kim et al., 2015), job stress that arise from work overload leads to increase on intention to leave the work (Chen et al., 2011). Moreover, emotional exhaustion, and organizational commitment (Cho, Rutherford, Friend, Hamwi, & Park, 2017), organizational prestige and organizational identification (Akgunduz & Bardakoglu, 2017), emotional intelligence (Hong, & Lee, 2016), quality of work life (Mosadeghrad et al., 2011), job stress (Duraisingam et al., 2009; Arshadi & Damiri, 2013; Jung, & Yoon, 2014; Chao et al., 2015), career development programs within the organization, HRM (human resources management) applications such as employee relationship management (Long et al., 2012), demographic characteristics (Güzel et al., 2011; Duraisingam et al., 2009) affect employees' turnover intentions.

***Perceived Organizational Support***

Perceived organizational support (POS) occurs as a result of evaluating various elements such as valuing employees by their own businesses, using the benefits of approval, respect, payment and promotion, and accessing the information needed to perform their business better (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). POS, which includes perceptions of employees' contributions to their businesses and their perception of welfare, is highly correlated with employees' organizational commitment (Kim et al., 2016) and is considered a precursor of organizational commitment (Rhoades et al., 2001).

POS has an experience-based nature that relates to the policies, norms and actions of the organizations (Eisenberger et al., 2001). Working in a supportive environment causes employees to be more willing to report their mistakes. Thus, they can reduce the occurrence of unsafe conditions that can result in a variety of costs (Baran et al., 2012). In addition to this, the belief that employees' contributions to their organizations are being assessed and importance is attached to their welfare by their organizations, reduces turnover intentions (Rhoades et al., 2001).

POS, correlate positively with the commitment and obligation to foster and deal with employees' organization (Eisenberger et al., 2001). Organizational commitment correlates negatively with voluntarily leaving work (Allen & Shanock, 2013). Furthermore, perceived managerial support also enhances perceived organizational support and reinforces obligation heard against the organization and emotional organizational commitment, thus reduces the intention of employees to leave work (Stinglhamber et al., 2002).

***Hypothesis Development***

The relationship between POS of hotel employees with turnover intentions can be explained by Social Exchange Theory. According to this theory, when hotel employees perceive that they are seen as valuable and are supported by their organizations, they will show desired behaviour such as keep working in the organization and increasing their performance. Consequently, employees who consider that they are valued and regarded by their organizations, they will be able to work in this organization in the future and their earnings will increase if they contribute to productivity, in other words who think that they are supported by their organizations, will also have less intention to leave the work voluntarily. The empirical researches (Anafarta, 2015, Ekmekçioğlu, & Sökmen, 2016, Akgunduz, & Sanli, 2017) also demonstrate this. Therefore, depending on both Social Exchange Theory and the empirical researches, perceived organization support is expected to decrease the turnover intention, thus H1 hypothesis was proposed.

*H1. Perceived organizational support decreases turnover intention of hotel employees.*

If the level of job stress of the employees is over the acceptable limits, this can cause the employees to confront physical, psychological and sociological problems and be unhappy. In the event of an organization that they working in or the job that they are performing is the source of stress, employees voluntarily move away from the organization and may want to get rid of the problems caused by stress. In the empirical research (Noor et al., 2008; Choi et al., 2013; Yenihan et al., 2014) it is suggested that stress increases turnover intention. H2 hypothesis is proposed because it is expected that job stress will increase employees' turnover

intentions due to the conducted empirical research and explanations.
*H2. Job stress increases turonver intention of hotel employees.*

## Method

### *Sample and data collection*

The sample of this research was employees working in 5-star business hotels in the centre of the city of Izmir in Turkey in 2016. There are 6 5-star business hotels in Izmir. During data collection, first we have contacted the human resources departments and a copy of the questionnaire was emailed to these departments. Four of the hotels accepted to participate in the study whereas five of the hotels declined. The research was conducted with these 4 5-star hotels. All employees regardless of their departments were included in the research; therefore, an convenience sampling method has been employed.
Researchers visited the hotels which volunteered to take part in the research and administered 286 questionnaires by face-to-face. 12 responses were deleted due to disqualification (n=4) or incompletion (n=8). After the elimination, 274 questionnaires were coded and analysed. 63% of the participants were male and 61% of them were single. A good majority of the participants (78%) had a high school or university degree and 66% of them were 36 years old and above. When their work experience was analysed, 76% of them had 5 years of experience or less and 34% of them were working at F&B (food and beverage) department.

### *Instrument development*

The questionnaire has 4 parts. The first part looks into the demographic information of participants (age, gender, marital status, education and department). The second part includes the Perceived Organization Support Scale. The scale was developed by Eisenberger et al. (1986). The third part includes the Job Stress Scale. This scale was developed by House and Rizzo (1972). The last part includes the Turnover Intention Scale. The scale was developed by Wayne et al. (1997). All the constructs were measured by a five-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” All questionnaire items are shown in Table 1.

