Di Trapani G., Lo Presti L., Maggiore G., Sarnacchiaro P.

Editors

New frontiers in the tourism and hospitality industry: digital, social and economic transformations

Book Proceedings of the 2019
4th International Conference on
Tourism Dynamics and Trends (ICTDT2019)

UnitelmaSapienza
Università degli Studi di Roma

UnitelmaSapienza
Università degli Studi di Roma

New frontiers in the tourism and hospitality industry: digital, social and economic transformations

Book Proceedings of the 2019
4th International Conference on
Tourism Dynamics and Trends (ICTDT2019)

Rome, Italy, 22nd – 24th October 2019

Editors

Di Trapani Giovanni

Institute for Research on Innovation and Services for Development
IRISS National Research Council CNR
Naples, Italy

Lo Presti Letizia

Department of Law and Economics
University of Rome Unitelma Sapienza
Rome, Italy

Maggiore Giulio

Department of Law and Economics
University of Rome Unitelma Sapienza
Rome, Italy

Sarnacchiaro Pasquale

Department of Law and Economics
University of Rome Unitelma Sapienza
Rome, Italy

Preface

The International Conference on Dynamics and Trends in Tourism took place on October 22–24, 2019, in Rome, Italy and was held at the Department of Law and Economics, University of Rome Unitelma Sapienza. The conference was organized by four universities— Akdeniz University (Turkey), University of Seville (Spain), Sannio University (Italy), University of Swansea (UK) and University of Rome Unitelma Sapienza (Italy). The conference was large-scaled and international. The international program committee appreciated the high quality of the papers. The conferees came from the western, central, and eastern parts of the European Continent. International participants represented such countries as Turkey, UK, Greece, Portugal, Spain, Austria, Italy, Netherland, Hungary and Romania. The conference participants submitted papers reflecting recent advances in the field of the impact of digital transformations on economic and social developments in the hospitality and tourism sector. The conference was interdisciplinary in nature, with various research angles that were discussed in the plenary sessions. The ICTDT2019 was organized to offer an overview of the dynamics and trends of tourism with the aim of promoting a network of researchers and experts who want to share their research visions and to disseminate their knowledge.

The conference was organized into 9 sessions: Sustainability and tourism (Session 1 and Session 7); Social media and tourism (Session 2); Consumer behavior and tourism (Session 3); Management and tourism (Session 4); Innovation and tourism destination (Session 5); Wellness and tourism (Session 6); Tourism development and sustainability (Session 8); Tourism and the economic and social impact (Session 9). The heterogeneity of the applicative and methodological approaches highlights the wide-ranging analysis of the topic.

In this book the reader will find a selection of papers presented during the Conference sessions. The papers on the book proceedings of ICTDT2019 were blind-reviewed by members of a scientific committee. Skanavis, C., N. Sardi, L. Vourdougiannis and E. Chariompoli, through a critical analysis and an examination of the literature studies the importance of communication in the outbreak of epidemics. The authors stress the need for better risk communication through various information channels to empower frontline providers so that they can provide adequate health services and to promote safe and healthy travel. C. Skanavis, K. Antonopoulos, V. Vitalis and V. Plaka, on the other hand, use the Skyros Island case study to analyze the profile of tourists and their characteristics before, during and after their arrival at the tourist destination. Furthermore, the paper attempts to assess the vital and unique aspects of the relationship between tourism and the sustainable development of Skyros Island. Cocco and Brogna address the topic of the use of social media in tourism, focusing their attention on the Instagram case study. The authors investigate the role of social networks in the pre/post travel experience. While, M. D'Arco, V. Marino and R. Resciniti show the importance of the Zero Moment of Truth (ZMOT) in the pre-purchase phase of the "journey". The authors find that ZMOT for tourism products and services occurs through a variety of touchpoints (e.g., search engines, and social media).

Dominguez Navarro and Gonzalez-Rodrigez offer theoretical advice and practical guidelines that a low-cost accommodation venue can follow in order to improve their Social Media performance.

Lo Presti, L, Maggiore G. and M. Mattana deal with tourism behaviour in the ecotourism destinations. The evidence from eco-kibbutz customer experiences are illustrated. The authors propose tourist approaches for choosing sustainable destinations. The results can offer insights for hospitality and tourism service providers on how to improve the customer experience by allocating investment so as to satisfy the increasing number of eco-tourists during the whole customer journey. V. Alfano, E. De Simone, M. D'Uva and G. L. Gaeta show that the exposition to television programs had an impact on consumer habits. The results suggest that gastronomic-driven tourism increases while the program is on air. G. Di Trapani talks about E-insurance: an experiential and innovative component of the tourist journey, while V. Danneo, L. Battaglia and E. Cedrola propose a tourist tour planning for a smart tourism system in Calabria. R. Mihailescu deals with the impact of tourism development and its consequences on biodiversity. The author illustrates the preliminary results with the Nahoon River estuary case study in East London. The author finds that both locals and visitors to the Nahoon Estuary place a high value on the improvement of the factors that contribute to an increase of its recreational potential. F. Cappelloni, F. Baglioni and S. Staffieri discuss the moto-tourists' habits demonstrating that moto-aggregation and moto-tourism could be opportunities to re-launch rural territories in a sustainable way. P. Pavone offers an analysis of the dynamics and prospects in the digital age for the Italian hotels. The authors demonstrate that in the digital era, the Italian hotel industry has all the potential to be more competitive. Also Costa R. and Costa C. offer a firm's point of view and analyze how the investment dynamics of small and micro-sized enterprises in the tourism sector can contribute to the creation of a strong and dynamic business sector that contributes to qualifying and improving the destinations. Finally, Migliaccio G. provides an excursus of the accessible tourism in Italy. The author also presents some Italian initiatives for the disabled population and focuses on the current and potential contribution of ICT and the digital reality based on the dissemination of information on the Internet.

Acknowledgments

We would like to express our special thanks to conferees who with passion and enthusiasm have contributed to enrich, through an abundance of information and insights, the theme of digital transformation and sustainable development of the tourism and hospitality sector. We would also like to express our gratitude to Prof. Luiz Moutinho for his lectio magistralis titled "Tourism Futurology ". His contribution has given valuable insights for thought and personal growth on the impact of digitalization on the tourism and hospitality sector. Finally, we want to thank the Rector of the University of Rome Unitelma Sapienza, Prof. Antonello Folco Biagini, Prof. Gaetano Napoli, Dean of the Department of Law and Economics, and the administrative offices of Unitelma Sapienza for their technical and substantial support, without which this conference would not have been possible.

Table of Contents

Analysis of mototourists' habits: focus on motoaggregation to develop a touristic product

Flavia Cappelloni[1], Federico Baglioni[2], Simona Staffieri[3]

Abstract Mototourism is a potentially profitable sector for rural territories [21], due to the great interest of motorcyclists in secondary activities during trips. The study analyses travel habits of mototourists, obtained by an online survey. Some aspects of motoaggregation have been investigated, focusing attention on motor clubs, motor meetings and digital aggregation. Findings show that motoaggregation and mototourism could be opportunities to re-launch rural territories in a sustainable way.

Key words: mototourism, motoaggregation, sustainability, motor club, travel habits.

1 Introduction

Mototourism is an expanding touristic phenomenon, which only in recent years has attracted the attention of institutions [21]. Despite the lack of information on mototourism, especially regarding the Italian context, available data suggests that mototourism is a profitable kind of tourism and mototourists have specific needs, that should be taken in account to develop a good touristic product [9, 19, 20].

The Italian Motorcycle Federation (FMI) annually holds a mototouristic championship and recently published a document where mototourism has been defined as "mototouristic events with the main purpose to contribute in spreading a culture of motorcycle tourism. Enhancing the Italian historical and cultural heritage and respect the environment are the fundamental values of this discipline" [10]. This definition highlights the ecological aspect of mototourism, even if it is not completely clear [10].

This article aims to partially fill the insufficiency of research about mototouristic world, analysing aspects related to travel experience and motoaggregation. Findings from this paper, in fact, provide a preliminary overview on traits of italian motorcyclists and their travel habits, topics that are almost ignored by scientific literature.

---

[1] Flavia Cappelloni, University of Rome, Sapienza. flavia.cappelloni@gmail.com
[2] Federico Baglioni, independent researcher. federico.baglioni@live.com
[3] Simona Staffieri, University of Rome, Sapienza. simona.staffieri@gmail.com

2 Literature review

Mototourism is actually not only a way of travelling, but can be considered a leisure phenomenon [24], because, as reported in a previous study [2], the pleasure of driving is the most important aspect for motorcyclists during a trip. Other activities, in addition, are also considered important, such as visiting a destination, eating local foods and cultural visits. In general, the external environment and the cultural landscapes influences travellers in their choice of accommodation [16, 23], but motorcyclists have specific needs, for example the presence of specific or designated parking areas for motorcycles [26]. For these reasons' motorcyclists prefer Bed & Breakfast, farmhouses and hotels, while campsites are the less preferred type of accommodation, due to motorcycles' lack of space for carrying luggage [2, 18].

Motorcyclists do mototourism prevalently using their own motorcycles, even if they are not technically suitable for tourism, showing that mototourism can be considered a sub-sector of motorcycling [2]. Furthermore, the curiosity for the vehicle and the influence of motorcyclists' friends and sport events on television are the main crucial factors in becoming a motorcyclist [8].

A very important phenomenon that can strongly influence travel preferences is the motoaggregation, which can be defined as the tendency of the motorcyclists to travel in groups [24]. Motorcyclists are often seen in a negative way, especially if they are in big groups, by the local population and even by some biker friendly facilities [6, 21].

Finally, despite the negative perception of motorcyclists, literature reports that mototourism can be a responsible and sustainable tourism [15], because motorcyclists are attracted by rural areas and strongly appreciate the high contact with nature [11, 13].

3 Method

The questionnaire has been divided in three sections, to add personal information, and was destined only to respondents that own a motorcycle with a displacement higher than 250 c.c. (cubic centimeters), due to possible driving restrictions. Also scooters have been excluded to obtain more congruent data, because this type of motorcyclists show different habits. The three principal sections were about general aspects on mototourism, travel preferences and travel experiences. A filter has been applied on this last section, including only respondents that had taken at least one trip[1] during the last year.

Data from this paper has been collected via an online survey, opened in April 2017 and remained available for 5 months[2]. Almost all answers and information have been obtained from the web, in particular Facebook groups and sites about mototouristic

[1] The trip must last at least one entire day, so respondents can be considered tourists.
[2] The questionnaire used is available on request, writing to flavia.cappelloni@gmail.com.

travels (such as "Motociclisti italiani", "Mr Helmet" and "Independent Free Bikers"), where the questionnaire has been shared. Some experts' motorcyclists have been involved to help the refinement and test of the questionnaire before the data collection.

Some answers, like respondents that claimed to travel more than 1000 km per day, have been cancelled because improbable or maybe resulted from a writing error. In addition, values too far from the rest of the sample have been considered outliers and have not been counted.

4 Empirical findings

3.1 Motorcyclists' profile

From the survey 1.154 valid answers have been collected, with a strong prevalence of male respondents (91%). The most part of the sample was from 34 to 51 years old, with an average of 42 years of age, while the youngest and the oldest respondents were, respectively, 18 and 88 years old. The data is in accordance with literature [17, 4] and shows that mototourism is a kind of tourism suitable for people of every age and can be adapted to different targets.

The majority of respondents were employed (86.3%), suggesting that availability of time and money are main factors that influence travelling habits [4].

Some questions inserted in the survey were related to motorcycles owned by respondents. Almost half of the sample (41.4%) owned a motorcycle with displacement between 1000 and 1249 c.c., 24.7% in the range 500-749 c.c. and 26.4% owned a motorcycle with displacement between 750 and 999 c.c. These findings show that the most part of the sample own motorcycles with mid-range engine, while motorcycles with very low or very high displacement are poorly represented. From findings it's also evident that most motorcyclists from the sample own a BMW (22.9%) or a Ducati (15.5%) motorcycles, followed by Honda (13.8%), Yamaha (13.2%) and Suzuki (8.0%).

A great number of respondents have owned their motorcycles for a long time and the majority between 7 and 28 years (51.6%), while a single respondent owned his motorcycle for 64 years. Although this value has been considered an "outlier", the distribution is still shifted to higher values (58 years), demonstrating that a great part of respondents has expertise rather than being novices or first-time motorcyclists. In fact, motorcyclists that own their motorcycles for no more than 6 years correspond only to 23.8%, while motorcyclists who own the vehicle for at least 7 years reach the 76.2% of the sample. These findings suggest that travel experiences and habits of respondents analyzed through this survey are probably well-established. Furthermore, their choices during trip are hardly the result of an experimentation, but presumably come from a routine process.

3.2 Travel experience

An important aspect that has been investigated through the questionnaire concerns the frequency and duration of the trips. As already mentioned in the first part of this section, a condition needed to access the section of the survey called "travel experience" was to have made at least one trip in the last 12 months. The 75.7% of the sample (874 respondents in total) tested positive for this requirement.

The highest response to the sample (26.7%) made two trips in the last year, followed by respondents that made one (23.8%) and mototourists that made three (19.6%). It must be noted that the percentage of respondents that made a lot of trips over 12 months (more than six per year) is rather high (10%), with the 1% that reach the extreme value of 20 trips per year. These findings suggest that mototourists travel willingly several times a year, if possible. The readiness to make trips, in fact, can be obviously facilitated by general good weather, but it's mostly linked to availability of time and money, as reported in the last subsection and described in previous papers [4, 2].

Concerning the trip duration, the most part of the sample claimed to make trips that last on average 3 days (29.2%) and more than half of the respondents (68.3%) made "short trips", while 31.7% made "long trips" (31.7%). Depending on the definitions proposed by ISTAT (Italian National Institute of Statistic), a "short trip"[1] lasts from 1 to 3 nights[2], while a "long trip" lasts more than 3 nights. The choice of the number of nights depends, also in this case, on time and money.

In this research the length of the journey has been investigated. In particular, the daily average distance is between 251 and 500 km per day for the 60.5% of the sample, followed by the range 0-250 km (29.2%): these two categories taken together reach the 89.7% (only 10% exceed 500 km per day). These findings show that a large selection of respondents covers daily distances that are not very high. An interesting consequence of this evidence is that, once the destination has been reached, motorcyclists can spend their time in secondary activities, like tasting local foods or visiting other places close by to their original destination [2]. This aspect is important because it can be economically exploited and an opportunity to decongest areas affected by mass tourism and promote sustainable tourism.

Mototourism can be a great opportunity for rural areas even because the type of road chosen by motorcyclists to travel have been analyzed, revealing that almost the entire sample (90.8%) prefers twisting and winding secondary roads, compared with only 1.4% of motorcyclists that opt for freeways. These findings suggest that motorcyclists are inclined to use roads that are typically around little towns and rural areas.

[1] Touristic vacation trip includes trips for leisure, pleasure, relax, visit relatives and friends, beauty treatments and religious reasons [12].
[2] 3 nights correspond to 4 days, as expressed in the survey.

3.3 Motoaggregation

In previous sections, general behaviour and travel experience of motorcyclists have been analyzed. This paragraph, instead, will focus on motor clubs and motoaggregation, which is the tendency of motorcyclists to travel in a group that strongly influences the touristic behaviour [24]. The perception of groups of motorcyclists by residents, in fact, is critical for the success of a destination that want to exploit this kind of tourism, so it's important to investigate the way the owners of motorcycles interact in the collective travel and spend their free time together, in order to personalize the tourism product [19, 4, 15].

Motoaggregation is evident for being considered the spirit of "big family", given that motorcyclists that received that questionnaire keenly spread it very quickly inside their social communities and in Facebook motorcyclists's groups: in few days, in fact, the survey reached hundreds of respondents. Even choices about destinations and accommodations are influenced by opinions from other motorcyclists, confirming that world of mouth inside the motorcyclism world is very common and should not be underestimated [21, 4]. Despite this, the most part of the sample extract their information for planning trips on internet sites (57%), both generic and specialists, planning trips on their own (70.4%).

As reported in other works, motorcyclists drive and do secondary activities more willingly in company with other motorcyclists [24, 4, 2]. For this reason, participation in motor meetings are an important aspect related to motoaggregation, which have been investigated and defined as an event "with recreational or sport purposes that involves at least 50 motorists and provides for at least an itinerary with a motorcycle and a meal". FMI reported a precise classification of the type of mototouristic events, even if are mentioned as daily excursions too, which is in contrast with the definition of tourism, that provides at least one overnight stay (World Tourism Organisation, UNWTO) [22]. Furthermore, FMI gives great attention to the number of regions crossed by the motorcyclists, but as already described [24] the destination is not the main trait of mototourism, because motorcyclists primarily like driving [2].

Findings from the questionnaire show that motorcyclists that travel with a passenger and other motorcyclists appreciate motorcycle events, but with lower percentages than expected [3], meaning that Italian motorcyclists in general aren't into motor meeting. Moreover, only 38% of the sample (439 respondents) belong to a motor club.

Despite the quite low percentage, motor clubs are an aggregation factor and a vector for travelling [5, 1], in fact the number of traveller is higher among respondents that belong to a motor club (82.5%, compared to 71.6%; Figure 1) and they tend to make more trips: the percentage of motorcyclists that make only one trip per year is 82.9% instead of 90.4% of respondents that are not members of a motor club (Figure 2). These findings suggest that motor clubs could be a key element of a touristic product that should be further investigated. A destination that wants to count on groups of mototourists, in fact, should be aware of the presence of motor clubs in a specific area, because it could be useful to attract other motorcyclists.

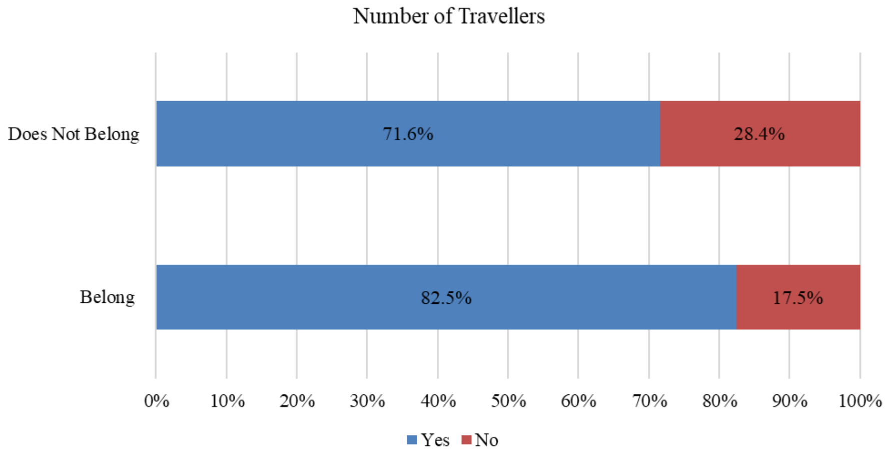


Figure 1: Number of travellers compared with their membership to a motor club. "Yes" in the figure is referred to travellers, which means respondents that had taken at least a trip during the last year

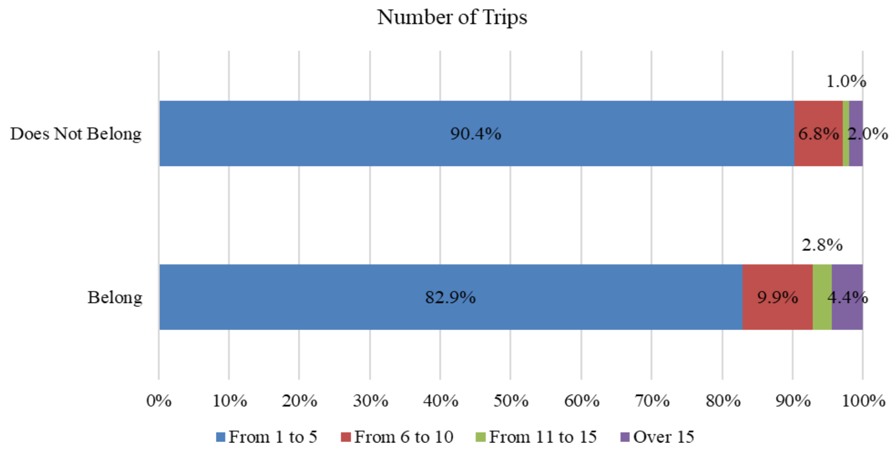


Figure 2: Comparison of the number of trips between respondents that belong or don't belong to a motor club

Analyses of data show that 60.1% of respondents belong to a mixed-branded motor club, while the 29% choose one which is monobrand[1] and the 9% is a member of a mono-model motor club: these last two categories, taken together, approximate 38%.