## Results

In order to test the hypothesis of the research, primarily the reliability levels of the scales that are utilised within the scope of the research were determined. In this context, explanatory factor analysis was performed and Cronbach Alpha values were determined. When explanatory factor analysis is performed, it is assumed that the eigenvalue is greater than 1, factor loads are more than 0.30, the load difference between the adjacent items is more than 0.10, and each factor consists of at least 3 items. The explanatory factor analysis and reliability values of perceived organizational support, job stress and job satisfaction scales are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Results of Validity and Reliability Analysis of Scales

| | Factor/Items | Factor Loadings | Eigenvalue | Explained Variance | Mean | Alpha |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Perceived Organizational Support* | *Positive Perceived Organizational Support* | | 4.438 | 44.147 | 3.321 | .90 |
| | The organization strongly considers my goals and values. | .848 | | | | |
| | The organisation takes pride in my accomplishments at work. | .844 | | | | |
| | The organization wishes to give me the best possible job for which I am qualified. | .843 | | | | |
| | The organization tries to make my job as interesting as possible. | .813 | | | | |

*Table continued on the next page*

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | The organisation cares about my general satisfaction at work. | .756 | | | | |
| | The organization values my contribution to its well- being. | .754 | | | | |
| | If I decided to quit, the organization would try to persuade me to stay. | .668 | | | | |
| | *Negative Perceived Organizational Support* | | 1.578 | 16.015 | 3.223 | .54 |
| | If my job were eliminated, the organization would prefer to lay me off rather than transfer me to a new job. | .778 | | | | |
| | The organization feels there is little to be gained by employing me for the rest of my career. | .698 | | | | |
| | If the organization could hire someone to replace me at a lower salary it would do so. | .672 | | | | |
| *Job Stress* | *Job Stress* | | 3.146 | 52.441 | 3.014 | .81 |
| | I feel frustrated because of my work. | .820 | | | | |
| | I work under a quite big tension. | .803 | | | | |
| | Problems that are related with work are causing sleeping problems. | .772 | | | | |
| | If I were working in a different job, my health would probably be better. | .751 | | | | |
| | I feel nervous before the meetings held at the hotel. | .650 | | | | |
| | My job is likely to directly affect my health. | .497 | | | | |
| *Turnover Intention* | *Turnover Intention* | | 2.386 | 75.525 | 2.758 | .87 |
| | It is likely that I will actively look for a new job next year. | .943 | | | | |
| | I often think about quitting. | .889 | | | | |
| | I will probably look for a new job new year. | .840 | | | | |

Firstly, descriptive factor analysis was applied to the POS scale (the first part of Table 1). KMO value was 88% and the Barlett test was significant in the analysis. In the analysis results of the scale, 10 items were gathered in two dimensions. When the distribution of the items in the dimensions are examined, the first sub-dimension describes about 44% of the total variance. The factor loadings of the factors in the factor range between 0.848 and 0.668. Furthermore, the average of the factors was determined as 3.321 and the reliability value was determined as 0.90. This factor was named "*Positive Perceived Organizational Support*" because the items in the scale showed the presence of organizational support perception of the employees. The second sub-dimension described about 16% of the total variance. The loadings of the items in the factor ranged from 0.778 to 0.672, the factor's average was 3.223 and the reliability value was 0.54. The factor was called "*Negative Perceived Organizational Support*" because the elements in the factor reflected negative opinions of employees on organizational support.
Factor analysis was then applied to the Job Stress Scale (second part of Table 2). An item which is in the original scale and consisting of 7 items was removed from the analysis and the analysis

was repeated because the item had loading below 0.30. In the analysis, the value of KMO was approximately 83% and the Barlett Test was significant. The factor loadings of the items range from 0.820 to 0.497. The overall mean of the scale was 3.014 and the reliability was 0.81.
Finally, factor analysis was applied to Turnover Intention scale (the last part of Table 2). The KMO value was approximately 66% and the Barlett test score was determined as significant. It was determined that the three items were accounted for 76% of the total variance, average of the scale was 2.758 and reliability was about 87%. When the reliability scores of the scales are examined, it is seen in Table 2 that all the reliability values were over 80% except Negative Organizational Support Perception subscale. Therefore, the scale that were utilized in the scope of research is valid and reliable.
Correlation analysis was performed to determine the relationship between variables (Table 2). It was determined that Negative Perceived Organizational Support is negatively related to job stress ($r = -.281$ $p < 0.01$) and turnover intention ($r = -.440$ and $p < 0.01$). Positive Perceived Organizational Support is negatively related to job stress ($r = -.358$ $p < 0.01$) and turnover intention ($r = -.328$ and $p < 0.01$). Job stress was positively related with turnover intention ($r = .473$ $p < 0.01$).