[1] Monobrand means that the motor club involves motorcyclists that own a motorcycle with a specific brand.

Motor clubs can be also distinguished in other categories: there are official and unofficial motor clubs (Facebook groups, blogs, or sites), but some motor clubs are specific for some types of motorcycles (vintage, endures[1]), others are related to public and private bodies (fire departments, policeman, energy distributors, phone companies) and there are also women's motor clubs. As just mentioned, a great part of motor clubs are, actually, unofficial groups of people that share the interest in driving and make trips together. This kind of motoaggregation works principally on internet and this probably comes by the necessity to develop a place of sharing away from official motor clubs and negative traits of some of them: specific requirements, the pronounced sense of rebelliousness and a very rigid hierarchical structure, with the presence of some rituals or requirements, could in fact limit or discourage the membership [5, 1].

A particular case concerns respondent that own motorcycles of the three main Japanese brands, Honda, Yamaha and Suzuki, that can be considered together, in accordance with literature [1]. Even if well represented in our sample (35.0% in total), respondents that own these motorcycles clearly prefer mixed-branded motor clubs, an evidence that could be related with the limited diffusion of official clubs of these brands in Italy, and the lack of great events organized by parent companies, that seem not to be very interested in developing a capillary network.

As already mentioned, BMW and Ducati are the most chosen brands of the sample and previous works confirm that these brands are extremely famous all over the world and are considered icons of a specific idea of life [15].

Neverthless, a difference has been noticed: 37.7% of respondents that belong to monobrand motor clubs, in fact, belong to a Ducati motorclub, while the percentage for BMW is significantly lower (29.9%). Furthermore, almost half of respondents that own a Ducati are a member of a motor club (49.7%) and the 71.1 % of them belong to a Ducati motor club. The tendency is similar also considering BMW, but values are significantly lower (43.7% and only 47.2%, respectively).

These findings show that Ducati is a very strong aggregator factor in Italy and this could be due to the high power of its merchandise and the great effort of the parent company to create a widespread network of motor clubs, also with the organization of national and international events. For example, the World Ducati Week (WDW) is a great event held every two years at the Misano Adriatico circuit, a place that is very respected by motorcyclists, especially Italian ones. Everyone can participate from the five continents [15] and there are no specific requirements, but it's an unmissable appointment for all Ducati motor clubs[2]. It has to be noted that other great international events are organised by other parent companies, as BMW, KTM and Harley Davidson, but in other countries away from Italy [15].

Concerning participation in motor meeting, only 54.6% of the sample took part at least in one motor meeting in the last 12 months. The majority of the answers were between 1 and 3 motor meetings (77%), while the highest value was one (36%),

[1] Endures are off-road vehicles, usually used for long-distance endurance racing.
[2] WDW in 2018 reached almost 100 hundred people (Source: ducati.it) [25].

compared to two (26%) and three motor meeting in the last year (15%). The 69.9% of these categories of respondents claims to be very or extremely satisfied. Respondents that didn't attend a motor meeting in the last 12 months justified their choice with lack of vacations and little interest in motor meetings. Economic availability and type of motorcycle owned, instead, seems not to be relevant.

Despite scepticism around motor clubs, it must be noted that 70.6% of them organize charity events, an aspect that has been taken in account also by FMI [10]. This fact demonstrates that motor clubs are not only involved in activities related to pleasure of driving or sportive world, but they are socially active. About this, it can be useful to remember the great support that motorcyclists gave to Italian populations stricken by the earthquake in 2016: between the various social initiatives, notably "Invaderemo Amatrice", that every year attracts hundreds of motorcyclists, favouring the re-launch of the entire area[1]. This social engagement appears in apparent contradiction with the idea of motorcyclists portrayed as rude and marginal people [21]. On the contrary, this evidence confirms that motorcyclism could be part of a strategy for the development of rural areas, as stated in literature [14].

3 Conclusions and implications

Mototourists travel essentially depending on availability of time and money, which influences the choice of accommodation and secondary activities. Furthermore, the almost total preference of motorcyclists for twisting or winding secondary roads, compared to preference for freeways, make mototourism suitable to re-launch those rural regions that do not have high road infrastructures.

The majority of the sample own motorcycles with an average displacement and they are generally expert motorcyclists, so their travel preferences probably come from routine and well-established choices. They make prevalently short trips, that last no more than 3 days and they travel low distances per day to reach destinations, which affect the free time available for secondary activities. The most part of the motorcyclists make two trips per year, with an average value of 3.8.

Analysing motoaggregation, data showed that only a low percentage of respondents belong to a motor club, but they correspond to the part of the sample that is more inclined to travel with other motorcyclists or a passenger [2] and also to the part that travel more. This means that knowing the dynamics of motor clubs could be useful for destinations to better interpret the potentiality of the territory.

Motorcyclists of the sample seems not to appreciate much "institutionalized" motoaggregation and just above half of respondents participate in motor meeting, while the remaining part answered that they don't like this type of activity. Furthermore, the

---

[1] Literally "We will invade Amatrice", in 2019 reached the fifth edition. Amatrice is one of the small town that has been completely destroyed during the earthquake. Source: https://www.motoraduni.it/motoraduno/INVADEREMO-AMATRICE-5-STAGIONE/16020.htm

most part of the sample that belong to a motor club prefers a mixed-branded motor club, but a significant percentage of respondents that own a Ducati and belong to a motor club tend to be a member of a Ducati motor club. This means that Ducati is a very aggregative factor in Italy, thanks to the power of merchandise and the organization of great events. In addition, some respondents belonging to a Ducati motor club own a motorcycle of different brands and it would be interesting to investigate the reasons why.

Therefore, we can state that mototourists travel gladly in company, preferring little groups rather than "institutionalised" organization, planning trips on their own, using internet and usually Facebook groups of unofficial motor clubs. Motor clubs and motor meetings are aggregative factors and future researches could analyze the way to intercept this market segment, which should be probably through unofficial channels, in order to exploit motoaggregation and bring benefit for territories.

Findings from this paper suggest that motor clubs and motor meetings, also thanks to their social and humanitarian activities, can be opportunities for rural territories [15]. A good strategy of touristic development, thus, should be planned, to avoid negative resident perception, without affecting the environment in a unsustainable matter, as has already occurred in some regions, as near Castelluccio [21, 7].

Knowing motorcyclists' habits, in fact, permits the development of successful touristic destinations and if a destination wants to rely on mototourists for its prosperity it should be aware of motoaggregation, that could be a crucial attractive factor.

References

1. Barbeta, M. La ambivalencia de los vínculos en el consumo: un análisis sociológico del caso Harley-Davidson, (2019).

2. Cappelloni, F., Baglioni, F., Staffieri, S. Knowledge of Mototourist's Habits to Develop a Successful Tourist Destination: an Italian Case Study, (2019)

3. Cater, C. Tourism society wales professional development award final report: motorcycle tourism in Ceredigion. Retrieved May 10, 2018, from https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/72001735.pdf, (2013).

4. Cater, C.I. Tourism on two wheels: Patterns of motorcycle leisure in Wales. Tourism Management, 61, 180–189 (2017).

5. Castellani, A. Mondo biker: bande giovanili su 2 ruote. Donzelli Editore, (1997).

6. Codron, É. Les gangs de motards criminalisés: une menace internationale parfois négligée. Sécurité globale, 5(3), 47 (2008).

7. Fabrizi, C. Domenica storica a Castelluccio: oltre 10mila visitatori. Ancora fioritura. Retrieved May 30, 2019, from http://www.umbria24.it/economia/domenica-doro-castelluccio-oltre-10-mila-visitatori-la-fioritura-mai-visti-cosi-tanti (2018).

8. Fatihudin, D., & Mochklas, M. Analysis of factors affecting consumer decision buy motorcycle (study on city of Surabaya Indonesia). International Journal of Innovative Research, 6 (6), 107-118 (2017).

9. Fjelstul, J., & Fyall A. Sustainable Drive Tourism: A Catalyst for Change. International Journal of Tourism Research, 17, 460–470 (2015).

10. FMI, Mototurismo – Turismo Epoca e Sport. Retrieved August 12, 2019, from http://www.federmoto.it/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2018/11/Regolamento-Mototurismo-Turismo-Epoca-e-Sport.pdf (2019).

11. Illum, S.F. Motorcycling and leisure: Understanding the recreational PTW rider. Book Review. Tourism Management, 32 (2011).

12. ISTAT, Report Viaggi e vacanze in Italia e all'estero, 2017. Retrieved August 12, 2019, from https://www.istat.it/it/files/2018/02/Viaggievacanze-2017.pdf

13. Pinch, P., & Reimer, S. Moto-mobilities: Geographies of the Motorcycle and Motorcyclists. Mobilities. Routledge, 7(3), 439–457 (2012).

14. Rago, A. FMI: il mototurismo risorsa per il territorio. Retrieved January 12, 2019 from https://www.moto.it/news/fmi-il-mototurismo-risorsa-per-il-territorio.html (2018).

15. Ramirez, A. E. K. *Análisis y diagnóstico de 3 rutas turísticas enfocadas al moto-turismo en el Ecuador*. Thesis (2014).

16. Robinson, M., & Picard, D. Tourism, culture and sustainable development. Retrieved May 12, 2018, from http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001475/147578e.pdf (2006).

17. Scol, J. Motorcycle tourism: renewed geographies of a marginal tourism practice, Via Tourism Review. Retrieved May 12, 2018, from http://journals.openedition.org/viatourism/356 (2016).

18. Sharpley, R., & Jepson, D. Rural tourism. Annals of Tourism Research, 38(1), 52–71. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2010.05.002 (2011).

19. Sykes, D., & Kelly, K.G. Mapping the Study of Motorcycle Tourism. in International Conference on Tourism and Events: Opportunities, Impacts and Change. (2012).

20. Sykes, D., & Kelly, K.G. Motorcycle tourism demand generators and dynamic interaction leisure. International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research, 8(1), 92–102 (2014).

21. Sykes, D., & Kelly, K.G. Motorcycle drive tourism leading to rural tourism opportunities. Tourism Economics, 22(3), 543–557 (2016).

22. UNWTO, World Tourism Organisation, www2.unwto.org

23. Viglia, G., Abrate, G., When distinction does not pay off-Investigating the determinants of European agritourism prices Journal of Business Research 80, 45-52 (2017)

24. Walker, L. Tourism and leisure motorcycle riding, in Dean Carson and Bruce Prideaux (eds) Drive Tourism, Trends and Emerging Markets. New York: Routledge, pp. 146–158 (2011).

25. WDW, https://www.ducati.com/it/it/experience/world-ducati-week, 2019.

26. Weddell, M. Travel Preferences of Recreational Motorcyclists, Journal of Tourism Insights, 5(1) (2014).

Economic size of Italian hotels: dynamics and prospects in the digital age. Trends from a quantitative analysis on balance-sheets

Pietro Pavone

Abstract The recent digital, social and economic transformations have modified the structure and characteristics of the accommodation capacity in Italy.
This paper investigates the dimensional dynamics that have affected the Italian hotel offer over the past ten years, through a quantitative analysis that covered the balance-sheets of a significant sample of hotels in the three macro-geographical areas of the North, Center and South Italy. The main objective of the research is to verify whether dimensional reconfigurations emerge from the balance-sheets of hotel companies, implemented in response to the new challenges of the external environment. Current trends and future perspectives are outlined, providing useful information to govern the new changes.

Key words: italian hotels, economic size, digital age, digital technologies, structural downsizing, balance-sheets

1 Literature Review

Only an interdisciplinary perspective can frame the theme of the recent frontiers of tourism, empirically elaborating and testing new theories in the digital age.

About the dimensional factor, scholars of economic disciplines, driven by a traditional neoclassical vision of the company, have always emphasized the importance

[1] Pietro Pavone, Department of Law, Economics, Management and Quantitative Methods, University of Sannio, Benevento, Italy; email: pietro.pavone@unisannio.it.

of the concept of economies of scale. Indeed, Bauman and Kaen (2003) distinguish between:

- technological theories, which focus physical capital and, therefore, economies of scale as the main source of profitability;
- organizational theories, which address the issues of size and profitability using the conceptual tools of transaction and agency costs;
- institutional theories, typical of corporate governance studies, which relate the dimensional profile to environmental variables, often representative of economic-regulatory frameworks.

However, it is certain that the study of the relationship between company size and profitability is fundamental for a correct analysis of the genesis of added value (Abdurahman *et al.*, 2003; Sing and Schmidgall, 2013; Poldrugovac *et al.*, 2016). Several Italian economists have also focused their studies on the analysis of the origin of hotel profitability (Liberatore, 2001; Ricci *et al.*, 2007; Desinano, 2010; Molinari, 2017; Bonfiglietti, 2018; Iovino and Migliaccio, 2018a and 2018b). From a methodological point of view, however, we can see the widespread propensity to neglect the instrument of balance-sheet analysis of tourist companies, failing to intercept trends that accounting can certainly reflect. Even the accounting studies focused mainly on the analysis of the economic conditions of hotel management, rather than on the evolution of size profiles. Thus Xu (2017) carried out a correlation study between operational efficiency and hotel profitability, referring to the research of Sami and Mohamed (2014) on the relationships between economic, financial and management efficiency. The issue of managerial efficiency, which also considers aspects linked to the question of the best size profile, is developed by Ben Aissa and Goaied (2016) considering a sample of 27 Tunisian hotel companies and then by Singh (2017) which highlighted the strategic role of revenue management of Indian hotels. Similar in methodology to this paper is Nwosu's research (2016) because it provides an overview of the dimensional and structural dynamics that define, govern and shape the hotel industry sector in Nigeria.

In addition to the stimuli deriving from the academic literature, some data from official statistics also offer hints for the insights proposed in this paper. For example, in Italy, in line with the European trend, hotels located in urban areas are larger than those in rural areas and hotel facilities are mainly concentrated in medium-sized urban centers (Eurostat, 2018). Furthermore, the trend, generally decreasing since the beginning of the 2000s and among the lowest in Europe, of the gross utilization rate of hotels clearly shows an oversized offer compared to demand. The index, which reached its lowest point in 2009, and again in 2017 was about 1% lower than at the beginning of the millennium (Bank of Italy, 2018), was affected by some geopolitical events which, starting from 2001, have had a negative impact on long-distance travel, as well as the long economic crisis that has affected Italy since the second half of 2008. Indeed, there is also a recent literature that has investigated the effects on tourism of the global financial crisis of 2008 (Cohen, 2010; Feng *et al.*, 2014; Perles-Ribes *et al.*, 2016; Grechi *et al.*, 2017; Alvarez-Ferrer *et al.* 2018; Angel *et al.*, 2018; Iovino and Migliaccio, 2018a and 2018b), without nevertheless intercepting changes in the size dynamics connected to the economic crisis.

2 Method and empirical findings

The study is based on the following hypotheses.

It is hypothesized that technological and digital transformations have reduced the importance of the physicality of corporate structures and processes and of the associated economies of scale:

H1: hotel companies have responded to the changed competitive environment with a smaller average size profile.

Furthermore, it is believed that the international economic crisis, by reducing the economic resources of tourists, has held back the expansion of the hotel offer:

H2: the economic crisis has reduced the investments of hotels in Italy, favoring their downsizing.

Finally, it is reasonable to believe that the economic and patrimonial figures in the balance sheets of Italian hotels reflect the territorial specificities of the areas where they are located:

H3: Italian hotels, located in different macro-regions due to their territorial conformation and tourist vocation, also present dimensional differences.

From these reflections, the following research questions arise:

RQ1: what was the trend of the most representative dimensional indices in the considered period?

RQ2: have the dimensional dynamics had a different evolution in relation to the geographical location of the companies?

Object of the research are the balance-sheets of a sample of 5473 hotels with turnover over 800,000 euros, from 2009 to 2018. The "columnwise" method was used to consider for each variable all the available observations, always numerous and therefore significant. The trends and the main statistics of the following dimensional indexes are determined, illustrated and commented: total assets, total technical fixed assets, turnover, operating result and number of employees. In addition to the national temporal evolution, a disaggregated analysis by geographical macro-areas is provided: North (Valle d'Aosta, Piemonte, Liguria, Emilia-Romagna, Lombardia, Trentino-Alto Adige, Veneto and Friuli-Venezia Giulia), Centre (Toscana, Umbria, Marche, Abruzzo and Lazio) e Sud Italia (Campania, Molise, Puglia, Basilica, Sicilia and Sardegna).

There were (figure 1) 2578 hotel businesses located in northern Italy, 1578 in central Italy and 1317 in the south. Table 1 shows the high concentration of hotels in Lazio (838, over half of the businesses of Central Italy) and in Lombardy (711, almost a third of the hotels in the North); the southern region with the greatest presence of hotels is Campania (460 compared to a total of 1317).