**Table 2.** Correlation Analysis

| Variables | St. D. | Mean | NPOS | PPOS | JS | TI |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Positive Perceived Organizational Support (PPOS) | 1.05 | 3.321 | 1 | | | |
| Negative Perceived Organizational Support (NPOS) | 1.04 | 3.223 | .097 | 1 | | |
| Job Stress (JS) | .50 | 3.014 | -.281** | -.358** | 1 | |
| Turnover Intention (TI) | .92 | 2.758 | -.440** | -.328** | .473** | 1 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Multiple regression analysis was performed to test the hypotheses which was proposed in the research. In this analysis, it was determined that the perception of job stress and perceived organizational support together explain turnover intention 35.5%, and a unit increase in job stress increases the intention to leave the work by 0.31, a unit increase in the positive perception of organizational support decreases the employees' turnover intention by 0.33, a unit increase in the positive perceived organizational support decreases the employees' turnover intention by 0.18. Thus, the hypotheses H1 and H2 are accepted. The equation can be written (while constant was 3.626) as:

$$Y \text{ (Overall Turnover Intention)} = 3.626 + 0.313 \text{ (JS)} + (-0.334) \text{ (PPOS)} + (-0.183) \text{ (NPOS)}$$

**Table 3.** Multiple Regression Analysis

| Variables | Standardized Coefficients Beta | t-value | Sig. | VIF |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Positive Perceived Organizational Support (PPOS) | -.334 | -6.567 | .000 | 1,086 |
| Negative Perceived Organizational Support (NPOS) | -.183 | -3.494 | .001 | 1,147 |
| Job Stress (JS) | .313 | 5.770 | .000 | 1,233 |
| $R=0.596$ $R^2=0.355$ $\Delta R^2=0.348$ $F=49.565$ Sig.=0.001 | | | | |
| Dependent Variable: Turnover Intention | | | | |

**Discussion**

In this study, the effect of job stress and organizational support perception on turnover intention which is accepted among the most important issues of turnover rate. In this context hypotheses have been developed based on Social Exchange Theory. Firstly, this research is expected to reduce employees' turnover intention by perceived organizational support. The research findings support this hypothesis. This finding, depending on the Social Exchange Theory, is supporting the results of Paille et al. (2010), Dawley et al. (2010)'s researches in which it was determined that employees who are valued by their organizations, and perceived that their efforts are appreciated, increases their intention to continue at the work. In order to provide the qualified employees to stay at work, it will be useful to ensure the perceptions that the contributions which were made by employees are important for the hotel. Moreover, the hotel management should be concerned about the employees, even if the employees' performance in the organization decreases, the managers should support the employees for their well-being and should allow them to continue working.

Despite the fact that the mistake should be tolerated, it is hard to remove the feeling of dissatisfaction in the customer as a result of employees' mistakes. Therefore, giving feedback to the employees about their mistakes as well as giving feedback to their success, and if needed training them or changing their task would be useful. In other words, since businesses are economic units, their performance should contribute to both customer satisfaction and the goals of the business. Supporting employees whose performances and contributions to the organization is low, waste of limited resources of the organization will be obstructed.

Secondly, in this study, it was expected that employees' job stress would increase their intention to leave the job. The findings of this study support this hypothesis. This finding supports the results of the research indicating that due to moving away from stressful work environment, employees have an intention to leave their work when they are under stress (Zincirkıran et al., 2015; Akova et al., 2016). While hotel businesses are producing services, they operate in an area where human relations are performing intensively

Surplus of working time, inability to taking a holiday, financial and social problems such as injustice in the working loads and promotions leads to an increase in job stress of employees. Some researches demonstrate that when employees are likely to lose their sources, their stress levels increase and this leads them to perform higher performance. However, it has been generally accepted that job stress is a factor that reduces the productivity of employees. Therefore, even if they cannot completely remove stress, hotel managers must implement managerial practices in order to reduce stress level.

Providing compatibility between employee competence and resources (time, equipment, etc.) which are necessary to carry out the duties and the sources and that employees have, instead of giving employees feedback in a demoralizing way communicating with them effectively in order to ensure an increased awareness of their own by hotel managers would increase employees' intention to continue working. Although they intend to leave the organization, employees in countries and businesses which have high unemployment rates, prefer to continue working in their jobs because of the limited opportunities for alternative jobs. The consequences such as low performance and high absenteeism in this case negatively affect customer satisfaction and organizational success. When they find an alternative job they immediately leave the organization. This brings about a number of costs such as finding a new employee, selecting, training and adapting processes. As a result, hotel managers need to support employees and reduce the factors that cause job stress, as explained above, in order to ensure the employees to voluntarily continue to work in the hotel.

**Limitations**

The most important limitation of this research is that the sample size is not enough for the universe. Therefore, all suggestions made for this reason has been limited to hotel businesses who agreed to participate in the study. There are also limitations of the study arising from data collection methods. In the data collection process, using a larger sample and interview method will enable the researches to generalize the research results and to provide more information about job stress, perception of organizational support and intention to leave. Data in this study was collected only from the perspective of employees. In future studies, gathering data from both the employees and the operating point of view, will provide important clues to the researcher for the application outcomes.

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# The Superior Destination Experience

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**Abstract**
Offering a desirable tourist experience is significant for destinations' success. Although tourist experiences have been analysed in different settings, there is still scant research on which experiential characteristics make a superior destination. This study compares superior and inferior destinations based on 20 experiential attributes. 500 respondents were requested to rate these attributes based on their best and worst destination experiences. Paired sample t-test results revealed that all attributes were rated significantly higher for superior destinations. Yet, the range of means suggests that some destination attributes might be considered more powerful than others in describing the experience continuum. Various suggestions for DMOs and stakeholders were discussed.

**Keywords:** Tourist Experience, Destination Management, Destination Benchmarking, Destination Competitiveness

## Introduction

As destinations became increasingly accessible, the competition intensified and offering a desirable experience become a major competitive advantage for destinations (Crouch & Ritchie, 2005). Hence destinations would be more successful if they would be able to understand experiential components of their offerings. A stream of research has already explored experiences in different settings (hotels, attractions, theme parks, cruises, restaurants) however the overall tourist experiences in destinations have been neglected. Limited research analysed destination experiences from psychological, social or anthropological perspective and usually tried to describe tourists' experiences without clearly identifying the supply side of the issue (e.g. Kim, 2010). These outcome oriented measures used subjective scales and do not adequately represent a practical way of analysing travelers' destination experience. The data required for these measures are also not easily available without a sophisticated system for data collection.

Majority of these studies have considered positive experiences in destinations whereas negative experiences have also been overlooked (Cetin & Walls, 2016). Measuring positive and negative experiences in destinations and comparing the two for supra- and infra- destinations would be considered as a more holistic approach. This paper sets out to look at experiences from a broader and more holistic perspective by exploring characteristics of destinations, that relate to tourist experiences. While doing so it also aims to identify what differentiates a superior destination experience from an inferior one.

## Literature Review

Various destination attributes (i.e. pull) and personal factors (i.e. push) might have an impact on quality of experiences in destinations (Gunn, 1988). Notwithstanding the crucial role of all destination features and the 'sensescapes' they provide (Agapito, Mendes, & Valle, 2013),

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visitors play, in fact, an active role in producing their own experiences (Kostenholz, Carneiro & Eusebio, 2015). Thus interacting with different elements in the destination tourists co-create their subjective experiences. Mill and Morrison (1985) list attractions, facilities, infrastructure, transportation and hospitality as basic pull components of a destination. According to Huang and Hsu (2009) the nature of participation, emotions and personality also affect the way the experience is lived and remembered in destinations. Corroborating with this, Kim (2010) for example identified involvement, hedonism, happiness, pleasure, relaxation, stimulation, refreshment, social interaction, adventure, personal relevance, novelty, escaping pressure and intellectual cultivation as basic experiential push factors for tourists.

According to Arnould and Price (1993) the peak experience emerges when experiencing something unique, unexpected and has a surprise dimension into it. Quan & Wang (2004) however argues a positive experience is only possible if the peak experience is accompanied by supporting experiences. Hence the total experience quality in a destination depends both on peak and supporting experiences. Destination image, infra-structure, quality of tourism services, local food (Quan & Wang, 2004), natural and cultural attractions (Kim and Brown, 2012), safety and security, cleanliness, climate, value for money, accessibility, crowdedness (Haywood & Muller, 1988), availability of information, variety of activities and liveliness (Kim, 2014), authenticity, quality of service staff, hospitality of locals (Cetin & Bilgihan, 2016), shopping alternatives, relaxation, entertainment and night life (Ritchie & Hudson, 2009), are identified as main factors affecting quality of experiences, emotional attachment (Hidalgo & Hernandez, 2001), and positive tourist behaviors in destinations (Ozdemir et al., 2012).

Despite valuable contributions on destination experiences no study so far attempted to measure these items based on a comparison between supra- (superior) and infra- (poor) destination experiences. Comparing the differences between desirable and undesirable destinations based on travelers' perspectives might offer important findings to identify the significant qualities that make a positive destination experience.

## Methodology

This paper compares experiential characteristics of favorable and unfavorable destinations. Respondents are asked to rate various destination qualities both for their superior and inferior destinations based on previous experiences. A pool of experiential items has been created based on the literature (30 attributes) and were refined during an expert panel of three scholars. Seven attributes were either removed or merged with other items during this phase. For example scenery was considered under natural attractions and prices were merged with value for money. Information provision was also merged with quality of tourist services; night-life with entertainment; peacefulness with relaxation during the peer discussion. The instrument was then pilot tested on 30 respondents to improve validity of items used. Three attributes were further removed or merged based on their loadings during this stage. For example, crowdedness received a lower rating with a large standard deviation, meaning this item is perceived both positive and negative by the respondents. Transportation network and public transportation were also perceived under accessibility and created confusion. Thus removed from the item pool. At the end of these refinement processes the final version of questionnaire included 20 destination attributes.