Figure 1: Data distribution by geographical areas

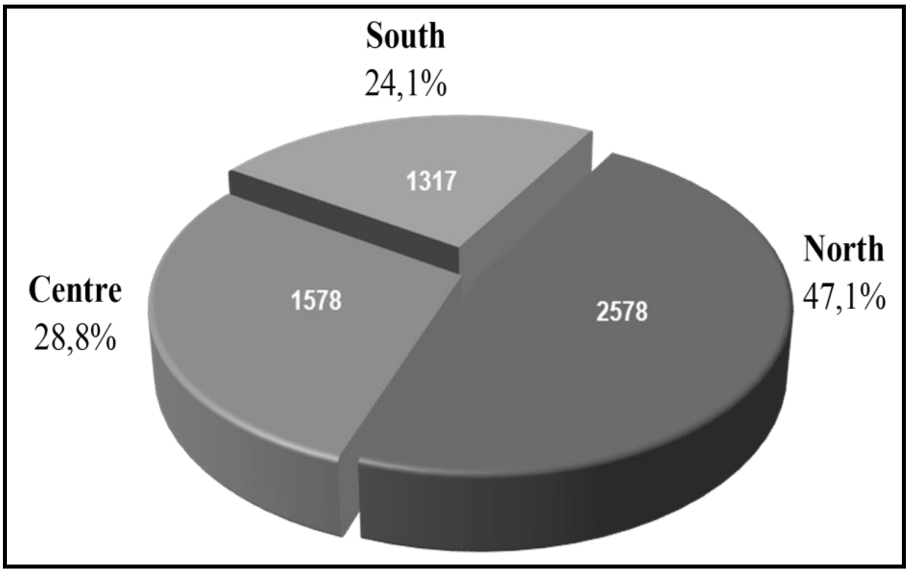


Table 1: Data distribution by regions

Regions	*Obs.*	*%*
Lombardia	711	13,0%
Veneto	557	10,2%
Emilia-Romagna	464	8,5%
Trentino-Alto Adige	415	7,6%
Piemonte	185	3,4%
Liguria	129	2,3%
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	82	1,5%
Valle d'Aosta	35	0,6%
NORTH	2578	47,1%
Lazio	838	15,3%
Toscana	473	8,6%
Abruzzo	116	2,1%
Marche	93	1,7%
Umbria	58	1,1%
CENTRE	1578	28,8%
Campania	460	8,4%

Sicilia	268	4,9%
Sardegna	213	3,9%
Puglia	209	3,8%
Calabria	105	1,9%
Basilicata	43	0,8%
Molise	19	0,4%
SOUTH	1317	24,1%
Total Italy	5473	100,0%

Total assets

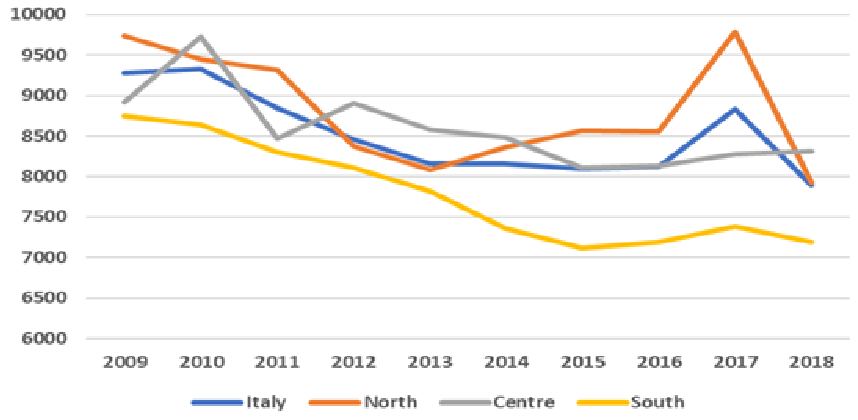
This parameter, more exhaustive than the total number of rooms often used as a dimensional measure (Zhang *et al.*, 2011), highlights all the investments and resources available to hotel companies. Table 2 summarizes, by geographical macro-areas, the statistics calculated on the sample data.

Table 2: Total assets – Statistics

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
North										
Obs.	1354	1428	1497	1574	1620	1711	1783	1874	1913	1489
Mean	9733	9451	9316	8368	8086	8357	8562	8555	9787	7928
Med.	3205	3162	3161	2999	2993	2983	2914	2937	3026	3305
S.d.	36865,4	34220,1	33526,55	29030,63	28466,09	31063,33	32849,6	32568,33	64731,72	26220,37
Var.	1359057719	1171014988	1124029373	842777583	810318323	964930524	1079096532	1060696293	4190195427	687507866
Min.	3	3	4	1	1	2	2	4	9	69
Max.	789698	692212	670265	678829	657774	727173	725044	801186	2449875	726546
Centre										
Obs.	757	790	824	855	897	938	973	981	992	638
Mean	8912	9725	8473	8905	8579	8477	8106	8135	8272	8310
Med.	2607	2582	2458	2400	2380	2263	2285	2306	2413	2661
S.d.	26557,22	34928,44	22850,93	31771,18	30876,6	30452,65	28098,2	27733,23	27152,2	17797,93
Var.	705285748	1219995746	522164905	100940763	953364380	927364063	789508708	769132156	737241737	316766396
Min.	7	7	8	7	2	1	10	11	1	117
Max.	414368	682869	319200	682836	676502	670538	664206	658657	649286	149823
South										
Obs.	659	687	720	750	775	824	868	894	883	479
Mean	8746	8636	8306	8111	7820	7362	7111	7184	7379	7192
Med.	3980	3847	3935	3657	3315	3057	2765	2743	2953	2999
S.d.	21190,14	20898,41	20322,81	20848,21	20750,3	20499,66	20260,69	20444,42	19768,20	22756,86
Var.	449022055	436743342	413016688	434647800	430575134	420235899	410495524	417974405	390781581	517874494
Min.	2	4	5	5	5	1	1	5	30	172
Max.	370233	368653	373059	410489	416685	462239	464482	471850	425546	437723

Figure 2, which shows the evolution of the balance sheet assets by geographical area and the comparison with the national value, shows the overall decreasing trend of the average values, except for the hotels in Northern Italy which record a rise in values after 2013. The minimum value is for Southern hotel companies (7111 in 2015), while the highest is recorded in the North (9787 in 2017). Consistently with these indications, the lowest values are present in the South (average value of 7784, well below the national average: 8513).

Figure 2: Total assets trend



Technical fixed assets

These are the investments in productive factors that represent the operational and productive structure of the company; they also measure structural rigidity and that of production processes.

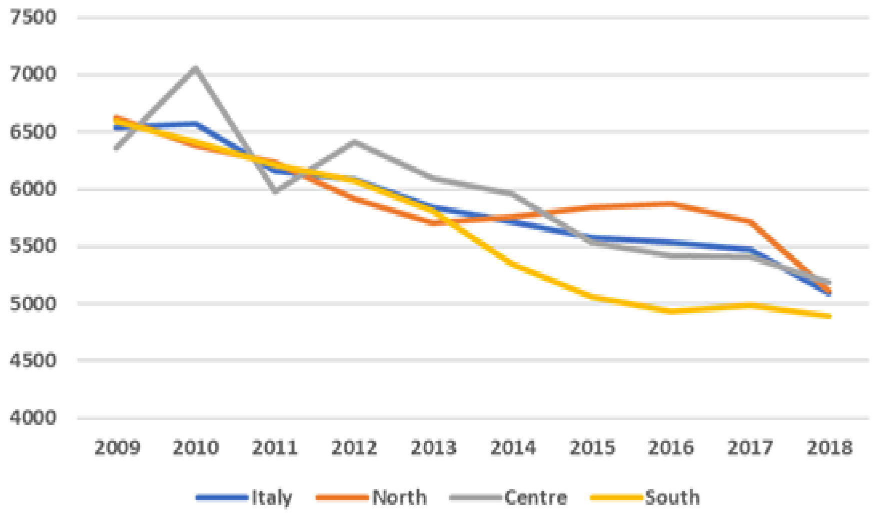
Table 3: Technical fixed assets – Statistics

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
North										
Obs.	1354	1428	1497	1574	1621	1711	1784	1875	1914	1489
Mean	6625	6383	6234	5911	5703	5756	5845	5878	5717	5113
Med.	1980	1898	1892	1677	1632	1582	1477	1538	1521	1822
S.d.	24084,11	22074,48	21350,62	20590,42	20096,99	21079,04	22020,32	22097,31	21269,75	14299,71
Var.	580044364	487282650	455848782	423965240	403889137	444326085	484894402	488291184	452402068	204481779
Min.	0	0	-108	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Max.	531477	519383	518259	510045	505382	499670	487831	509949	498708	379289
Centre										
Obs.	757	790	824	855	897	938	973	981	992	638
Mean	6357	7053	5978	6416	6097	5963	5534	5417	5411	5189
Med.	971	788	774	673	543	517	464	515	545	714
S.d.	22388,6	30558,67	20187,78	27634,82	26706,69	26147,37	24127,27	23217,58	22673,09	14069,18
Var.	501249564	933832198	407546589	763683469	713247344	683684996	582125082	539056027	514069215	197941758
Min.	-183	0	-833	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Max.	360504	595389	293868	591078	583562	576044	568528	559081	548468	141735
South										
Obs.	659	687	720	750	775	824	868	894	883	479

Mean	6592	6409	6207	6071	5815	5346	5058	4928	4988	4894
Med.	2731	2623	2556	2329	2105	1885	1508	1425	1600	1706
S.d.	16494,3	16110,82	15904,22	15911,74	16293,2	15072,87	14677,77	14355,74	14324,62	17066,77
Var.	272061985	259558488	252944314	253183617	265468392	227191410	215436802	206087408	205194855	291274770
Min.	-32	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Max.	284989	282905	287305	301131	327017	343617	338406	331946	326317	336313

From a comparison with the total assets (table 3), this rigidity is high for hotels, given that structural costs constitute the prevalent part (about 70%) of total costs, in line with similar results in the tourism sector encountered by Benevolo and Grasso (2019). Figure 3 confirms the general trend of disinvestment already emerged by analyzing the total balance sheet assets, showing an always decreasing trend of national average values (from an overall average at the beginning of the period of about 6500 to an average value of 5000 at the end of the period (4894 in the South, where the lowest values are recorded). 4894 is also the minimum value, while the maximum is reached at the Center in 2010, an area of the country where on average investments in technical fixed assets are higher in the period under observation.

Figure 3: Technical fixed assets trend



Turnover

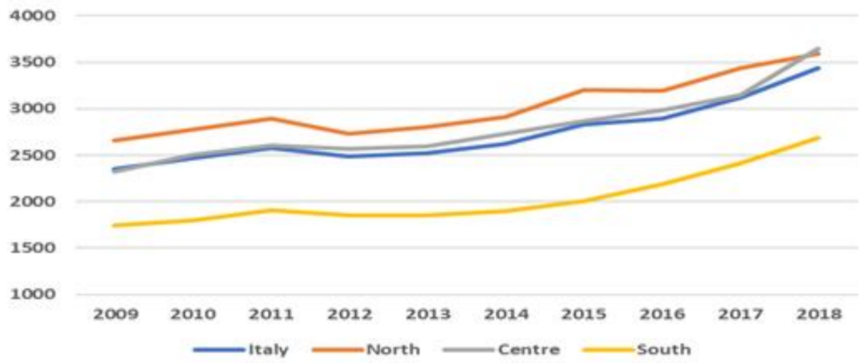
It indicates the quantity of goods sold for which the relative invoices have been issued. In the tourism sector, given the nature of the service offered by accommodation facilities with payments that are normally imminent or even anticipated, it appears to be a valid indicator of economic and size developments.

Table 4: Turnover – Statistics

North										
	2009	***2010***	***2011***	***2012***	***2013***	***2014***	***2015***	***2016***	***2017***	***2018***
Obs.	1352	1428	1497	1574	1621	1711	1784	1875	1914	1489
Mean	2659	2773	2892	2734	2805	2913	3205	3196	3436	3588
Med.	1216	1252	1341	1315	1312	1350	1452	1527	1633	1775
S.d.	8056,33	8424,59	8678,60	8711,22	8889,42	8947,35	9810,57	9058,16	9729,61	9928,46
Var.	64904526	70973700	75318151	75885421	79021747	80055103	96247243	82050207	94665219	98574254
Min.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Max.	149849	156095	146101	203598	210648	221947	261830	263149	272868	287694
Centre										
Obs.	756	789	824	855	897	938	973	981	992	638
Mean	2327	2500	2606	2566	2599	2730	2867	2982	3151	3645
Med.	1259	1312	1315	1310	1316	1333	1399	1459	1519	1810
S.d.	4229,69	4520,43	4699,34	4594,67	4488,37	4917,86	4979,99	5201,44	5462,21	6340,92
Var.	17890267	20434302	22083759	21110992	20145499	24185343	24800340	27055017	29835737	40207251
Min.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Max.	52521	53326	58902	53022	51412	53352	55506	60243	62175	76328
South										
Obs.	657	686	720	750	775	824	868	893	883	479
Mean	1742	1800	1905	1855	1848	1900	2003	2185	2418	2682
Med.	1091	1128	1178	1144	1169	1211	1305	1417	1532	1652
S.d.	2863,12	2929,46	2996,90	3031,59	2928,17	2879,99	2999,95	3164,15	3515,13	4506,94
Var.	8197466	8581749	8981417	9190554	8574177	8294354	8999718	10011872	12356135	20312497
Min.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Max.	52387	56170	58922	63578	62942	63209	66073	71166	78540	84716

The trend (figure 4) is generally growing but there are significant differences between the groups: the tendency of Central Italy follows the national one; higher values (equal to 3020 on average) in the North; the turnover of Southern companies is much more limited (average value of 2033). The range of variation fluctuates between 1742 in the South in 2009 and 3645 in the Center in 2018 (table 4).

Figure 4: Turnover trend



Operating result

The difference between the value of production (net sales revenues plus revenues from secondary services) and the cost of production is the result of characteristic management.

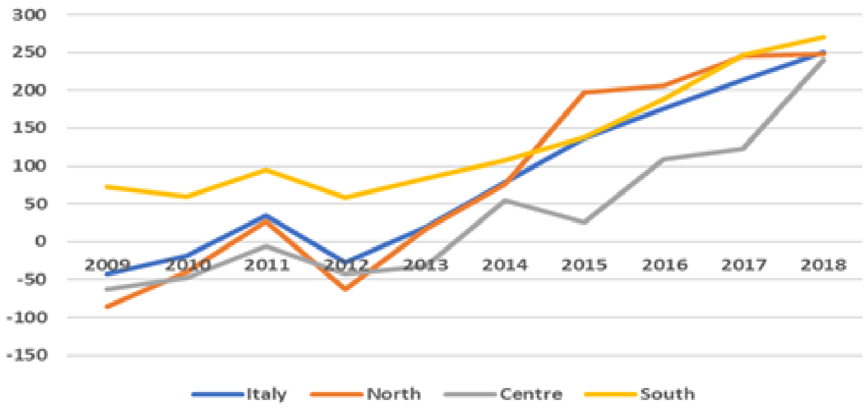
Table 5: Operating result – Statistics

North										
	2009	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**
Obs.	1354	1428	1497	1574	1621	1711	1784	1875	1914	1489
Mean	-86	-40	27	-63	17	76	197	206	245	248
Med.	21	37	49	28	35	46	80	86	101	106
S.d.	1928,4	1722,75	1277,97	2647,94	1355,5	941,69	1275,14	1179,49	1331,65	1197,89
Var.	3718721	2967858	1633196	7011575	1837377	886780	1625980	1391208	1773281	1434952
Min.	-40561	-47231	-23497	-85697	-24695	-12111	-11278	-14862	-28986	-7199
Max.	11001	10719	12955	13620	13493	19029	28586	30702	22018	35728
Centre										
Obs.	757	790	824	855	897	938	973	981	992	638
Mean	-63	-48	-6	-43	-33	54	26	109	123	240
Med.	22	36	40	29	35	42	43	53	60	77
S.d.	834,27	1510,18	999,88	1119,06	1332,33	806,71	1466,04	976,60	2569,92	1180,83
Var.	696009	2280658	999753	1252287	1775109	650787	2149262	953748	6604494	1394352
Min.	-11692	-33274	-13535	-19075	-24110	-11348	-30883	-13934	-71318	-10334
Max.	7328	7046	7445	8270	8141	8998	8523	10218	23297	13628
South										
Obs.	659	687	720	750	775	824	868	894	883	479
Mean	72	60	95	59	83	108	138	188	246	270
Med.	32	32	45	32	41	55	58	88	94	122
S.d.	569,64	579,87	682,07	754,11	707,44	604,28	616,71	701,68	842,90	899,95

Var.	324491	336252	465226	568687	500477	365152	380327	492352	710473	809902
Min.	-4229	-4382	-4596	-4604	-3788	-3771	-5282	-7088	-2148	-1748
Max.	6989	7775	12818	15651	15206	11134	8729	12610	18171	16814

In the two-year period 2008-09 the global economic crisis has significantly affected the arrivals and presences of foreigners in Italy, which however have started to increase rapidly since 2010 (Istat, 2017). For the Italians, on the other hand, the most marked decline was recorded in the three-year period 2011-13, in correspondence with the sovereign debt crisis, which caused a significant reduction in national consumption, including expenses for tourist trips. The operating result of the companies reflects these dynamics (table 5), recording low and in some cases negative values both at the Center and in the North, before a new fall after 2011. The results are better and exponentially increasing starting from 2013 (figure 5).

Figure 5: Operating result trend



Number of employees

In general, in the tourism sector, where hospitality is a necessary condition for creating value, the human factor remains today a strategic variable. According to the Unioncamere report of 2018, between 2008 and 2017 employment in tourism increased by about 20%.

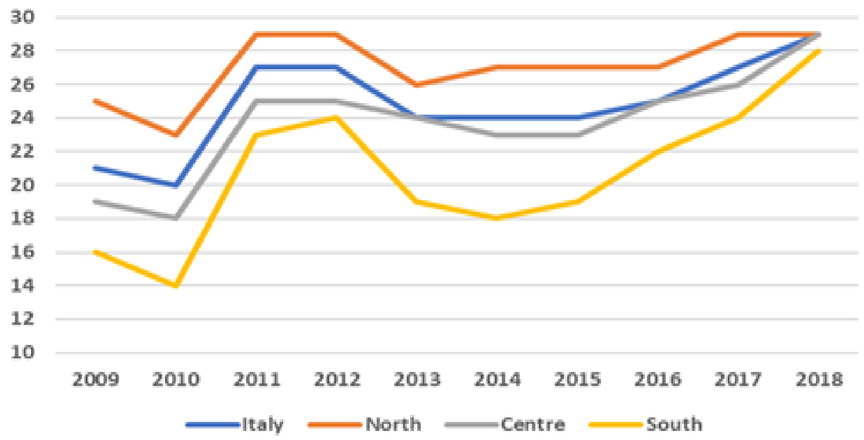
Table 6: Number of employees – Statistics

North										
	2009	*2010*	*2011*	*2012*	*2013*	*2014*	*2015*	*2016*	*2017*	*2018*
Obs.	1046	1130	1466	1571	1614	1708	1782	1871	1907	1488
Mean	25	23	29	29	26	27	27	27	29	29
Med.	10	7	16	16	15	15	15	16	17	17
S.d.	84	80,76	70,44	72,08	64,14	62,55	60,46	50,42	58,5	59,18
Var.	7056	6522	4962	5195	4114	3913	3656	2542	3423	3502

Min.	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Max.	1459	1365	1240	1755	1414	1303	1356	805	1255	1280
Centre										
Obs.	594	630	802	850	891	936	973	978	988	637
Mean	19	18	25	25	24	23	23	25	26	29
Med.	9	5	14	14	13	13	13	14	15	16
S.d.	42,89	44,83	43,49	45,88	45,25	40,11	40,55	41,29	41,10	47,84
Var.	1839	2009	1891	2105	2048	1609	1644	1705	1689	2288
Min.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Max.	415	447	529	551	600	463	425	420	424	588
South										
Obs.	506	519	700	748	769	820	861	886	874	476
Mean	16	14	23	24	19	18	19	22	24	28
Med.	7	0	16	16	13	13	14	16	17	20
S.d.	38,55	31,34	35,45	37,04	21,25	20,85	21,97	26,60	26,77	28,02
Var.	1486	982	1257	1372	452	435	483	708	716	785
Min.	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Max.	657	462	672	705	176	188	225	409	313	228

Considering table 6 and figure 6, the employment rate is higher in the North (on average 27 employees, above the national figure: 24.8). In the South the value is on average lower: 20.7. The dynamics of Central Italy (on average 23.7) follow the national one. However, the general trend is upward (28 employees in 2017 in the South and 29 in other areas). The minimum value is in the South at the beginning of the period (16).