Data collection took seven weeks in September – October 2016 in Istanbul, local tourists were approached at well known attractions of the city as well as domestic arrivals of two international airports. The screening criteria used for the surveys were being older than 18 years and to have visited at least one destination within the past year for leisure purposes. A total of 500 surveys were collected. 29 surveys were eliminated because of missing data and "ja" saying bias and a total of 471 surveys were included in data analysis. Respondents were requested to rate their best and worst leisure destinations based on their experiences on a Likert scale. Some demographic (e.g. gender, age, marital status) and tripographic (e.g. frequency of travel) information were also requested. In order to identify which experiential attributes have significant differences between supra- and infra- destinations a paired sample t-test was utilized. The findings are discussed in the next section.

**Findings**

258 of the respondents were male, 228 were between 22 to 31 years of age. Most of them were single (240) and had a university degree (437). They might also be considered as experienced travelers taking a leisure trip at least twice in a year (283). Concerning the results of the paired sample t-test comparing the mean ratings of supra- and infra destinations; supra destinations scored significantly ($p<0.01$) higher on all attributes identified with varying degrees. These are depicted on table 1.

**Table 1.** Differences between supra- and infra- destinations

| **Attribute** | **Supra destination** [$\bar{x}$] | **Infra destination** [$\bar{x}$] | **Supra**[$\bar{x}$] – **Infra**[$\bar{x}$] |
|---|---|---|---|
| Tourist services | 4,26 | 2,64 | 1,62** |
| Variety of activities | 4,11 | 2,63 | 1,48** |
| Service staff | 4,02 | 2,59 | 1,43** |
| Entertainment | 4,17 | 2,75 | 1,42** |
| Infra-structure | 4,30 | 2,92 | 1,38** |
| Cleanliness | 4,37 | 3,03 | 1,34** |
| Lively environment | 4,12 | 2,93 | 1,19** |
| Natural attractions | 4,45 | 3,36 | 1,09** |
| Cultural attractions | 4,17 | 3,08 | 1,09** |
| Local food | 3,94 | 2,89 | 1,05** |
| Safety & security | 4,32 | 3,30 | 1,02** |
| Authenticity | 3,74 | 2,76 | 0,98** |
| Reputation | 4,59 | 3,61 | 0,98** |
| Shopping alternatives | 4,00 | 3,05 | 0,95** |
| Relaxing environment | 4,18 | 3,26 | 0,92** |
| Climate | 4,43 | 3,60 | 0,83** |
| Local hospitality | 3,92 | 3,16 | 0,76** |
| Value for money | 3,65 | 3,15 | 0,50** |
| Accessibility | 3,69 | 3,31 | 0,38** |
| **Behavior** | | | |
| Loyalty | 4,58 | 2,07 | 2,51** |
| Recommendation | 4,53 | 2,22 | 2,31** |
| Overall experience | 4,50 | 2,41 | 2,09** |
| Satisfaction | 4,40 | 2,43 | 1,97** |

** Significant at $p<0.01$ level

As displayed on table 1, all items rated higher for supra- destinations than infra- destinations. Yet the mean differences of some items are noteworthy. Tourist services (1.62), variety of activities (1.48), service staff (1,43), entertainment (1.42), infra-structure (1.38) and cleanliness (1.34) had the highest mean difference among supra- and infra- destinations. On the other hand, the gaps between accessibility (0.38), value for money (0.50), local hospitality (0.76), climate (0.83) and relaxing environment (0.92) were the lowest between supra- and infra- destinations. As expected, respondents were also significantly more likely to be loyal (2.51), recommend (2.31), have a positive overall experience (2.09) and satisfied (1.97) from supra- destinations than infra- destinations.

**Discussions**

Tourist experiences do not occur in a vacuum and requires a great deal of planning at the destination level and within the individual services in the destination. This study explores the experiential attributes of destinations based on a comparison between travelers' experiences in supra- and infra- destinations. Previous studies do not offer such a distinction. Understanding what makes superior destinations different than inferior destinations have important implications. By comparing superior and inferior destination experiences this paper offers valuable empirical findings as to the experiential dimensions that create the difference.

All experiential destination attributes identified in this study received significantly higher mean ratings for supra- destinations than infra-destinations. Thus these items might be used by destination managers and individual service suppliers to offer a holistic experience and to benchmark other destinations. Scholars might also use the experiential items offered in this study for future research on destination competitiveness and tourist experience. The findings might also be used in positioning and design of marketing communications for destinations. Although all of them were significant; the difference was higher in some attributes than others. Tourist services, variety of activities, service staff, entertainment, infra-structure and cleanliness had the highest mean difference and can be interpreted as the most important items that differentiate superior from poor destinations. Importance of tourist services, variety of activities (e.g. Kim, 2014), service staff, entertainment, infra-structure and cleanliness (e.g. Haywood & Muller, 1988) have also been discussed in the literature.

Accessibility, value for money, local hospitality, climate and relaxing environment were identified as items with the lowest difference. Literature also confirms that tourists are willing to travel far and pay more for desirable experiences (e.g. Hidalgo & Hernandez, 2001). The climate in the destination might also be ignored by tourists for positive experiences (i.e. Ice Hotel in Kiruna). Although local hospitality and relaxing environment were also mentioned as important items in the literature (e.g. Kim, 2010) and there were significant differences among supra- and infra- destinations on these attributes, the range of difference were among the lowest. This might be attributed to structure of the sample which were local travelers. Local hospitality and relaxation might be rated higher by international travelers.