Figure 6: Number of employees trend



3 Conclusion and implication

The present quantitative research has analyzed the main dimensional indexes derived from the financial statements of 5473 hotel companies operating in the three Italian geographical macro-areas (North, Center and South) from 2009 to 2018, an extremely significant time span because it is crossed by epochal tendencies:

- the development of the sharing economy and online intermediation channels, which favored the further expansion of B&Bs and the offer of private accommodation;
- the global financial crisis, whose consequences in 2009 still slowed down the entire Italian economy and that of the tourism sector.

In this renewed scenario, the penetration of digital technologies increases the possibility of differentiating and distributing on the territory the accommodation offer, attenuating some elements of fragility deriving from the scarce presence of large tourism companies, for the benefit of less sized structures that are more difficult to attract customer attention. This would explain the downsizing of assets in the balance sheets of the analyzed sample (H1), with a reduction in fixed structural costs without reducing profitability and competitiveness in the sector. Hotel companies, already affected by structural downsizing phenomena due to the crisis, then produced negative operating results precisely in the hardest years of the crisis and in those immediately following them, with turnover down in the period 2011-2013 (H2). Finally, it is noted that tourism in Italy remains a "territorialized" phenomenon (H3): there are areas to be exploited to benefit from the potential of the sector, especially in the South, where hotel companies appear relatively undersized and where, given the delay in development in this area, the benefits could be greater in terms of impact on territory and employment.

The main limitation of this study is its almost exclusively quantitative nature based on balance sheet data of companies with at least € 800,000 in turnover. Furthermore, the survey refers to the individual balance-sheets of hotel businesses and, therefore, does not consider the possible presence of groups of companies. Then, balance-sheet considerations should be integrated, in an interdisciplinary way, with qualitative analyzes, given the social, environmental and ethical impacts of tourism. In conclusion, it is believed that this paper has different implications: the first relates to the method, which can be replicated to favor auspicious comparative analyzes. The study can also be useful to public decision-makers and administrators who want to develop policies to promote tourism in the territories. It could also help hotel entrepreneurs, helping them to understand the genesis of profitability.

4 Citations and References

1. Abdurahman, A., Awad, S.H., Erik, V.N. & Jeffrey, S.R.: Indicator variables model of firm's size-profitability relationship of electrical contractors using financial and economic data. Journal of Construction Engineering and Management, 192-197 (2003)
2. Alvarez-Ferrer, A., Campa-Planas, F. & Gonzales-Bustos, J.P.: Identification of the key factors for success in the hotel sector. Intangible Capital, 14(1), 74-98 (2018)

3. Angel, K., Menéndez-Plans, C. & Orgaz-Guerrero, N.: Risk management: comparative analysis of systematic risk and effect of the financial crisis on US tourism industry: Panel data research. International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 30(3),1920-1938 (2018)
4. Banca d'Italia: Turismo in Italia. Numeri e potenziale di sviluppo, n. 23. Roma, Italy (2018)
5. Baumann, H.D. & Kaen, F.R.: Firm size, employees and profitability in U.S. manufacturing industries. Soc. Sci. Res. Net., 13, 71-79 (2003)
6. Ben Aissa, S. & Goaied, M. (2016), Determinants of Tunisian hotel profitability: The role of managerial efficiency. Tourism Management, 52, 478-487.
7. Benevolo, C. & Grasso, M.: Destinazioni e imprese turistiche. Milano, Italy: Franco Angeli (2019)
8. Bonfiglietti, F.: La gestione professionale dell'azienda alberghiera. Milano, Italy: Franco Angeli, 1-314 (2018)
9. Cohen, E.: Tourism crises: A comparative perspective. International Journal of Tourism Policy, 3(4), 281-296 (2010)
10. Desinano P.: Hotel revenue management. Un approccio consapevole. Milano, Italy: Franco Angeli, 1-164 (2010)
11. Eurostat: Methodological manual on territorial typologies. Luxembourg (2018)
12. Feng, W., Ma, Y. & Deng, S.: FJ CTS Group: Strategic restructuring for turnaround. Asian Case Research Journal, 18(1), 199-221 (2014)
13. Grechi, D., Ossola, P. & Tanda, A.: The European tourism industry in crisis: A stock market perspective. Tourism Analysis, 22(2), 139-148 (2017)
14. Iovino, F. & Migliaccio, G.: Profitability dynamics of tourism companies during the crisis period 2007-2015. In Vrontis D., Weber Y., Tsoukatos E. (Eds), Conference readings book proceedings, 11th Annual Conference of the EuroMed: *Research Advancements in National and Global Business. Theory and Practice*, Valletta, Malta, September 12th-14th, EuroMed Press: Cyprus, 663-677 (2018a)
15. Iovino, F. & Migliaccio, G.: Financial dynamics of tourism companies, travel agencies and tour operators, during the crisis period. In Conference Proceedings: 2nd International Scientific Conference on Economics and Management - EMAN 2018: *Economics & Management: How to Cope With Disrupted Times*, Ljubljana, Slovenia, March 22th, Printed by: All in One Print Center, Belgrade, 693-702 (2018b)
16. Istat: Conto satellite del turismo per l'Italia. Statistiche report (2017)
17. Liberatore, G.: *Nuove prospettive di analisi dei costi e dei ricavi nelle imprese alberghiere*. Milano, Italy: Franco Angeli, 1-202 (2001)
18. Molinari, V.: *Profit Management alberghiero. Filosofia, tecniche e strategie per l'ottimizzazione dei ricavi dell'albergo*. Milano, Italy: Franco Angeli, 1-114 (2017)
19. Nwosu, B.: A review of the hotel industry in Nigeria: size, structure and issues. Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes, 8(2), 117-133 (2016)
20. Perles-Ribes, J. F., Ram n-Rodr guez, A. B., Sevilla-Jiménez, M. & Rubia, A.: The effects of economic crises on tourism success: An integrated model. Tourism Economics, 22(2), 417-447 (2016)
21. Poldrugovac, K., Tekavcic, M. & Jankovic, S.: Efficiency in the hotel industry: an empirical examination of the most influential factors, Economic Research-Ekonomska Istraživanja, 29(1), 583-597 (2016)
22. Ricci, P., Jannelli, R. & Migliaccio, G.: Profili gestionali e rivelazioni contabili delle imprese alberghiere. Milano, Italy: Franco Angeli, 1-258 (2007)
23. Sami, B.A. & Mohamed, G.: Determinants of tourism hotel profitability in Tunisia. Tourism and Hospitality Research, 14(4), 163-175 (2014)
24. Singh, A.J. & Schmidgall, R.S.: Does Financial Performance Depend on Hotel Size? Analysis of the Financial Profile of the U.S. Lodging Industry. Hospitality Review, 30(2) (2013)
25. Singh, A.: Competing for profitability: The role of revenue management as a strategic choice for indian hotels. The Indian Hospitality Industry: Dynamics and Future Trends, 86-104 (2017)
26. Unioncamere Campania: Il bilancio del 2016 e prime evidenze per il 2017. Fondazione Istituto Guglielmo Tagliacarne. Osservatorio economico della regione Campania (2018)
27. Xu, X.: Evaluating operating and profitability efficiencies of hotel companies. International Journal of Information and Decision Sciences, 9(4), 315-333 (2017)
28. Zhang, H., Zhang, J., Lu, S., Cheng, S., & Zhang, J.: Modeling hotel room price with geographically weighted regression. International Journal of Hospitality Management, *30*(4), 1036-1043 (2011)

Accessible tourism in Italy: state of the art and future prospects in the digital age

Guido Migliaccio

Abstract Commonly accepted ethical principles, but also profitable economic logic, require attention to the tourist needs of people with disabilities. The paper illustrates the evolution and current situation of accessible tourism in Italy, and its possible prospects, in the digital age. In fact, many current results and even future projects are linked to the evolution of the IT technologies that often replace the human assistance of people with disabilities. The evolution of the sector is presented, also considering the recent regulatory changes. Some Italian initiatives for disabled population are described. Then the focus is on the current and potential contribution of ICT and digital reality based on the dissemination of information on the Internet. Italy can be an important example for many other countries.

Key words: Accessible tourism in Italy, Universal tourism, Disability, Benchmarking, ICT, Information and Communications Technology

1 Introduction

The Italian population with disabilities is constantly growing (Istat, 2017; Laganà, 2017; Censis, 2014), and this creates new ethical, social and economic problems. An inclusive society designed and managed "for all" is therefore the subject of frequent reflection (Migliaccio, 2015b & 2016b; Levitas, 2005), also in the business economic field, developing the logics of "disability management" (Metallo et al., 2009; Migliaccio, 2015a, 2016a & 2019a; Angeloni, 2010, 2011 & 2013b; Borgonovi & Angeloni, 2016; Borgonovi & Angeloni, 2017).

The tourism sector is not exempt from this distance, also induced by ethical principles (Nicolaides, 2018a; 2018b, 2018c & 2019; Ramphal & Nicolaides, 2018; Nicolaides & Grobler, 2017) and by significant profit opportunities.

[13] Guido Migliaccio, Department of Law, Economics, Management and Quantitative Methods, University of Sannio, Benevento, Italy; email: guido.migliaccio@unisannio.it. It is right to thank Pietro Pavone for the important work of translating the text of this paper from Italian into English.

The theme also affects Italy, which remains a desired tourist destination (ONT, 2018), despite the growing competition from developing countries. It is rapidly developing inclusive tourism initiatives (Migliaccio, 2018b & 2019b).

An important role for achieving a tourism for all is played by ICT (Information and Communications Technology) (Migliaccio, 2016b) which will have an essential function in the new digital societies.

2 Purpose, methodology and structure of the paper

The main purpose of this paper is to illustrate the situation of accessible tourism in Italy, and its future prospects, in relation to the use of the most modern ICTs.

The research questions are:

- RQ1: What are the main experiences of Italian inclusive tourism, exemplary for other countries?
- RQ2: What is the contribution of ICT for inclusive tourism in Italy and in the world?

After a brief review of international literature, the paper tries to answer these questions.

The hypotheses are:

- H1: Italy makes tourist sites accessible.
- H2: ICT promote inclusive tourism.

This research favors benchmarking, proposing exportable experiences in other geographical areas, stimulating learning and creativity (Fondazione Cariplo, 2008; Garbellano, 2006; Keegan & O'Kelly, 2007; Watson, 1995). It can therefore bring out gaps in one region compared to others, and thus stimulate public authorities and private companies to intervene to improve services to the population with disabilities.

Tourism is a privileged theme for benchmarking (Buhalis et al., 2012; De Salvo et al., 2013): this is also the case for the accessible one.

This paper proposes several critical considerations, considering the latest developments and reviewing the best international bibliography. This work offers interdisciplinary value because it originates from the combination of technical (ICT), general economic, managerial, and ethical aspects.

3 Literature Review

The bibliographic analysis can be distinguished with respect to the theme of accessible tourism and that of ICT.

Accessible tourism

The critical collection of the main contributions is edited by Small & Darcy (2010a) and by Ibarra et al. (2016). It is possible to distinguish studies related to the demand and the supply of the market.

The characteristics of the disabled tourist are outlined in Gallucci & Marino (2009), Lurgi, (2009), Figueiredo et al. (2012) and Gassiot et al. (2018). This latest study also proposes a particular classification, despite the extreme diversity of disabilities, which could also lead to personalized services (Zajadacz, 2015). However, the common needs are described in Zenko & Sardi (2014).

The importance of inclusive tourism for society and the economy is underlined by Lehto et al. (2018) and from Eichhorn et al. (2013) according to which tourism offers greater possibilities to develop a sense of self-identity, as highlighted by the strong denial to make use of specialised operators.

A different culture also allows the overcoming of the resistance of people with disabilities who fear to encounter physical and psychological barriers (Pagán, 2012) and therefore choose a tourist destination in relation to criteria different from normal people (Darcy, 2010).

International literature underlines the importance of inclusive tourism, highlighting its benefits, as well as the respect of ethical principles (Kulichova, 2014; Popiel, 2014; Foggin, 2010; Small & Darcy, 2010b; Kastenholz et al., 2015). Some contributions, instead, focus on the role of public authorities and on the most recent regulatory reforms (Shaw, 2011; Goodall et al., 2004; Shaw & Coles, 2004). The situation is very different in different countries (Devile & Kastenholz, 2018; Domínguez Vila et al., 2015; Le et al., 2012; Patterson et al., 2012; Gröschl, 2007; Cernaianu & Sobry, 2011).

The spread of accessible tourist environments favors all users (Buhalis et al., 2012), with benefits for companies' profitability (Morad, 2007).

However, a widespread culture of inclusion is needed, forming the new generations (Bizjak et al., 2011) and making use of third-sector companies (Hunter-Jones & Thornton, 2012).

These themes, with reference to the Italian reality, are proposed in Agovino et al. (2017), Angeloni (2013a), Migliaccio (2014; 2018b & 2019b), Gelarda & Bardi, 2011; Leone, 2013; Lepri, 2011; Citarella, 2016; Bardelli, 2007; Arenghi, 2001; Fauzzi et al., 2008) as well as in useful operational guides (Integrated Cooperatives Consortium, 1992; Fantini & Matteucci, 2003; Touring, 2004).

ICT for accessibility

A brief reference to research related to technological innovations (Bogdanova & Gjorgjevikj, 2015; Govardhan et al., 2015, ecc.). ICTs mainly represent the main solutions for health problems (Haluza & Jungwirth, 2015; Salkever et al., 2000) and for teaching students with disabilities (Garbutt & Kyobe, 2013; Bocconi & Ott, 2013; Aesaert et al. 2015; Salehi et al., 2014; Sbattella & Tedesco, 2013; Papavasiliou et al., 2014; Istenic Starcic & Bagon, 2014; Lidström & Hemmingsson, 2014).

After schooling, ICT helps with the inclusion of disabled people in society by promoting the ethical principle of equal opportunities (Toboso, 2011; Foster, 2011). Some studies are: Falch, 2014; Bada, 2012; Ishida, 2015; Youngsang et al., 2007; Seneviratne & Percival, 2005.

ICT are not enough to eliminate prejudices against people with disabilities: a new culture is needed, based on different values!

4 Description and Discussion: accessible Italian tourism

In 2013 the public authorities presented the first "White Book" on tourism for all in Italy (Mission Structure for the Revival of the Image of Italy, 2013; Angeloni, 2013a) which also outlined the highlights of the development of accessible tourism, which, in the first decades of the Republic, coincided with social tourism, often assisted by voluntary associations. Only at the end of the previous millennium, are the first initiatives related to accessibility, including seminars and conferences, followed by some projects (Italy for everyone, Yes, travel ... tourism for everyone, STARe - Tourist Services for Accessibility and Comfortable Residence, Vademecum for tourists with special needs, SuperAbile portal; Charter of Rimini, The Park belongs to everyone. The world too; Accessible Cities of European Regions; Hospital City Card; Italian Institute for Tourism for All; Calypso project) and numerous books and manuals, including: Laura & Petrangeli (2003), Fantini & Matteucci (2003), Touring (2004), etc.

This also in relation to an international and Italian regulatory development, accompanied by special "accessibility posters" (of accessible tourism and culture accessible to all) and by "guidelines for overcoming architectural barriers in places of cultural interest (Mibac, 2008; Caprara et al., 2008). Many initiatives have been financed by public entities, in addition to activities of associations or foundations (Attanasio, 2009).

The different situations related more or less directly to accessible tourism are briefly described (Migliaccio, 2014 & 2019b):

1) Transports

Italy has gradually adopted measures to ensure the mobility of disabled people, breaking down architectural barriers and providing assistance (Serluca, 2009), in consideration of the fact that easy transports are absolutely necessary. Projects to improve the accessibility of public transport promote wheelchair access, disseminate vocal announcements for the blind and light warnings for deaf people. Free calls are also provided and the standard routes are diverted to the disabled person's home. Trains have reserved seats for people with disabilities and accessible toilets, after having assisted the customer at the station. This in addition to tariff concessions. Similar guarantees for air and sea travel. Almost all of these facilities use modern computer and digital technologies.

2) Accommodation and catering

Common parts and services and a number of rooms and outdoor areas are equipped for people with reduced or impeded mobility, ensuring their safety (Migliaccio, 2012), even with modern digital devices.

A set of guidelines for hoteliers (Vitali, 2009) is widespread, with the main provisions regarding accommodation, catering and above all the dissemination of information to allow the benefits of the surrounding area to be enjoyed, hoping for effective networks between companies (Migliaccio et al., 2018c). Special staff training is required. The situation is in development, despite deficiencies that generate discomfort (Leone, 2018).

3) Museums

In museums, for people with motor disabilities it is necessary to remove architectural barriers; for the blind it is necessary to provide audio guides and obstacle detection systems, allowing tactile exploration or reproducing smells and sounds (Caruso, 2011; Bellini, 2000; Association of friends of the Carrara Academy Onlus, 2011).

Positive experiences are at the National Gallery of Modern Art in Rome, the Parma Opera Museum. The tactile museums: Homer at the Mole Vanvitelliana of Ancona, of Varese, of the Regional Braille Printing House of Catania, Anteros of the Institute of the blind "Francesco Cavazza" of Bologna, etc. The Alinari national museum of photography in Florence and that of the natural sciences of the lake and the mountain of Trarego, Cheglio and Viggiona (VB) are also accessible museums, which reproduce entire natural environments.

4) Churches

Accessibility problems that can be overcome with ramps. Internal obstacles that can be used with walkways. Crypts and bell towers would need elevators if possible. Many secondary accesses (Arenghi, 2003; Della Torre & Pracchi, 2003) would have no particular aesthetic requirements.

The visit should be directed with multimedia information or digital devices to replace people. Many Italian churches have fulfilled these normative and moral precepts.

5) Natural parks

In Italy there is a set of guidelines for accessibility to protected natural areas (Lancerin, 2003; Vacca, 2010) that should be planned at the origin to prevent subsequent and higher charges of adaptability. It is necessary to plan entrances next to the parking areas for disabled people, create pedestrian paths accessible to all with the necessary equipment.

Multimedia information must specify the difficulties of the paths. Ecological minitaxis can facilitate travel.

The best experiences: Adamello Brenta with accessible path of Lake Tovel, Panaveggio-Pale di S. Martino, of Majella, of Sila, of Stelvio, of Garda of Brescia, of Gran Paradiso, Agricultural South Milan, etc.

6) Archaeological parks

Among the first in the world (Bishop, 1996), usability depends on the extent and the need to safeguard aesthetics. The "visitability" is possible by identifying routes that can be followed with tactile maps, areas equipped for refreshment and assistance services. For blind people, audio guides and sensors can be provided to indicate obstacles. For the deaf, illustrated publications and/or expert guides in sign language are desirable.

Best practices: Rome (Colosseum and Archaeological Area of the Markets of Trajan), Pistoia Underground, Naples (Roman Domus in the basement of Palazzo Ricca), Ozzano (BO) near Claterna (archaeological site of the historic Roman city), Reggio Calabria (Archaeological Submarine Park), etc.

7) Sport facilities

Sports tourism (Jannelli, 2009) is favored by special associations and by the promotional effect of the para olympics, even in winter, which were also held in Italy. Individual football clubs are developing accessible facilities and services, in addition to tariff reductions.

8) Beaches

Accessibility requires parking near the entrance, facilitated pedestrian routes, free access to all services, private posts on the beach, comfortable entry and exit from the sea, toilets, showers, accessible changing rooms, guidance and assistance for blind people. Attention must be paid to mental disabilities, also to protect other tourists. Numerous positive national experiences.

5 Description and Discussion: the contribution of ICT

The concept of technology includes the entire set of knowledge regarding the production process and the benefit that could come from it (Festa, 2009; Migliaccio, 2014): the value of technology in supporting disability is clear when it is accessible and usable.

The new technologies include many instruments. ICT create modular, accessible platforms that provide a computing environment for people with disabilities accessible (Rivas-Costa et al., 2014). Relying on a standard device allows dependent individuals, especially people with disabilities, to introduce new technological advances in communication and information management into their everyday lives.

The technologies in support of disabled peoples' activities are very useful.

In particular, it is possible to outline some typical aids of accessible tourism.

First of all, all the most recent devices must be mentioned which allow the dissemination of information and above all assistance to people with disabilities, highlighting better the routes and describing possible tourist attractions. Examples of this kind are relatively present, especially in museums and archaeological areas. They take more different forms: from agile headsets to robots that almost entirely replace an assistant person.

Basically all the aids are based on mobile devices equipped with sensors capable of detecting the position of the disabled person in the context of his environment. Therefore, they orientate the person and provide all possible information. In this way, any environment, including those of tourist importance, such as museums, naturalistic or archaeological parks, can be accessible and enjoyable, even by people with disabilities (Pierdicca et al., 2016).

There are also more complex projects that favor the iteration between databases and other useful information so that specific software can provide complete information to the population with disabilities. See, for example, the framework that stores and manages tourism information and makes this information available to be used by mobile applications developers through specific web services proposed by Ribeiro et al. (2018).

Reference is also made to the conceptual framework relating to the applications of artificial intelligence, object of the research of Tsaih & Hsu (2018). In particular, the research defines an "intelligent" tourism that, thanks to digital applications, allows intelligent destinations, intelligent tourism experiences mediated by technology that facilitates customization in relation to the typical characteristics of the constantly monitored context. This complex digital system is supported by smart companies with their information that also facilitates typical e-commerce exchanges.

Smart tourism is based on the ability to collect, analyze and use huge amounts of data. This is possible through the rapid development of ICTs such as artificial intelligence, cloud computing, mobile devices, big data mining and social media.

Obviously almost everything passes through the efficiency of the internet network which remains the most abundant, accepted and comprehensive source of information, and which is therefore the basis for the development of accessible e-tourism. In fact, all the described applications and any other possible implementation of e-commerce, digital, web, mobile and ICT solutions pass through the internet. (Ivanović, 2015).

This derives from the complementary nature of tourism products which requires information to be easily accessible everywhere: the network has had the merit of having contributed to the increase in tourist demand (Ramos & Rodrigues, 2013).

6 Conclusion and implication

The described Italian experiences denote a growing sensitivity of a small nation that, with modest investments, is trying to make accessible tourist environments to the benefit also of non-disabled people. These results were also achieved thanks to younger and more sensitive leaderships and more modern regulations, despite limited public funds The technological development that provides low-cost products also had an impact.

This overview, although incomplete, allows us to confirm the two initial hypotheses. The Italian Republic has been characterized by a progressive attention to the needs of the population with disabilities also on the tourist theme, where there are considerable efforts for the usability of the main sites (H1), despite some delays and sometimes still lacking communications (Leone, 2018).

These confirmations derive from the brief examination of the main initiatives that favored access for people with disabilities to the main tourist sites (RQ1). This is also considering the peculiar tourist connotations of Italy and its growing latent demand (Agovino et al., 2017) which is progressively finding acceptance, even considering the economic convenience and a changed sensitivity towards disability.

The ICT and all digital innovations are obviously fundamental for the development of an inclusive society (H1), as shown by the outlined brief report on telematics technologies - accessible tourism (RQ2). With ICT, the lives of people with disabilities can be improved, allowing them to better interact in society by widening their scope of activities. ICT can be a powerful tool to people with disability in their battle (Migliaccio, 2016b):

- to gain employment;
- to increase skills, confidence, and self-esteem;
- to integrate into the community;
- to reduce physical or functional barriers.

A new culture is important but equally important is the availability of technologies that give greater independence. The solution is to increase the culture of inclusion, the availability of ICT, the disbursement of public funds for access to education and culture for people with disabilities, and finally, to disseminate the principles of disability management. ICT can also help overcome the diversity and disability management. ICT can also create an inclusive economy (Sabharwal, 2014). Disability can become an opportunity to innovate structures, processes, and products and to renew management's style as well as the business and work atmosphere, but only using new ICT!

This interdisciplinary research is only a descriptive and purposeful study. However, it can become a framework for detailed analysis, perhaps supporting theoretical insights with critical analyzes of real cases.

The practical implications are easy to understand. The first users can be public authorities that deal with tourism and equal opportunities, as well as the dissemination of technologies. Other beneficiaries are associations and foundations dedicated to assisting people with disabilities and private transport companies, offering accommodation and catering services, organizing fairs, shows, concerts, sporting events, etc., or also to welcome and tourist guide at museums, places of worship, naturalistic or archaeological parks, etc. This paper can also be useful to scholars of the social phenomena of the most needy and of the evolution of the tourist economy.

Italian experiences can also be exported to other countries that wish to undertake paths of inclusion of tourists with "special" needs, obviously assessing the context, the needs of the resident population with disabilities and its number. The action of each country also depends on the prevailing cultural trends, more or less favorable to inclusion (Migliaccio, 2018a) and also depends on public and private economic resources.

7 Citations and References

29. Aesaert, K., Van Braak, J., Van Nijlen, D. & Vanderlinde, R.: Primary school pupils' ICT competences: Extensive model and scale development. Computers and Education, 81, 326-344, Ireland: Elsevier (2015).
30. Agovino, M., Casaccia, M., Garofalo, A. & Marchesano, K.: Tourism and disability in Italy. Limits and opportunities. Tourism Management Perspectives, 23, 58-67 (2017).
31. Angeloni S. & Borgonovi E.: An ageing world and the challenges for a model of sustainable social change, Journal of Management Development, 35(4), 464-485 (2016).
32. Angeloni S.: Accessible tourism in the Italian destination. International Conference on Tourism & Hospitality Management, Athens, 27-29 June, 8-28 (2013a).
33. Angeloni, S.: Il Disability Management Integrato. Un'analisi interdisciplinare per la valorizzazione delle persone con disabilità, Quaderno Monografico Rirea No. 94. Roma, Italy: Rirea, 1-112 (2011).
34. Angeloni, S.: Integrated disability management: An interdisciplinary and holistic approach. SAGE Open, 3(4), 1-15 (2013b).
35. Angeloni, S.: L'aziendabilità. Il valore delle risorse disabili per l'azienda e il valore dell'azienda per le risorse disabili. Milano, Italy: Franco Angeli, 1-356 (2010).
36. Arenghi, A.: L'adeguamento finalizzato all'accessibilità. In Della Torre, S., Pracchi, V., Le chiese come beni culturali. Suggerimenti per la conservazione. Milano, Italy: Electa, 90-99 (2003).
37. Arenghi, A.: Turismo accessibile nelle città d'arte. La rivista del turismo. 3(2), 21-27 (2001).
38. Assennato, S. & Quadrelli, M.: Manuale della disabilità. Santarcangelo di Romagna, Italy: Maggioli, 1-350 (2012).
39. Associazione amici dell'accademia Carrara Onlus (Ed.): L'arte vista sotto un'altra ottica. Roma, Italy: Armando, 1-160 (2011).

40. Attanasio, A.: La cultura. In Metallo, G., Ricci, P. & Migliaccio, G.. La risorsa umana “diversamente abile” nell’economia dell’azienda. Disability management e accountability. Torino, Italy: Giappichelli, 423-426 (2009).
41. Bada J.K.: ICT for business services: the case of Ugandan microfinance institutions’. International Journal of Research and Reviews in Applied Sciences, 11(1), 140-152 (2012).
42. Baratella, P.: I Diritti della persona con disabilita. Dalla convenzione internazionale ONU alle buone pratiche. Trento, Italy: Erickson, 1-200 (2009).
43. Bardelli, B.: Turismo accessibile e marchio di qualità Italia. Economia e ambiente. 26(6), 31-33 (2007).
44. Bellini, A. (Ed.): Toccare l’arte: l’educazione estetica di ipovedenti e non vedenti. Roma, Italy: Armando, 1-125 (2000).
45. Bizjak, B., Knežević, M. & Cvetrežnik, S.: Attitude change towards guests with disabilities. Reflections From Tourism Students. Annals of Tourism Research, 38(3), 842-857 (2011).
46. Bocconi, S. & Ott, M.: ‘ICT and Universal Access to Education: Towards a Culture of Accessibility’, Communications in Computer and Information Science, 278, 330-337, Berlin, Heidelberg, New York: Springer (2013).
47. Bogdanova, A.M. & Gjorgjevikj, D. (Eds): ICT Innovations 2014: World of Data. Advances in Intelligent Systems and Computing, 6th Information and Communication Technologies Innovations 2014 conference, ICT 2014; Ohrid; Macedonia; 9-12 September 2014, 311, Berlin, Heidelberg, New York: Springer (2015).
48. Borgonovi, E. & Angeloni, S.: Laboro ergo sum. Quando il lavoro abilita l’uomo. Sviluppo & Organizzazione, (1) 54-66 (2017).
49. Borzetti R.A.: L’evoluzione della legislazione italiana sulla disabilita. www.didaweb.net [Accessed 12/01/2018] (2008).
50. Buffa F.: La disciplina lavorativa e previdenziale per i diversamente abili. Milano, Italy: Giuffrè, 1-378 (2009).
51. Buhalis, D., Darcy, S. & Ambrose, I. (Eds.): Best practice in accessible tourism: Inclusion, disability, ageing population and tourism. Bristol, Uk: Channel View Publications, 1-379 (2012).
52. Buhalis, D., Darcy, S. & Ambrose, I.: Best practice in accessible tourism: Inclusion, disability, ageing population and tourism. Best Practice in Accessible Tourism: Inclusion, Disability, Ageing Population and Tourism, 1-379 (2012).
53. Buzzanca A.: Handicap e diritto all’assistenza. Analisi e strumenti di tutela. Milano, Italy: Giuffrè, 1-302 (2009).
54. Caprara, G., Pane, A., Agostiano, M., Virdia, E. & Baracco, L. (a cura di): Linee Guida per il superamento delle barriere architettoniche nei luoghi di interesse culturale. Roma, Italy: Gangemi, 1-176 (2008).
55. Caruso, F. (Ed.): Visioni e oltre. Multisensorialità accessibilità e nuove tecnologie al museo. Roma, Italy: C&P Adver Effigi, 1-160 (2011).
56. Censis: I disabili, i più diseguali nella crescita delle diseguaglianze sociali. www.censis.it [Accessed 19/07/ 2016] (2014).
57. Cernaianu, S. & Sobry, C.: Aspects of Sports Tourism for People with Disabilities: the Case of France and Romania. Conference: 6th International Scientific Conference on Kinesiology: Integrative Power on Kinesiology Location: Zagreb, CROATIA Date: SEP 08-11, 358-361 (2011).
58. Citarella, G.: Il turismo accessibile : una possibile alternativa per la competitività territoriale. Turistica, 25(3), 97-110 (2016).
59. Consorzio cooperative integrate (a cura di): Guida di Roma per disabili. Barriere architettoniche. Vol. 1: Turismo, cultura, tempo libero. Roma, Italy: Gangemi, 1-200 (1992).
60. Darcy, S.: Inherent complexity: Disability, accessible tourism and accommodation information preferences. Tourism management, 31(6), 816-826 (2010).
61. De Salvo, P., Mogollón, J.M.H., Di Clemente, E. & Calzati, V.: Territory, tourism and local products. The extra virgin oil's enhancement and promotion: A benchmarking Italy-Spain. Tourism and Hospitality Management, 19(1), 23-34 (2013).
62. Devile, E. & Kastenholz, E.: Accessible tourism experiences: the voice of people with visual disabilities. Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events, 10(3), 265-285 (2018).
63. Domínguez Vila, T., Darcy, S. & Alén González, E.: Competing for the disability tourism market - A comparative exploration of the factors of accessible tourism competitiveness in Spain and Australia. Tourism Management, 47, 261-272 (2015).
64. Eichhorn, V., Miller, G. & Tribe, J.: Tourism: A site of resistance strategies of individuals with a disability. Annals of Tourism Research, 43, 578-600 (2013).

65. Falch, M.: The impact of ICT on market organisation - A case of 3D-models in engineering consultancy. Telematics and Informatics, 31(2), 282-291 (2014).
66. Fantini, L. & Matteucci, M. E. (a cura di): Guida al turismo accessibile. Consigli pratici per offrire una migliore ospitalità. Ozzano dell'Emilia, Italy: Airplane, 1-61 (2003).
67. Fauzzi, A., Novembre, C. & Pellagra, R.: Disabilità, turismo e tempo libero: governance e modelli gestionali delle reti territoriali di pubblico interesse. Turistica, 17(1), 105-136 (2008).
68. Festa, G.: 'Un'analisi proattiva della relazione tra «diverse abilità», produttività e tecnologia'. In G. Metallo, P. Ricci and G. Migliaccio (Eds.), La risorsa umana "diversamente abile" nell'economia dell'azienda. Torino, Italy: Giappichelli, 287-304 (2009).
69. Figueiredo, E., Eusébio, C. & Kastenholz, E.: How Diverse are Tourists with Disabilities? A Pilot Study on Accessible Leisure Tourism Experiences in Portugal. International Journal of Tourism Research, 14(6), 531-550 (2012).
70. Foggetti, N.: La tutela delle persone con disabilita nel diritto internazionale. Vicalvi, Italy: Key, 1-214 (2017).
71. Foggin, B.: Tourism in the Leisure lives of people with disability. Accessible Tourism: Concepts and Issues, 98-122 (2010).
72. Fondazione Cariplo: Apprendere dai migliori. Quaderno manageriale, n. 2. Milano, Italy: Fondazione Cariplo, 1-38 (2008).
73. Fondazione Serono: Il quadro normativo e definitorio. www.fondazioneserono.org [Accessed 14/01/2018] (2016).
74. Foster, C.: Promoting accessibility and inclusion through ICT. Equal Opportunities Review, (210), 19-20 (2011).
75. Gallucci, C. & Marino, V.: Il Ripensare il marketing dei servizi turistici per la co-creazione di esperienze e soluzioni per i "diversamente abili". In Metallo, G., Ricci, P. & Migliaccio, G. (2009). La risorsa umana "diversamente abile" nell'economia dell'azienda. Disability management e accountability. Torino, Italy: Giappichelli, 406-412 (2009).
76. Garbellano, S.: Apprendere per innovare. Best practices, tendenze e metodologie nella formazione manageriale. Milano, Italy: Franco Angeli, 1-224 (2006).
77. Garbutt, M. & Kyobe, M.: 'Knowledge practices of people with disabilities and the role of ICT'. In 2013 4th International Conference on Information and Communication Technology and Accessibility, ICTA 2013; Hammamet; Tunisia; 24-26 October 2013, USA and Canada: Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Inc. (2013).
78. Gassiot, A., Prats, L. & Coromina, L.: Tourism constraints for Spanish tourists with disabilities: Scale development and validation. Documents D Analisi Geografica, 64(1), 49-71 (2018).
79. Gelarda, I. & Bardi, C. (a cura di): Turismo accessibile della città di Palermo. Palermo, Italy: Officina di Studi Medievali, 1-189 (2011).
80. Goodall, B., Pottinger, G., Dixon, T. & Russell, H.: Heritage property, tourism and the UK Disability Discrimination Act. Property Management, 22(5), 345-357 (2004).
81. Govardhan A., Raju K.S., Satapathy S.C. & Mandal J.K. (Eds): Advances in Intelligent Systems and Computing, 49th Annual Convention of Computer Society of India: Emerging ICT for Bridging the Future. AISC 2014, Hyderabad; India; 12-14 December 2014, Voll. 337-338, 2015, Berlin, Heidelberg, New York: Springer (2015).
82. Gröschl, S.: An exploration of HR policies and practices affecting the integration of persons with disabilities in the hotel industry in major Canadian tourism destinations. International Journal of Hospitality Management, 26(3), 666-686 (2007).
83. Haluza, D. & Jungwirth, D.: ICT and the future of health care: Aspects of health promotion. International Journal of Medical Informatics, 84(1), 48-57 (2015).
84. Hunter-Jones, P. & Thornton, A.: The third sector responses to accessible/disability tourism. Best Practice in Accessible Tourism: Inclusion, Disability, Ageing Population and Tourism, 168-179 (2012).
85. Ibarra, C., Jose, J. & Netto, A.P.: Scientific articles on tourism for persons with disabilities in Ibero-American journals of tourism. A proposal for categorization. Pasos-Revista de Turismo y Patrimonio Cultural, 14(1) 41-58 (2016).
86. Ishida, H.: The effect of ICT development on economic growth and energy consumption in Japan. Telematics and Informatics, 32(1), 79-88 (2015).
87. Istat: Nota sulla legge "Dopo di noi", con allegato statistico. Roma, Italia, 31 maggio, www.istat.it [Accessed 23/02/2019] (2017).