Concerning tourist behaviors, intention to return and recommend, level of satisfaction and quality of experience were rated significantly different and higher for supra- than infra-destinations. This, supports current literature that regards experiences as antecedents of loyalty and recommendation (e.g. Lugosi & Walls, 2013).

Tourist experience might differ based on individual characteristics and spatial environment. Thus experiences are personal and context specific. Although respondents were asked to rate their best and worst destinations, the structure of the sample might have influenced results. A cultural tourist might look for different experiential clues in a destination than a sunlust tourist. According to Ooi (2005) subjective nature of experiences and difficulties with standardizing environmental factors makes it challenging to create same level of experiences for everyone at each time. Yet a general diagnostic tool such as attributes offered in this study might still be used to measure the experiential potential of a destination.

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# The Development of Bali Tourism Through Cultural and Local Wishdom of Pakraman Village

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**Abstract**

The attractiveness of the locality becomes strategic and important. In the midst of tourist development, it has become an industry capable of supporting national development. The era of globalization is the reason for the revival of cultural identity and local wisdom in various parts of the world. Moreover, the development of Bali relies on the tourism sector. The fame of Bali tourism at domestic and international levels, which promotes cultural tourism is very likely to reap the impact of globalization. Therefore, the existence of local village, well-known as Desa Pakraman or Pakraman Village which has its own culture and local wisdom, at least could minimize the impact of globalization.

Culture and local wisdom become one of the strategy choices in anticipating the bad consequences of globalization and even become a counterstrike of mass cultural domination which is owned by developed countries. The strategic value of culture and local wisdom has provided an innovative inspiration to develop the potential of locality and tourism development in Bali.

Therefore, the development of tourism in Bali should not marginalize the local culture and local spirit. Thus, the development of tourism in Bali in line with the existence of Pakraman Villages that its own culture and spirit of human together with their creativity, taste and intention and local wisdom which strongly attached are able to maintain a harmonious relationship in the life of indigenous people in Bali. Henceforth, this article focus on the questions: firstly, what is the definition of Pakraman village? Secondly, how to define the basis of attractiveness of cultural elements and local wisdom as the development of a global culture? and thirdly, how to connect globalization with local culture? Which this analysis, it is expected to have a better understanding on how the local villages should be strengthened in terms of sustainable development in Bali.

**Keywords:** Tourism, Pakraman Village, Culture and Local Wisdom, and Globalization

## Introduction

The existence of tourism development today is considered increasingly important to support national development. Various countries develop tour packages in an effort to increase foreign exchange. Indonesia, which has various advantages in the field of tourism, also does not want to be left behind compared with other countries. Various patterns of policy and regulations in the form of legislation are formulated to support tourist programs. Even the promotion of tourist visiting every year to Indonesia is introduced intensively to various countries.

For the famously tourist areas, the island of Bali is one of tourist destination that is well known among tourists, both domestic and foreign countries. Among tourists, this tourist area is known for various slogans of Bali's tourism exotic (Pitana and Gayatri, 2005: 48). It has a unique, exotic, and

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amazing panorama. So it is not surprising that the island of Bali is awarded as the best tourist spot in the world. Even the leaders and world leaders, such as; King of Saudi Arabia with the royal family, Barack Obama, the former President of the United States and Malaysian Prime Minister who include his family members to have vacation in Bali.

The major potential of tourism and the interest of tourist to visit Indonesia, including Bali had encouraged the government and local governments to improve the facilities and infrastructure of tourism management. Various policy and regulation packages have been formulated and enforced to be applied as reference in conducting tourism. So that the wealth of natural resources and the various cultures which Indonesia needs to be protected and requires conservation efforts in order to become a tourist attraction that can attract the number of tourist to visit, both domestic and foreign countries.

The effort to accelerate the realization of the welfare of the community which is the responsibility of the government had been pursued through improving services, empowerment, and community participation and enhancement of regional competitiveness by taking into account the principles of democracy, equity, justice and privilege. Meanwhile, for the specificity of a region in the system of the Republic of Indonesia is given the widest authority in the region accompanied by the granting of the rights and obligations to organize regional autonomy in the unity of the system of state governance.

Nowadays, the implementation of regional development that is carried out exhibits some progresses in various areas of community life. The result of various advances in community life has been achieved, however, in the dynamics of life and the rapid flow of globalization has implications to bring new impacts, challenges and problems. Regarding with this matter, it is required anticipation and strategic steps in overcoming it. Therefore, this article will focus on the issue of: firstly, what is the definition of Pakraman village? Secondly, what is the background of Pakraman Village in Bali? and Thirdly, how to connect globalization with Balinese local culture in the context of Pakraman Village? Through these questions, qualitative methods will be used as the methodology of this research.