88. Istenic Starcic, A. & Bagon, S.: ICT-supported learning for inclusion of people with special needs: Review of seven educational technology journals, 1970-2011. British Journal of Educational Technology, 45(2), 202-230 (2014).
89. Ivanović, A.M.: Business opportunity and social responsibility: Growing importance of accessible e-tourism for senior tourists and persons with disabilities. New Business Opportunities in the Growing E-Tourism Industry, 303-336 (2015).
90. Jannelli, R. (2009). Lo sport. In Metallo, G., Ricci, P. & Migliaccio, G.: La risorsa umana "diversamente abile" nell'economia dell'azienda. Disability management e accountability. Torino, Italy: Giappichelli, 400-406 (2009).
91. Kastenholz, E., Eusebio, C. & Figueiredo, E.: Contributions of tourism to social inclusion of persons with disability. Disability & Society, 30(8), 1259-1281 (2015).
92. Keegan, R. & O'Kelly, E.: Abc. Applied benchmarking for competitiveness. Guida per i titolari e manager di Pmi. Milano, Italy: Franco Angeli, 1-288 (2007).
93. Kulichova, M.: Social and Ethical Dimensions of the Development of Accessible Tourism Services in Relation to Persons with Disabilities. Conference: 9th International Conference on Topical Issues of Tourism - Tourism and its Impacts on Society Location: Jihlava, Czech Republic, Date: FEB 26-27, 126-132 (2014).
94. Laganà, C.: ISTAT, nasce un archivio integrato dei disabili. www.fondazioneserono.org, [Accessed 23/02/2019] (2017).
95. Lancerin, L. (Ed.): Il verde è di tutti. Schede tecniche per la progettazione e la realizzazione di aree verdi accessibili e fruibili. Venezia, Italy: Regione Veneto, 1-148 (2003).
96. Laura, A. & Petrangeli, A.: Viaggiare si Può. Turismo e persone disabili. Novara, Italy: De Agostini, 1-240 (2003).
97. Le, H., Fujimoto, Y., Rentschler, R. & Edwards, D.: Tourism Victoria, Australia – an integrative model of inclusive tourism for people with disabilities. Best Practice in Accessible Tourism: Inclusion, Disability, Ageing Population and Tourism, 144-156 (2012).
98. Lehto, X., Luo, W., Miao, L. & Ghiselli, R.F.: Shared tourism experience of individuals with disabilities and their caregivers. Journal of Destination Marketing and Management, 8, 185-193 (2018).
99. Leone, N.G. (a cura di): Itatour. Accessibilità diffusa, spazi del tempo libero e territori del turismo nella punta occidentale della Sicilia. Milano, Italy: Franco Angeli, 1-416 (2013).
100. Leone, S.: Turismo accessibile e barriere (tutte le barriere): a che punto siamo? www.superando.it [Accessed 23/02/2019] (2018).
101. Lepri, C.: Viaggiatori inattesi. Appunti sull'integrazione sociale delle persone disabili. Milano, Italy: Franco Angeli, 1-128 (2011).
102. Levitas, R.: The Inclusive Society?: Social Exclusion and New Labour. Basingstoke, Uk: Palgrave Macmillan, 1-277 (2005).
103. Lidström, H. & Hemmingsson, H.: Benefits of the use of ICT in school activities by students with motor, speech, visual, and hearing impairment: A literature review. Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy, 21(4), 251-266 (2014).
104. Lurgi, M.: Il turismo. In Metallo, G., Ricci, P. & Migliaccio, G.: La risorsa umana "diversamente abile" nell'economia dell'azienda. Disability management e accountability. Torino, Italy: Giappichelli, 406-412 (2009).
105. Mahmoudzadeh, S. & Kourdi Sarjaz, N.: Environmental barriers to tourism development for people with disabilities. Acta Turistica, 30(1), 87-114 (2018).
106. Metallo, G., Ricci, P. & Migliaccio, G.: La risorsa umana "diversamente abile" nell'economia dell'azienda. Disability management e accountability. Torino, Italy: Giappichelli, 1-535 (2009).
107. Mibac – Ministero per il beni e le attività culturali: Linee guida per il superamento delle barriere architettoniche nei luoghi di interesse culturale. Decreto ministeriale 28 marzo 2008. Roma, Italy: Mibac (2008).
108. Migliaccio, G., Lurgi, M. & Aufiero, V.A.: Business networks in Italian tourism. Case study: Rete destinazione sud. International Journal of Leisure and Tourism Marketing, 6(2), 117-135 (2018).
109. Migliaccio, G.: Accessible museums in Italy: an overview. African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 7(6), article No 6, 1-16 (2018b).
110. Migliaccio, G.: Dalla soppressione alla valorizzazione delle persone con disabilità: alcune 'provocazioni' di economia etica. In Giaconi, C. & Del Bianco, N. (a cura di), Inclusione 3.0. Milano, Italy: Franco Angeli, 188-203 (2018a).
111. Migliaccio, G.: Disability management and 'glocalization' for an inclusive society. In Dermol, V. Trunk, A., Smrkolj, M. (Eds), Conference proceedings of MakeLearn & TIIM 2015 International

Conference “Managing Intellectual Capital and Innovation for Sustainable and Inclusive Society”, Bari, 27-29/5/2015, 20-29 (2015a).
112. Migliaccio, G.: Disability stakeholders. Considerations from Italian Context. In Vrontis, D., Weber, Y., Tsoukatos, E. (Eds), Conference readings book proceedings, 8th Annual Conference of the EuroMed Academy of Business: Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Value Chain in a Dynamic Environment, Verona, 16-18/9/2015, 1542-1555 (2015b).
113. Migliaccio, G.: Disabled people in the stakeholder theory: a literature analysis. Journal of the Knowledge Economy, 10(4), 1657-1678, (2019).
114. Migliaccio, G.: Economicità e disabilità: un connubio possibile? Il governo inclusivo dell’azienda per un’economia e una società inclusive. In Marchi, L., Lombardi, R., Anselmi, L. (Eds.), Il governo aziendale tra tradizione e innovazione. Milano, Italy: Franco Angeli, VI 113-136 (2016a).
115. Migliaccio, G.: Economicità, efficacia ed efficienza dei fattori produttivi «limitati». Produttività delle ‘diverse abilità’ e tutela della loro sicurezza. L’integrazione scolastica e sociale, 11(2), 141-149 (2012).
116. Migliaccio, G.: ICT for disability management in the net economy. International journal of globalisation and small business, 8(1), 51-72 (2016b).
117. Migliaccio, G.: The Disability Marketing and the Cultural “Product”. Italian Experience and Propositions for International Contexts. In Aiello L. (Ed.), Management of Cultural Products: E-Relationship Marketing and Accessibility Perspectives, Hershey, USA: Igi Global, 321-346 (2014).
118. Migliaccio, G.: The Disability Marketing and the Cultural “Product”: Italian Experience and Propositions for International Contexts. In L. Aiello (Ed.), Management of Cultural Products: E-Relationship Marketing and Accessibility Perspectives. Hershey: Igi global, 321-346 (2014).
119. Migliaccio, G.: Tourism for people with disabilities in Italy: an overview. African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 8(5), article No 8, 1-19 (2019b).
120. Morad, T.: Tourism and disability. A review of cost-effectiveness. International Journal on Disability and Human Development, 6(3), 279-282 (2007).
121. Nicolaides, A. & Grobler, A.: Spirituality, Wellness tourism and quality of life. African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 6(1), art. n. 26 (2017).
122. Nicolaides, A.: A Marcusean philosophy for restoring workplace dignity, and curbing the excesses of capitalism and the dehumanisation of labour: Lessons for the hospitality Industry. African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 7(3), art. n. 44 (2018b).
123. Nicolaides, A.: Ethical hospitality marketing, brand- boosting and business sustainability. African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 7(1), art. n. 7 (2018c).
124. Nicolaides, A.: The role of spirituality in moderating hospitality industry conflict management and promoting sustainability. African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 7(2), art. n. 33 (2018a).
125. ONT - Osservatorio Nazionale del Turismo: WTTC: in crescita il contributo del turismo al PIL. www.ontit.it [Accessed 09/01/2019] (2018).
126. Pagán, R.: Time allocation in tourism for people with disabilities. Annals of Tourism Research, 39(3), 1514-1537 (2012).
127. Papavasiliou, S., Saridaki, M., Mourlas, C. & Van Isacker, K.: Providing assistive ICT learning for people with disabilities through a personalised mobile application. In Huang R., Kinshuk, Sampson D.G., Spector M.J. & Chen N.S. (Eds) Proceedings - IEEE 14th International Conference on Advanced Learning Technologies, ICALT 2014, 17 September 2014, pp. 592-596, USA and Canada: Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Inc. (2014).
128. Patterson, I., Darcy, S. & Mönninghoff, M.: Attitudes and experiences of tourism operators in Northern Australia towards people with disabilities. World Leisure Journal, 54(3), 215-229 (2012).
129. Pierdicca, R., Frontoni, E., Zingaretti, P., Malinverni, E.S., Galli, A., Marcheggiani, E. & Costa, C.S.: Cyberarchaeology: Improved way findings for archaeological parks through mobile augmented reality. Lecture Notes in Computer Science (including subseries Lecture Notes in Artificial Intelligence and Lecture Notes in Bioinformatics), 9769, 172-185 (2016).
130. Popiel, M.: Benefits of Tourism Development for People With Disabilities at Local and Regional Levels. Conference: 9th International Conference on Topical Issues of Tourism - Tourism and its Impacts on Society Location: Jihlava, Czech Republic, Feb. 26-27, 212-220 (2014).
131. Ramos, C.M.Q. & Rodrigues, P.M.M.: The importance of ICT for tourism demand: A dynamic panel data analysis. Quantitative Methods in Tourism Economics, 9783790828795, 97-111 (2013).
132. Ramphal, R.R. & Nicolaides, A.: Intelligent consistency- Ethical practices of Lean Six Sigma in quality service provision in the hospitality industry. African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 7(3), art. n. 53 (2018).

133. Ribeiro, F.R., Silva, A., Metrôlho, J.C., Silva, A.P. & Barbosa, F.S.: A new framework for accessible tourism mobile application development. International Journal of Mobile Computing and Multimedia Communications, 9(2), 31-46 (2018).
134. Rivas-Costa C., Anido-Rifón L., Fernández-Iglesias, M.J., Gómez-Carballa, M.A., Valladares-Rodríguez, S. & Soto-Barreiros, R.:, An Accessible Platform for People With Disabilities. International Journal of Human-Computer Interaction, 30(6), 480-494 (2014).
135. Sabharwal, M.: Is diversity management sufficient? Organizational inclusion to further performance. Public Personnel Management, 43(2), 197-217 (2014).
136. Salehi, H., Shojaee, M. & Sattar, S.: Using e-learning and ICT courses in educational environment: A review. English Language Teaching, 8(1), 63-70, Toronto: Canadian Center of Science and Education (2014).
137. Salkever, D.S., Goldman, H., Purushothaman, M. & Shinogle, J.: Disability Management, Employee Health and Fringe Benefits, and Long-Term-Disability Claims for Mental Disorders: An Empirical Exploration. The Milbank Quarterly, 78(1), 79-113 (2000).
138. Santagati, F.M.C.: Partecipazione culturale nei musei europei: le dinamiche del percorso inclusivo. Viagrande, Italy: Algra, 1-56 (2019).
139. Sbattella, L. & Tedesco, R.: Innovative ICT solutions supporting students with learning disability and hearing impairments during classes. Assistive Technology Research Series, 33, 1171-1178, Amsterdam: IOS Press (2013).
140. Seneviratne, A. & Percival, T.: National ICT Australia (NICTA). Computer Communication Review, 35(2), 61-63 (2005).
141. Serluca, M.C.: Il trasporto. In Metallo, G., Ricci, P., Migliaccio, G. (2009). La risorsa umana "diversamente abile" nell'economia dell'azienda. Disability management e accountability. Torino, Italy: Giappichelli, 392-400 (2009).
142. Shaw, G. & Coles, T.: Disability, holiday making and the tourism industry in the UK: A preliminary survey. Tourism Management, 25(3), 397-403 (2004).
143. Shaw, G.: Disability, representation and access to tourism. Social Tourism in Europe: Theory and Practice, 145-165 (2011).
144. Small, J. & Darcy, S.: Tourism, disability and mobility. Tourism and Inequality: Problems and Prospects, 1-20 (2010b).
145. Small, J. & Darcy, S.: Understanding tourist experience through embodiment: The contribution of critical tourism and disability studies. Accessible Tourism: Concepts and Issues, 73-97 (2010a).
146. Struttura di Missione per il Rilancio dell'Immagine dell'Italia: Accessibilità è meglio. Primo Libro Bianco sul Turismo per Tutti in Italia. Roma, Italy: Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri, 1-160 (2013).
147. Toboso, M.: Rethinking disability in Amartya Sen's approach: ICT and equality of opportunity. Journal Ethics and Information Technology, 13(2), 107-118 (2011).
148. Touring: Turismo senza barriere. Milano, Italy: Touring Digital, 1-121 (2004).
149. Tsaih, R.-H. & Hsu, C.C.: Artificial intelligence in smart tourism: A conceptual framework. Proceedings of the International Conference on Electronic Business (ICEB), 2018-December, 124-133 (2018).
150. UEFA (Union of European Football Associations) & CAFE (Centre for Access to Football in Europe): Accessibilità per tutti. Guida delle buone pratiche per uno stadio accessibile e una partita piacevole. Nyon, Switzerland: UEFA (2011).
151. Vacca, I.: Speciale parchi accessibili 2010. www.disabili.com [Accessed 23/02/2019] (2010).
152. Vitali, R.: Il decalogo dell'albergatore. www.laboratoriosipuo.net [Accessed 26/02/2019] (2009).
153. Watson, H.G.: Il benchmarking. Come migliorare i processi e la competitività aziendale adattando e adottando le pratiche delle imprese leader. Milano, Italy: Franco Angeli, 1-256 (1995).
154. Youngsang, C., Jongsu, L. & Tai-Yoo, K.: The impact of ICT investment and energy price on industrial electricity demand: Dynamic growth model approach. Energy Policy, 35(9), 4730-4738 (2007).
155. Zajadacz, A.: Evolution of models of disability as a basis for further policy changes in accessible tourism. Journal of Tourism Futures, 1(3), 189-202 (2015).
156. Zenko, Z. & Sardi, V.: Systemic thinking for socially responsible innovations in social tourism for people with disabilities. Kybernetes, 43(3-4), 652-666 (2014).

New tourism trends: the Instagram case study

Valeria Cocco and Marco Brogna

Abstract The research displays the changes in the tourist market, the fast development of the digital tourism and the advent of social networks in tourism sector. In particular, the attention is focused on the new perception by the consumer in digital tourism and the role of social networks in the pre and post travel. Thus, the work is going to focus on the Instagram case study, as a powerful marketing and inspirational tool.

Riassunto La ricerca intende mostrare i cambiamenti nel mercato turistico, il rapido sviluppo del turismo digitale e l'avvento dei social network nel settore turistico. In particolare, si concentra l'attenzione sulla nuova percezione da parte del consumatore nel turismo digitale ed il ruolo dei social network nelle fasi pre e post viaggio. Il lavoro si concentrerà, dunque, sullo studio di Instagram, come fonte di ispirazione per il turista e come potente strumento di marketing.

Key words: social network, digital tourism, new trend.

8 The digital tourism evolution

Tourism appeared as a constantly changing phenomenon: over time the concept of travel acquired innumerable meanings and tourism is undergoing significant changes and facing new challenges and perspectives.

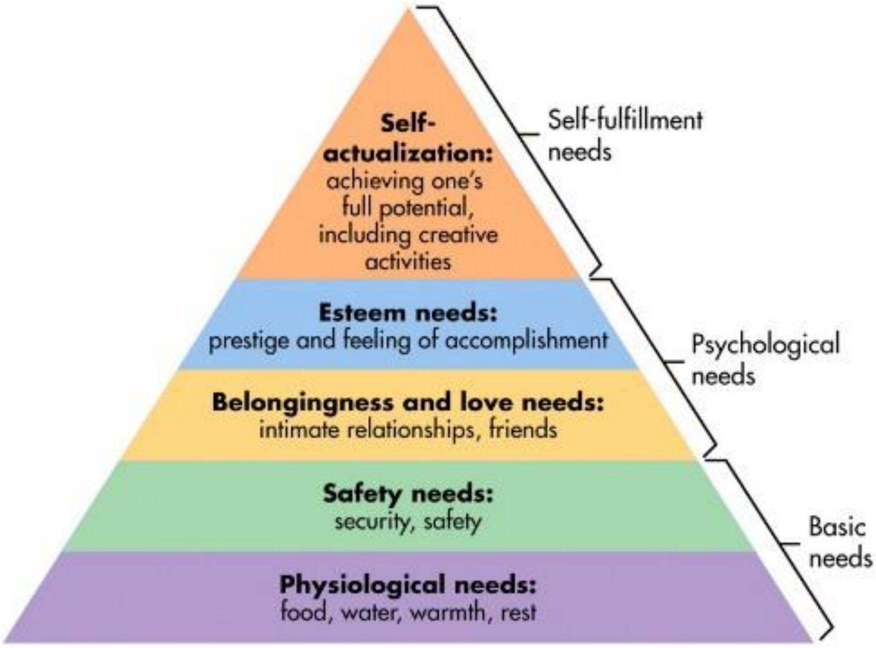
At least two dimensions of the change can be identified:

• new forms of tourism, characterized by the tendency to depart from mass tourism;

[14] Valeria Cocco, Università La Sapienza; valeriacocco23@gmail.com
Marco Brogna, Università La Sapienza; marco.brogna@uniroma1.it

• the diffusion of information and communication technologies (ICT), with a pervasive effect on the creation, production and consumption of the tourist product (Stamboulis, Skayannis, 2002).

Figure 1: Pyramid of Needs



Tourism evolution can be explained by using the Pyramid of Needs proposed by the psychologist Abraham Maslow (1954) to consider the motivational model of human development based on a hierarchy of needs. Tourism has become a composite intangible service, where the entrepreneurial and marketing skills, the country's resources and the community's commitment are base elements (Castoldi, 2005).

Nowadays, travelling is becoming one of the prevailing needs of the global community. Thus, the concept of tourism and travels is always evolving, so that, according to the speed changes that occurred, the tourism companies had to be fast in the proposal of new offers and activities (Celant, 2017).

The digital revolution involved the complex tourism sector (Kotler, 1999; Celant, 2017) in all the chain (i.e. in the way to find information, to organize a trip, to book, to see and know the chosen destination, but also in the way of thinking, of interacting, of relating and perceiving the surrounding world).

In the digital panorama, the spread of the network has greatly contributed to change the travel market and consequently the behavior of the potential consumer. Thus, to ride the wave of innovation, the digital tools were designed to create direct communication between companies and their target market, increasing the level of interactivity and the degree of personalization of the communication itself. This digitalization of the processes has transformed the tourism sector, achieving a high degree of coordination and collaboration (Boyer, Viallon, 1999).

By the way, the unbridled use of the media and digital tools seems to be one of the factors that simulated the evolving of an emotional and experiential tourism. In fact, thanks to the media and internet images people know the more dissimilar places they never physically visited; that's why the surprise effect of the travel and the curiosity of the traveler is stimulated by the possibility of living an exclusive and unforgettable experience and emotion in meeting local people and discovering traditions, tastes and perfumes (Brogna, Cocco, 2015). The demand of experience forces industry operators to remain competitive, to develop and adopt new forms of tourism, so that the tourist industries become producers and sellers of memories (Valdani, Guenzi, 1998)

In this sophisticated research of emotional and experiential tourism, the storytelling assumes an important role in the strategic communication of the travel (Aaker, Aaker, 2016). The communication is changing through the tool of storytelling that let the people to feel the identity of the territory, to get in touch with its roots and traditions, and to share it through new authentic and personal stories. These factors define the success of the digital tourism, and some social network tools (i.e. Instagram stories).

The innovation of the digital communication strategies is the fact that is addressed to every single person through *ad hoc* digital channels, platforms and social media able to bring the consumer a "true" narration of the offer that respects different cultures and sensibilities.

The power of the digital tourism is given by the fact that, if the offline tourism provided and supported people in organizing a trip and assistance in all its phases; the online tourism offers the same service, but faster, simpler and updated, with promotions and a customer care that shows measurable effects also on the turnover. Digital engagement puts a strain on traditional travel agencies, increasingly less favored by young people, the undisputed protagonists of this completely digital era.

Table 1: Relationship between generations and digital

Generation Name	Relationship with technology	Born period
Baby Boomers	-	1945-1965
Generation X	-	1965-1980
Millennials (Generation Y)	Interconnection	1980-200
Generation Z	Hyper-connectivity	After 2000

Smartphones and social networks are an integral part of any holiday, so much that, in Italy, more than 14% of tourists hold the smartphone for more than 4 hours a day, to view maps and reviews, etc. (Gelter, 2017)

The social network is one of the best developments on the web, as it allows to connect people, share multimedia items or personal information. The most common social networks are, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

Table 2: Comparing the main social network

Facebook	Twitter	Instagram
informal, friendly and interactive environment	-	global and multitasking platform
chat, stay in touch with friends and family, make new friends and share your daily life online	read information and news, transmit their updates on the web	keep users up-to-date through the so-called stories

The success of the social networks is first of all determined by the easy accessibility and the fast uploading of the contents (i.e. easy process of creating an account).

In fact, according to the Digital Innovation Observatory in Tourism in Milan Polytechnic School of Management, the 82% of transactions are carried out by PCs and tablet, while the smartphone has recorded a really impressive growth rate of + 46%, over 12 months.

The incidence of smartphone purchases on digital tourism spending exceeds the 18% and its value is around 2.5 billion euros. According to one of the Italian business journal IlSole24ore (Kolter, 1999), the digital tourism is worth more than 14 billion euros.

According to the White Paper about The American Travelers Digital Landscape published by Phocuswright in 2017, over 167 million users a month consume digital content regarding travel and holidays, interacting with their device. Mobile users perform informative searches for the organization of a journey through the browser: only 32%, in fact, use a specific app, for example of airlines, railways, etc. The same studies (2017) showed how much time is devoted to this action and it has emerged that, in the 45 days preceding the booking, the user visits travel sites on average 140 times, visits concentrated mostly in the same week in which the reservation is made, with an increase of +88% compared to the initial research period. Also, the time spent for consultation and interaction with digital content increases until the time of booking: five weeks before, it is about 2 hours, during the week of booking exceeds 4 and a half hours, almost 287 minutes.

Comparing the different studies, it appears that the organization of a trip is generally inspired by the research on social media. The pictures of wonderful places and the multimedia contents arouse greater appeal than the full description of a location, and they create more engagement, so that the user feels completely involved and overwhelmed by the desire to leave and to choose that destination.

According to this point of view, the attractiveness of a destination depends consistently about its web reputation, precisely because it reflects the opinion that individuals have about a specific geographical area and all the actors, activities and experiences that are part of the tourist destination (Pencarelli, Betti, Forlani, 2005). Web reputation and reviews are linked to the so-called eWord of Mouth (eWOM), or digital word of mouth, faster than the real word of mouth. Through the evolution of the digital era, also the models, the role and the impact of word of mouth have been evolved and new forms of online communities have been modeled. The main difference between the eWOM and the word of mouth, it is the fact that instead of taking place on the streets or at home, it takes place in a single public space, the social web, that will be able to reach thousands of people.

Especially in the tourism sector, the focus on the intangible components of the product has increased considerably, as well as the quality of experience and service, necessarily requiring the customer's participation in production (Boaretto, Noci, Pini, 2007). The online consumer, therefore, has not only the power to decide on the possibility of accepting or rejecting the offer, but also that of influencing it. In this context, social media are used for its potential from both digital and traditional marketing companies.

Nowadays, traveling means to know and explore, but also to share with a subjective and very personal character. In fact, according to Statistic Brain

Research Institute, until March 2018, the 20% of Millennials use applications in every stage of a trip planning and about the 65% of them claim to have installed a travel application on their mobile device.

In the majority of Millennials and Generation Z, the pre, in and post travel activities appear to be dominated by the travel apps and social networks. Indeed, the increasing interest in the experiences in travelling, it is outlined by different studies (Gelter, 2017), so that Millennials seek travel experiences, verified through their social networks, because they can be sure of what expect. According to psychologists, it is a symptom of a little adventurous and enterprising character (Shatto, Erwin, 2016).

Table 3: Experiential cycle

Pre-experience	In- experience	Post - experience
promotion of the offer	satisfying customer needs and expectations	E-Word of Mouth
Social media	Google Maps, QR code, social media	Social media
promotion of the offer	satisfying customer needs and expectations	

1.1. Instagram case study

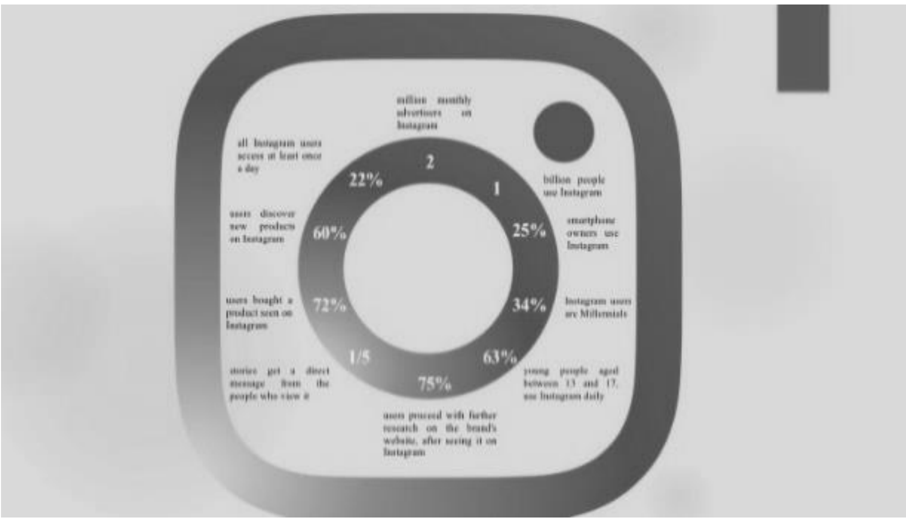
Instagram is a social network app created to share multimedia content, using smartphones. By now, Instagram has overcome many other marketing channels, such as email, text messages, website announcements, TV and radio. It’s similar to Facebook, but with the emphasis on using mobile and visual sharing. Just like other social networks, it allows the interaction with other users, commenting on them, tagging them in photos and videos. Instagram is based purely on visual sharing, therefore, the main intention of all those who register is to share their daily life and their experiences. Visual seems to be the winning factor, even for companies that want to advertise and sponsor their brand.

The platform is reinforced by comments, which replace the reviews. They are key factors in user buying decisions, as at least seven reviews are read on average before completing the purchase process, especially if it is the first online, and about the 46% of Generation Z users follow more than ten influencers on social media (Gelter, 2017). The pleasant, convincing, emotionally engaging and non-invasive content is the key to communicate with this generation and an influencer who conveys security and recommendations regarding the product offered.

Considering that the social network active users are about the 12% of the 7.6 billion people on the planet, in June 2018 registered users were 1 billion, data continues to grow, and especially every day generates almost 4.2 billion of “likes” on the photos posted by users. Instagram is perhaps the most innovative social network, as it introduced the possibility to share and be connected 24 hours per day, through stories and direct (Instagram Live).

According to Instagram engineers the success and the fast propagation of the social network is defined by the basic principles to keep it simple style (KISS), to use available resources and to use popular and verified solutions; but also, the strong power of the visual contents made the social network even more attractive for the young generations.

Figure 2: Instagram numbers



Instagram is focused on stories: visual contents that are fast tools to attract people and to involve them in the creation of those contents. A story is a small live shoot to express a concept, a thought, an opinion or to advertise a product or a service. This frequent use of stories makes it possible to be considered a flexible and adaptable format for many activities, as it allows people to express themselves creatively, to experience moments outside their daily lives and feel part of a larger community. Stories also help marketing experts to forge stronger relationship with brands and people, so many users say they have stepped up this relationship to the point of citing brands into their stories, thus, pushing the buying process.

According to the Digital Innovation Observatory in Tourism in Milan Polytechnic School of Management, after the consumer look at the testimonials live, he also goes and sees on the official e-commerce site of that product or service. A significant number of users (56%) consult the website of the brand for further information, 50% search online where they could buy it, 38% activated the word of mouth phenomenon concerning that product and 34% visited a store physically for check the product. Faced with these percentages, it is quite clear, how followers are likely to share brands that show, through stories, authentic content of live events or true testimonies of influencers.

In the tourism sector, Instagram represents a great potential for the market. In fact, young Millennials and Generation Z are no longer considering Instagram as a simple social app, but as a real source of inspiration for their trips. Furthermore, tags, hashtags and geo-localization make the post visible and traceable.

Through simplicity, involvement, active participation and entertainment Instagram represents one of the most powerful social media marketing tools. In this way, Instagram does not only remain a virtual area where it can exhibit personal daily experiences, but it becomes a new search engine to organize travels, a sort of virtual tour guide for all those who wish to choose the destination for the next trip, where it is possible to find targeted information, already reviewed and evaluated by millions of other users and it provides travelers with the basis for a successful storytelling, making it easy to share the tradition and culture of a destination. Therefore, tour guides books are not a past memory, but they have only undergone a transformation, adapting from the paper format to the digital one.

That's why the recent new of this social network, it is made by the creation of a digital tourist guides, on the Instagram portal, through local pages: Rome, London, Paris, New York etc., which post multimedia contents regarding places and must-visit places. The geotags and the nametags allow to know the name of the location, to better search for information in other review sites, and to locate the place or attraction represented in the images.

The Instagram users are also *instagrammer* through the creation of the pictures and the sharing of stories and Instagram lives. In this way, all the pictures with the same nametag or geotag (i.e. #Colossueum; #Rome) and shared by different people are going to become part of an album or a collective feed, in which anyone can access it.

The pictures of the real life of people create more value for the traveler and the consumer, because it is not a “postcard unreal picture”. In fact, one of the favorite nametag for authentic images is the #nofilterneeded.

According to Gelter (2017) the 70% share further photos of their travels or new places visited, the 67% continue to seek inspiration between the home and the Instagram guides and the 62% use the platform during the tourist experience, using it to look for things to do and see (Gelter, 2017).

An English real estate agency, according to a survey carried out, found that for boys aged between 18 and 33, what most influences the choice of a next tourist destination is its *instagrammability* (40.1%); so, Instagram is officially a verb, according to Merriam-Webster and the adjective Instagrammable is a descriptor for those things that one might deem worthy of sharing (Steinmetz, 2018).

References

Aaker, D. & Aaker, J. L.: What Are Your Signature Stories?, *California Management Review*, 58(3), pp.49-65. (2016)

Brogna, M. & Cocco, V.: Un modello di ospitalità originale. L’albergo diffuso. In: M. Brogna (Eds.), *Turismo poliedrico. Un brainstorming sulle nuove opportunità di sviluppo turistico*, pp. 209-236. Sapienza Editore, Roma (2015)

Boyer, M. & Viallon, P.: *La Comunicazione Turistica*, Armando Editore, Roma (1999)

Boaretto, A., Noci, G., Pini, F.M.: Marketing Reloaded, leve e strumenti per la co-creazione di esperienze multicanale. *Il Sole 24 ore*, Milano (2007)

Celant, A.: *Frammenti. Per un discorso sul territorio*, Sapienza Editore, Roma (2017)

Castoldi, G.: *Marketing Per Il Turismo. Dai Bisogni Dei Turisti Al Prodotto Turistico*, Hoepli, Milano (2005)

Gelter, H.: *Digital Tourism. An analysis of digital trends in tourism and customer digital mobile behavior*, Visit Arctic Europe project (2017)

Kotler, P.: *Il Marketing secondo Kotler. Come creare, sviluppare e dominare i mercati”,* Il Sole 24 Ore (1999)

Pencarelli, T., Betti D., Forlani, F.: L’attività Di Ricerca Di Informazioni Per La Scelta Del Prodotto Turistico, *Sinergie*, 66(5), pp.27-54. (2005)

Shatto, B. Erwin, K.: Moving on From Millennials: Preparing for Generation Z. *The Journal of Continuing Education in Nursing*, 47(6), pp.253-254. (2016)

Stamboulis, Y., Skayannis, P.: Innovation strategies and technology for experience-based tourism. *Tourism Management*, 2(4), pp.35–43. (2002)

Steinmetz, K.: Instagram is officially a verb, according to Merriam-Webster, *Time USA LLC*. (2018)

Valdani, E., Guenzi, P. *Il marketing nei parchi tematici. Un modello di gestione per le imprese dell'entertainment*, Egea, Milano (1998)

Risk communication at airports: dealing with public health threats

C. Skanavis[15], C. N. Sardi[16]*, L. Vourdougiannis[17], E. Chariompoli[18]

ABSTRACT Air travelling and all activities deriving from it create conditions of potential exposure to and/or transmission of disease. Information and communication are of tremendous importance, particularly in the outbreak of epidemics, at enabling passengers to adopt appropriate preventive behavior so as to limit the spread of the disease. As airport gates are also gates to communication diseases, measures to prevent disease spreading are to be taken particularly there, on the spot. A technical report by the ECDC (10) concluded that: ‘*’ Risk communication messages often fail to reach the intended communities, including those people most at risk of the diseases. During air travel, the challenges of reaching travellers is inherently difficult due to factors including the volume of travellers to near and far points across the globe, language barriers and other challenges related to building public trust”*. Research findings stress the need for better risk communication through various information channels to empower frontline providers in order to provide adequate health services and to promote safe and healthy travel. As global health threats continue to emerge, the need for improved communication of health risks and appropriate management strategies rises.

Key words: risk communication, public health, Points of Entry, airports, pre-travel health services

---

[15] Professor, *Department of Public and Community Health, University of West Attica, Greece*

[16] PhDc, *Department of Public and Community Health, University of West Attica, Greece *Corresponding author: e-mail:* **csardi@uniwa.gr**

[17] *Junior Researcher, Research Unit of Environmental Education and Communication, University of the Aegean, Greece*

[18] *Junior Researcher, Research Unit of Environmental Education and Communication, University of the Aegean, Greece*

1. INTRODUCTION

International travel and trade, tourism and open border policies are constantly improving everyday life and living standards for people all around the globe [1]. However, the rapid increase in global transport of individuals and goods, has brought the potential transmission of communicable diseases and the related public health hazards in the spotlight. Points of Entry like airports are already part of the front line as common entrances for infectious diseases, and air travel constitutes the most effective route for emerging diseases to be spread internationally [2].

"A public health emergency is defined as any situation with health consequences that are likely to overwhelm the community's routine capability of addressing them." Timing, scale and unpredictability of an event are the main factors for characterizing a health situation as an emergency [3]. Consequently, the public health measures that are being enforced at the airports of a country will be a big part in determining whether and when an infectious disease enters a region. A fundamental part of these measures should be providing the critical information to inbound and outbound passengers, and to airport staff [3]. **A technical report by the ECDC (10) concluded that: '' *Risk communication messages often fail to reach the intended communities, including those people most at risk of the diseases. During air travel, the challenges of reaching travellers is inherently difficult due to factors including the volume of travellers to near and far points across the globe, language barriers and other challenges related to building public trust*".** In order to allow the development of adequate preparedness plans it is crucial to be able to describe the essence of potential public health emergencies [3].

The key concerns, when designing a plan, are those components that have the foremost impact on the success or failure of a response.

One of the most frequently identified areas needing improvement is the communication area. **Effective messages will be developed and disseminated through sources from which the public /travelers report that they would be seeking such information. It is necessary to provide reliable and timely data through these channels to encourage people to participate in acceptable protective behaviors and, most importantly, to reduce panic [18].** This includes "sharing the right information, to the right people, at the right time, in the right format". Effective communication is probably the best determinant of the success or failure of any plan and emergency response [4].

2. METHODOLOGY

The paper is based on rigid knowledge communicated from others' research. Identified gaps in understanding the proposed topic served as the areas that needed clarification in order to enforce appropriate policy making. A literature integrative review took place in order to address this emerging topic. This type of literature review is conducted to evaluate the state of knowledge on the topic exploring the collective evidence in the research area of interest by identifying gaps that need special attention.

In the case of an emerging topic, such as this one, the purpose of using an integrative review method is to overview the knowledge base, to critically review and potentially re-conceptualize, and to expand the theoretical infrastructure. This type of review often requires a more creative collection of data. The purpose is usually not to cover all articles ever published on the topic but rather to combine perspectives and insights, from different fields or research traditions, by categorizing them to groups, that could facilitate studying of the points of interest.

Critical analysis and examination of the relevant literature as well as the main ideas and relationships of the issue of concern is how this literature review has proceeded. This integrative review method could potentially contribute in the advancement of knowledge and theoretical frameworks, rather than simply overviewing or just describing the research area at stake [19].

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Communication

For an emergency reaction, effective operational communication is essential. Operational communication is the prompt exchange of data between inner stakeholders. Effective operational communication guarantees a coordinated reaction and informs decision-makers about the situation, allowing them to make appropriate decisions about the next possible steps and policy modifications. Operational communication should take into account cross-country communications, particularly when disease outbreaks or other emergencies impact cross-border regions [4].

3.1.1 Risk communication

Risk communication has been recognized as a core competency to guide reactions to infectious disease threats from public health authorities. The significance of risk communication is recognized as one of the eight key capabilities for the effective management of infectious diseases and other hazards to public health, both in terms of intelligence gathering and the functional flow of data, communication and coordination [5]. Risk communication relates to the exchange of data, advice and views between professionals or agents and individuals facing a risk to their survival, health or financial or social well-being in real time conditions. Its aim is to enable everyone at risk to make informed choices to mitigate the impacts of the threat (hazard) such as an epidemic of disease and to take measures for protection and prevention. Risk communication utilizes many communication methods varying from media and social media communications to mass communication and involvement of stakeholders and the community. It involves understanding the attitudes, issues and beliefs of stakeholders, as well as their expertise and guidelines. Effective risk communication also needs to define rumors, misinformation and other communication difficulties early on and subsequently handle them [6]. The abiding goal of public health is to control the outbreak as quickly as possible, with the lowest possible social disruption. Effective risk communication is one tool for achieving this objective [7].

3.1.2 The importance of risk communication

Risk communication is seen as a complicated process. Listening and comprehension are as important as offering data and guidance. Risk communication is not perceived as based solely on the transmission of data, but as a strategic activity concerned with constructing relationships over time between officials and the public. Risk communication is not only about the action of the directive, but also about establishing supporting environments where individuals can make informed choices themselves. Integration and partnership are involved in risk communication [5]. One vital lifesaving intervention in emergencies of public health is risk communication. People have the right to learn how to safeguard their health and to make informed choices to better protect themselves, their loved ones and those around them. In addition to saving life and reducing disease, effective risk communication allows nations and regions to maintain their social, financial and political stability in the event of emergencies [6].

3.1.3 How does risk communication work

Threatening issues often seem morally, physically, socially, economically, religiously, and otherwise unacceptable to a group [8]. Risk communication functions only when there is trust-based communication between those who know (professionals), those responsible (officials) and those impacted. Without trust, it is unlikely that individuals will follow the advice provided. It is just as essential to listen to and understand the views, issues and perceptions of people as to give them facts and guidance. It is vital to explain honestly what is known and to admit what is unsure. The credibility of those who give guidance, their caring and empathy expressions are the factors that make risk communication efficient [6].