**Defining the Concept of Desa Pakraman**

The existence of Balinese culture is one part of the unified culture of the archipelago with a distinctive identity. That identity is a physical knit, institutional, and local style, integrated with belief systems, community, and philosophy. Universal values, such as harmony, religion, appreciation of esthetics, solidarity, and balance are the hallmarks of Balinese culture supported by its Hindu-Buddhist population. The introduction of strong spiritual concepts makes Balinese culture unique and famous throughout the world.

Culture is part of Balinese life. Thus Balinese culture becomes the most dominant attraction in the development of Bali tourism. These conditions can be realized because the people of Bali always introduce, utilize, preserve, and improve the quality of tourist objects and attractions, maintaining the norms and values of culture, religion, and nature of Bali. Therefore, the island of Bali is always identical with the culture of customary funds owned by the community. One of the main buffers of Balinese culture, that is Pakraman Village, formerly called custom village which is customary law society. The definition of Pakraman Village can be found in the Bali's local regulation on the Article 3 (2001) states that;

> "Pakraman Village is the local unit of Balinese society that has tradition and local custom of Hindu-based religion as hereditary on the bond of Kahyangan Tiga (Kahyangan Desa); they have their own territory and wealth with the rights to manage for themselves." (Lembaran Daerah Propinsi Bali, 2001)

The legitimacy of the Pakraman Village is juridical recognized pursuant to the constitution, formulated based on Article 18 B Paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia which states;

> “States recognize and respect customary law community units and their traditional rights as long as they are alive and in accordance with the development of society and the principle of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, which regulated in act”

In this regard, the existence of Pakraman Village and its traditional rights are recognized and respected by the state, such as creating customary law (awig-awig), organizing self-government and solving legal problems that occur in its territory, in the form of disputes and customary violations (Sudantra, 2008 : 18). On the other hand, according to Provincial Regulation No. 3 of 2001 on Pakraman Village, it is mentioned;

> “The Pakraman Village is a unit of customary law community in Bali Province which has a unity of tradition and manners of social life of Hindu people hereditary in the bonds of three principles temple of the villagers which has certain territory and their own property and have the right to take care of their own household."

Based on the definition, essentially Pakraman Village has 2 (two) functions, namely the function of culture and economy. The function of culture means the function of maintenance and cultural development. While economic function is the function of maintenance and development of culture. In this connection is closely related to the management of property owned by Pakraman Village that includes the management of tourism which available in the environment. Moreover, Pakraman Village has its cultural political function that implemented in the concept of Tri Hita Karana interacts with wewidangan (regions) in Bali (I Wayan Wesna Antara: 2013, 83).

**Pakraman Village in Bali**

In the Dutch colonial era, the regulation of indigenous and tribal peoples was established in Staatblaad 1996, No. 83 on IGO (Inlandscha Gemente Ordonantie Java en Madura), and Staatblaad 1938 Number 40 regarding IGOB (Inlandscha Gemente Ordonantie Buiten Gewesten). Then it no longer applies to the issuance of Act Number 19 of 1965 on the Principles of Regional Government (Windia P Wayan, 2004: 46). Then, the implementation in Bali in terms of some terms that have a relationship with the existence of the Pakraman Village, namely: sime (local rule), dresta (habituarulel), lekita, paswara, awig-awig (customary law), karaman, or krama and thani (Wayan Surpha, 2002: 51 and Laksono, 2005: 141).

The history regarding to the kingdom that the emerging power of Majapahit kingdoms in Bali in the 14th century in which the villages in Bali were influenced. From this influence, then the village community system moves or evolves toward a more dynamic and meets the rules of the kingdom. So at first the villages in Bali began to make adjustments. But next, being colonized by the newly arrived ruler, the resistance was undertaken eventually but still can be solved.

Furthermore, the source of Pakraman Village formation in Bali, one of which was found in the palm manuscript Markendya Purana. That matter is always associated with the formation of the Pakraman Village its existence in association with the three principle temples of the village. Regarding the property owned by Pakraman Village called druwe or druwen(village belonging) (word druwemeans own or wealth). Customary property of Pakraman Village can be in the form of material and immaterial (social religious) treasure. It shows the existence of religiousand communal characteristic. (Sirtha, 2008: 15).

In relation to the existence of customary land, it is not private property though the customary land is utilized for living of the society. Thus, the existence of customary land coincides with the emergence of communion or at least somewhat the existence of communion of customary land

(Suasthawa Darmayuda, 2001: 27). Then in relation to the Pakraman Village autonomy, is associated with the right to hold its own household. This is very different when associated with the issuance of Act No. 5 of 1979 on Village Governance as currently published Act No. 6 of 2014 on the Village. The intended provision, as defined in Article 1 number (4) of Regional Regulation of Bali Province Number 3 Year 2001 concerning Pakraman Village.

**The Connection of Balinese Local Culture and Globalization**

The fast growth of communication and information technology recognized or not, has increased the flow of capital, investment, and service goods from one country to another. Especially from developed countries to developing countries in general. This infinite world era is known for globalization. It is not surprising that globalization is a form of imperialism in the new form is not entirely wrong. Therefore, it will be inevitable by the development of globalization. Result of influence will certainly have a positive and negative impact. The increasing number of violence and terror caused by the perpetrators who are inspired by the influence of science and technology progress. Therefore, it is necessary to formulate anticipatory steps so that the impact can be minimized and even become culture counter against the dominance of mass culture owned by developed countries. If anticipation is not undertaken, it would have a big effect on the mindset and "culture" of our society.

The attractiveness of cultural elements and local wisdom as the basis for the development of a global culture can be detailed on the following grounds:

a) The cultural strategy's perspective, with the increasing influence of globalization, has reduced national cultural values. Local culture has the potential and role as counter culture for the dominance of global culture that considered as the myth is inevitable (Fakih, 2003: 5). Local cultural treasures can be a source of local nurseries, as one source of critical attitude to globalization. It happens that in an increasingly homogeneous society the lifestyle of a society due to its moderation, the stronger the dependence of society on deeper values such as; religion and art. While the outside world grows more and more homogeneous as a result of globalization, people increasingly appreciate the traditions that spring from within. The emergence of a new trend of lifestyle rooted in traditional art is a positive indication of the rise of local values in people's lives. Traditional art that still survive until now and still maintained by the people of Bali has a very high cultural value.

b) Decentralized perspective or local autonomy, that the regions can explore, develop and preserve local cultures as social and cultural capital of local community development (Thoyibi, 2004: 15).

Provincial Government of Bali in an effort to strengthen the culture and custom. In order to strengthen the implementation of Tri Hita Karana culture is the life philosophy of Balinese society which contains three elements that build balance and harmony of relationship between human with God, human with human, and human being with its environment which become the source of prosperity, peace, and happiness for human life. In an effort to support this expectation, the Bali Provincial Government issued the Regulation No. 2 of 2012 on Balinese Culture Tourism. In the provision, among others, regulate on Bali Cultural Tourism is the tourism of Bali is based on the Culture of Bali is imbued by the teachings of Hinduism and the philosophy of Tri Hita Karana as the main potential by using tourism as a vehicle for actualization, resulting in a dynamic interrelationship between tourism and cultures that make them grow synergistically, harmoniously and sustainably to provide prosperity to society, cultural and environmental sustainability. The concept of Tri Hita Karana is the Balinese philosophy of life which contains 3 (three) elements that

build the balance and harmony of the relationship between man and God, man with man, and man with his environment which is the source of prosperity, peace, and happiness for human life.
Many potentials owned by Pakraman Village in supporting tourism in Bali. Among others are; First, the structure of the settled community pattern in rural areas based on the concept of Tri Hita Karana, so that displays its own distinctive and unique style in the system of community life in Bali. Secondly, according to the socio-religious character of society in Bali that the activities of Hindu religious ceremonies is realized in everyday life. Thirdly, Pakraman Village besides exudes Hindu Religion values, it is also a center for Balinese culture. Fourth, from the beginning the atmosphere of community life in the Pakraman Village is safe and peaceful.
The diversity that comes from customs, culture and religion in Balinese society can go hand in hand in harmony to form a local identity that inspires the life and interaction of fellow society that is in one region, namely the area of Pakraman Village. Nevertheless, the rise of local culture does not mean a complete comeback to past traditions and to the realities of the ever-changing realm. According to Gidden (2001: 34) what most are considered as tradition in the present, has passed the time by adjusting to new developments.
This means that past cultures can be revitalized to strengthen the identity of a community or social group, even if the culture is no longer genuine as the culture is alive and understood in the past. Then it can also be interpreted that the development of knowledge and human experience of cultural support will be able to support the existence of a culture that gives beauty and noble (noble value) and reduce the values artificial or not so deep that there is a culture that appears artificial and will survive for a moment. Any natural tourist destination though often cannot maintain "authenticity", the place is due to change and new product addition in accordance with the efforts of the entrepreneurs who commercialize the tour thus destroying the value of noble (fair) and even the beauty of nature. Therefore, it is necessary to think that the development of tourism does not change the authenticity of tourism objects and human behavior in it.
The concept of tourism developed in Bali not only pay attention on the basic philosophy that is used but it also means to promote cultural factors both as a tourist attraction and as a tourism business actor. In this case it is to give function to institutions that grow on the basis of Balinese culture.

## Conclusion

Some of the potential of Pakraman Village in which there is culture and local wisdom is very supportive in the development of tourism in Bali. Even become a potential strengthening tendency of tourism potential in the future. The rapid influence of globalization has not been able to undermine the strength of the Pakraman Village in maintaining the existence of a noble culture. Even, the culture and local wisdom become one of cultural strategy choice to minimize the impact of globalization even become culture of domination of mass culture dominated by developed countries. Thus, the sustainability of Balinese tourism development always remains steady, in line with the existence of the Pakraman Village that can become a bulwark against the increasing influence of globalization that has reduced the values of national culture.

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