3.2 What is going wrong in practice

There are numerous resources accessible today for risk communicators in terms of risk communication practice (e.g. toolkits, training modules, instruction frameworks), but challenges, gaps and constraints were revealed when tested [1]. A ECDC technical report found that messages of risk communication often fail to reach the expected groups, including those most at risk of disease. The difficulties of reaching travellers during air travel are particularly hard due to variables such as the number of travellers to near and far destinations around the world, language obstacles and other difficulties linked to building governmental confidence [9].

Regardless of how well scheduled or implemented, risk communication measures will fail to allow individuals at risk to make informed choices, to act against threats, to safeguard their life-health-families and communities, if they do not trust the source of transmitted data. The most significant step in efficient risk communication is to establish and maintain confidence between the sender and receiver of information [10]. According to a study that analysed business travellers' 'pre-travel health preparation methods', although the bulk of travellers profile theoretically indicated receptiveness to health prevention data, the general amount of pre-travel preparing was inadequate and important gaps in pre-travel health procedures were discovered [11].

In addition, the level of understanding the scientific concept of transmissible disease and associated preventive techniques among non-health employees is considerably limited compared to health employees, most probably due to lack of adequate channels for information sharing [12]. On the contrary, it was discovered that travelers seeking advice from a health care professional on pre-travel health were better educated about the danger of infectious diseases, had more precise perceptions of risk and a greater level of protective behavior.

It is of great significance to comprehend the amount of information the various groups of travelers is able to absorb in any future outbreak of infectious disease [13]. It is quite common that those who don't seem to worry about such a potential threat are the ones who also have minimum expectations for updated information and relevant data.

Although most communicable diseases associated with travel can be avoided, the burden of these diseases on public health management continues to be important. There is relatively little knowledge about how tourists know and perceive travel-related health hazards and how they use preventive measures before and during traveling overseas [13].

4 DISCUSS

Risk communication incorporates the variety of communication capabilities needed for public health emergencies through the preparation, reaction and retrieval stages of a severe public health event to encourage informed decision-making, beneficial behaviour change, and trust maintenance [15].

It is vital to establish effective and reliable lines of communication between stakeholders due to the disparate nature of the public health and aviation industries. Although often a significant challenge, this happens to be the only way to promote coordination and cooperation in safety planning, decreasing the danger of misunderstanding and developing coordinated strategies [9]. Risk communication aims at sharing vital information to save lives, protecting health and minimizing damage to self as well as others; changing views; and/or changing behaviour [15]. To guarantee that stakeholders are aware and ready to react, sharing data is essential. Because notification can be received with very limited time prior to the arrival of the flight (because of late radio communication, flight diversion or any other reasons), it is of paramount importance to prepare standard preliminary responses. These standard responses should be included both in the national aviation policy in the public health component of the emergency plan of the airport. Upon detection and verification of a potential public health incident, preliminary standard response protocols must be applied without waiting to receive the results of a complete risk evaluation [9]. In the lack of particular prophylaxis, the most efficient strategy to interrupt the chain of infection among members of the public might be to use communication to boost hygiene behaviours [2]. The success or failure of any reaction in the command and control structures will be strongly related to the calibre, level of skill and experience of the individuals. It is essential to guarantee that individuals involved are suited for their positions and duties and to invest in upskilling, training and frequent drills to maintain them at their finest and ready to conduct. National points of Entry Health Authority (NaPHA) and associated authorities have a distinctive and significant role to play not only in handling the Points of Entry reaction to public health events, but also in directly be advising and guiding their counterparts in the domestic command and control system. They should therefore be upskilled with technical ability, aligned with their new position and well connected to the regional and global intervention scheme [4].

5 CONCLUSION

Public health policies aim at raising awareness of the pre-travel health services, providing appropriate health facilities and encouraging secure and healthy travel. The insufficient amount of awareness of tourists and the false use of travel medicine services justify the need at national and international level to provide specific travel medicine services and to create instructional materials that promote the significance of acquiring pre-travel health advice [13]. It is very important to provide suitable medical travel advice for business travelers, including specific risk data for destinations and instructions for symptom recognition. Improving pre-travel health services is warranted by public health policies. Travel health suppliers should keep updating their knowledge on how to provide appropriate pre-travel health services and encourage secure and healthy travel [11]. Knowledge and training distribution channels should be stationed at the airport to continuously safeguard necessary levels of preparedness. Strategies should be tested for effectiveness to enhance business travelers ' state of awareness [11].

Research results emphasize the need for better communication of risk through different channels of information spreading in order to empower frontline suppliers in outbreaks of infectious disease. As global health threats continue to arise, there is a growing need for enhanced health risk communication and suitable management strategies [12]. A great example in our days is the outbreak of corona virus. Around the globe, some of the major and busiest international airports, started announcing preventive safety measures against the spread of the 2019 Wuhan coronavirus – Covid-19 (WHO), after its outbreak in China and it's rapid spread. Due to the growing spread of the virus, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) expanded the screening to 20 airports within a week [20]. Furthermore, in order to bring changes in the existing systems (legal, educational, social), there is a strong belief that emphasizing the importance and need for empowering citizens with participatory skills happens to be of prime importance [8]. Components that make citizens actively participate in the decision making process and providing relevant knowledge, giving easy access to information, critical thinking, evaluation and assessment, must all be addressed [16].

The International Health Regulations (IHR 2005) require all Member States to create and retain capacity for preventing, detecting and responding to emergencies of public health. One of the key tasks is early detection of public health hazards. A better understanding of the conditions of the health system as well as its influencing factors is required to enhance surveillance and detection [17].

Finally, the two major points of concern, if we are willing to safeguard the Points of Entry from potential public health treats, are building trust between travellers and officials on the circulation of information and boosting pre-travel public health support and delivery. Both of the above-mentioned points of view could be boosted with appropriate public health education and understanding from early age, on a global basis. Being a conscious traveler should become a way of lifestyle in our days. From the other point of view, the ones working in the public health area should invest on upgrading their communication expertizes.

REFERENCES

[1] A literature review on effective risk communication for the prevention and control of communicable disease in Europe. (2013). Stockholm: ECDC, pp.5, 12.

[2] Dickmann, P., Rubin, G., Gaber, W., Wessely, S., Wicker, S., Serve, H. and Gottschalk, R. (2010). New Influenza A/H1N1 (“Swine Flu”): information needs of airport passengers and staff. *Influenza and Other Respiratory Viruses*, 5(1), pp.39-46.

[3] Gosadi, I., Al-Hazmi, A., Fadl, A., Alharbi, K. and Swarelzahab, M. (2015). Evaluation of knowledge and behaviour of workers in Prince Mohammed International Airport in Western Saudi Arabia regarding public health emergency measures applied during Hajj season 2014. *Saudi Medical Journal*, 36(4), pp.456-462.

[4] International health regulations (2005) : a guide for public health emergency contingency planning at designated points of entry. (2012). Manila : WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific.

[5] Dickmann, P., Abraham, T., Sarkar, S., Wysocki, P., Cecconi, S., Apfel, F. and Nurm, Ü. (2016). Risk communication as a core public health competence in infectious disease management: Development of the ECDC training curriculum and programme. *Eurosurveillance*, 21(14).

[6] Who.int. (2019). *WHO | Risk communication: Frequently asked questions*. [online] Available at: https://www.who.int/risk-communication/faq/en/.

[7] WHO outbreak communication guidelines. (2005). [Geneva, Switzerland]: World Health Organization.

[8] Skanavis, C., Koumouris, G., & Petreniti, V. (2005). Public Participation Mechanisms in Environmental Disasters. *Environmental Management*, *35*(6), 821-837. doi: 10.1007/s00267-004-0120-z

[9] Handbook for the management of public health events in air transport. (2015). pp.13, 28.
[10] Communicating risk in public health emergencies. (2018). WHO, p.10.
[11] Pavli, A., Silvestros, C., Patrinos, S., Lymperi, I. and Maltezou, H. (2014). Pre-travel preparation practices among business travellers to tropical and subtropical destinations: Results from the Athens International Airport Survey. *Travel Medicine and Infectious Disease*, 12(4), pp.364-369.
[12] Ganguli, I., Chang, Y., Weissman, A., Armstrong, K. and Metlay, J. (2015). Ebola Risk and Preparedness: A National Survey of Internists. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, 31(3), pp.276-281.
[13] Aziz, M., Abd El-Megeed, H. and Abd Ellatif, M. (2018). Pre-travel health seeking practices of Umrah pilgrims departing from Assiut International Airport, Egypt. *Travel Medicine and Infectious Disease*, 23, pp.72-76.
[14] Al-Abri, S., Abdel-Hady, D. and Al-Abaidani, I. (2016). Knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding travel health among Muscat International Airport travellers in Oman: Identifying the gaps and addressing the challenges. *Journal of Epidemiology and Global Health*, 6(2), pp.67-75.
[15] Gamhewage, G. (2019). *An Introduction to Risk Communication*. [online] Who.int. Available at: https://www.who.int/risk-communication/introduction-to-risk-communication.pdf?ua=1&ua=1.
[16] Skanavis, C., & Sarri, E. (2004). World Summit on Sustainable Development: An environmental highlight or an environmental education let-down?. *International Journal Of Sustainable Development & World Ecology*, *11*(3), 271-279. doi: 10.1080/13504500409469831
[17] Adini, B., Singer, S., Ringel, R. and Dickmann, P. (2019). Earlier detection of public health risks – Health policy lessons for better compliance with the International Health Regulations (IHR 2005): Insights from low-, mid- and high-income countries. *Health Policy*.
[18] Sandra, C. Jones, L. (2007). Where would Australian travelers seek information about bird flu? Results of two airport intercept surveys. In: *Proceedings of the Australian and New Zealand Marketing Academy (ANZMAC) Conference*. [online] pp.2976-2982. Available at: https://ro.uow.edu.au/hbspapers/55/
[19] Snyder, H., (2019). Literature review as a research methodology: An overview and guidelines, *Journal of Business Research*, Volume 104, pp. 333-339.
[20] Duddu, P., (2020), Covid-19: Coronavirus safety measures at major international airports, Airport Technology, Available at: https://www.airporttechnology.com/features/coronavirus-measures-world-airports/

Exploring travellers' customer journey: The relevance of Zero Moment of Truth

Mario D'Arco, Vittoria Marino and Riccardo Resciniti

Abstract This study explores the customer journey in tourism and hospitality industry. Specifically, it is focused on the pre-purchase phase of the "journey", namely, those moments where consumers grab their laptop, mobile phone or some other wired device and start searching for information about the destinations, the hotel, and transportations. All those moments where consumers began to do research online because they are thinking to buy a certain product or service, at Google, are called Zero Moments of Truth. The findings indicate that the Zero Moments of Truth for tourism products and services occur through a variety of touchpoints (e.g., search engines, and social media). Knowing the Zero Moment of Truth helps marketers to understand where to compete for consumers' attention online.

Key words: customer journey; customer engagement; decision-making process; Zero Moment of Truth; purchase intention; tourism and hospitality industry

1 Introduction

The advent of the internet, social media, and mobile technologies has altered the traditional consumer decision-making process. Court et al. [1], analysing the purchase decisions of nearly 20,000 consumers across five industries and three continents, revealed that consumers, rather than start with a set of potential brands in mind and methodically reduce that number to make a purchase, follow a non-linear and iterative process until they had decided what to buy. This means that the decision-making process is more like a "circular journey" rather than a "funnel". Specifically, its structure encompasses four phases: (a) consider, (b) evaluate, (c) buy, and (d) post-

[19] Mario D'Arco, University of Salerno, Fisciano, Italy; email: mdarco@unisa.it

Vittoria Marino, University of Salerrno, Fisciano, Italy; email: vmarino@unisa.it

Riccardo Resciniti, University of Sannio, Benevento, Italy; email: resciniti@unisannio.it

purchase experience that, in turn, includes stages such as enjoy, advocate, and bond [1, 2].

Considering these premises, the present contribution aims at investigating the customer journey in tourism and hospitality industry. In particular, it focuses on the pre-purchase phase of the "journey", namely, those moments where consumers, exposed to intrinsic motivation (i.e., self-esteem, social recognition, escape and relaxation, learning and discovery [3]) or external stimulus (i.e., advertising, friends and acquaintances, social media, Films and TV series [4]), direct themselves toward the fulfilment of tourism needs. Therefore, they decide to grab their laptop, mobile phone or some other wired device and start searching for information about the destinations, the hotel, and transportations (i.e., train, bus, plane, and car).

All those moments where consumers began to do research online because they are thinking to buy a certain product or service, at Google, are called Zero Moments of Truth (ZMOTs) [5].

The objective of this explorative study is to answer the following research question: "*What are the ZMOTs for tourism products and services?*"

Therefore, our intent is to understand exactly where potential customers spend their time before the final purchase. In other words, to answer the above-mentioned research question we need to investigate how people search for specific tourism products or services, that is, what types of channels and forms of content they encounter during the path to purchase.

In the following section, the theoretical background of this explorative research regarding the relevance of the Zero Moment of Truth (ZMOT) phenomenon in tourism and hospitality industry is briefly reviewed.

2 Literature review

In tourism literature, scholars have been influenced by research outside tourism to explain consumer behaviour [6]. Most of the studies about travel decision-making process are based on classical buyer behaviour theory such as the "grand models". The main assumption of these models [7, 8, 9] is that consumers are seen as rational decision-makers. Hence, purchase process is depicted as similar to logical problem solving approach and as a multi-stage sequence of actions such as: (a) needs motivation; (b) problem recognition; (c) information search; (d) evaluation of alternatives and decision; (e) purchase; (f) post-purchase evaluation.

Drawing from "grand models" researchers [e.g., 10, 11, 12] described tourist behaviour as a funnel-like process of narrowing down choices among alternatives. The choices can be influenced by socio-psychological factors like attitudes, motives, values, personal characteristics and also non-psychological or external factors like time, price and advertising, situational and interactional factors [11].

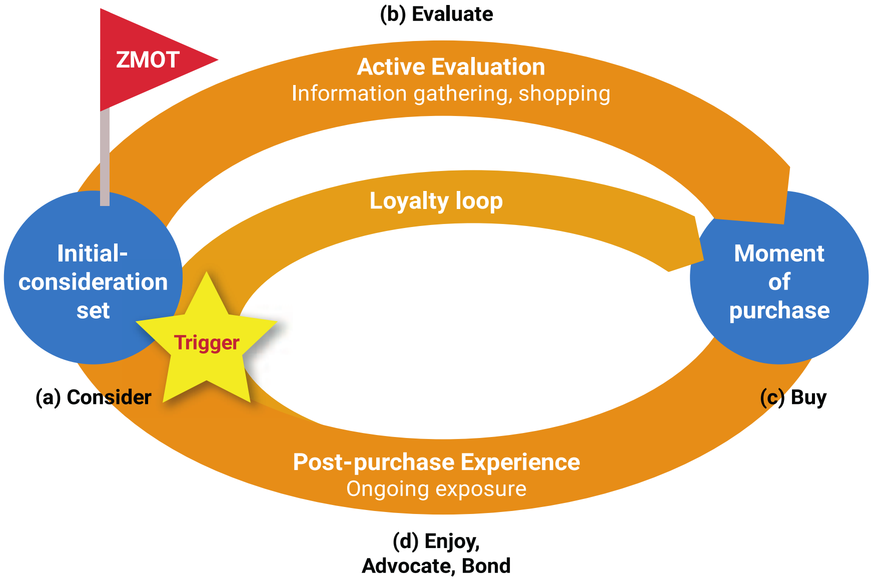
Because of their deterministic view, several researchers have criticized decision-making models inspired to "grand models" applied to the tourism and hospitality sector. Choi et al. [13], for instance, underlined that these models focus on the destination choice process but cannot comprehend the vast range of decisions and purchases during the overall course of vacation planning. Furthermore, these models do not take account of how Information and Communication Technology is shaping consumer behaviour in tourism context. Dunne et al. [14], in fact, observed that decision-making process is becoming less rigorous in its sequence thanks to the internet. For example, in the case of short-term vacation to a city destination with no other destinations visited en route the decision is last-minute, spontaneous, opportunistic and less complex. This means that the information search and bookings occur simultaneously.

The internet and its related digital technologies have changed decision-making process by influencing the way consumers search, decide and purchase vacation destinations [15, 16, 17]. Specifically, consumers do not start with a set of potential destinations or tourism and hospitality brands in mind and methodically reduce that number to make a purchase. Their decision-making process is not lineal. For example, an individual can recognise tourism needs while surfing the social media platforms such as Facebook [4]. Furthermore, a recognition may arise when marketing practitioners use social media or banner advertising to promote hotels or tourist destinations by trying to attract the attention of consumers [16].

To better depict the consumer behaviour emerged after the pre-internet era Court et al. [1] proposed the new consumer decision journey model. As suggested by these authors, nowadays consumers rather than a linear decision-making process take a much more iterative and circular journey, which can be schematised as a model consisting of four phases, namely, (a) consider, (b) evaluate, (c) buy, and (d) enjoy, advocate, bond.

Hudson and Thal [16] adopted the model proposed by Court et al. [1] to explain the main changes in the tourism and hospitality industry. In particular they modified the model by introducing the ZMOT concept in the first phase of the customer journey, that is, the initial-consideration set based on the information collected by consumers before purchase (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: The new consumer decision journey (Adapted from Hudson & Thal [14])



In service marketing, the initial encounter between a customer and a firm's representative is considered a crucial moment, because the customer begins to formulate positive or negative impressions about the firm [18]. This encounter is referred to as a "moment of truth" (MOT) [19]. Procter & Gamble altered the notion of MOT in order for it to be applicable to retail marketing. Hence, they coined the label "First Moment of Truth" to indicate the first seven seconds in which a consumer is exposed to a product on a store shelf and decides whether to buy one brand or another. Later, Procter & Gamble introduced the notion of "Second Moment of Truth" (SMOT) to refer to those moments at home, when a consumer uses the product/brand and expresses his/her satisfaction or dissatisfaction [4].

Lecinksi [4] noted another moment called ZMOT. This phenomenon, which is the direct consequence of consumers empowerment on technological level, occurs whenever an individual start searching online for more information about a certain brand or product/service before arriving at a purchase decision.

According to a global survey conducted by Google [4], ZMOT is in all categories as shoppers make decisions (e.g., automotive, consumer electronics, grocery, banking and so on). Nevertheless, reviewing the extant academic literature, we noticed that there is scant research about the relevance of ZMOT in tourism and hospitality industry. Therefore, the aim of this research is to provide insight into the attitudes of consumers with regard to this new moment where people are making decision before buying.

3 Research methodology and data collection

In order to answer the following research question: "*What are the ZMOTs for tourism products and services?*" we conducted an online survey. The questionnaire consisted of four sections. The first section contained 12 specific statements, adapted from previous literature [e.g., 4, 5], in order to explore the antecedents (or stimulus) regarding consumers' willingness to search online information about specific tourism products/services. The second section concerned 10 statements, adapted from existing researches [e.g., 5, 17, 20], about the main information sources consulted by consumers before to conclude the purchase. The third section was prepared to discover the length of the pre-purchase phase, that is, the time employed by consumers to collect information about tourism products/services, and evaluate different options. The last section asked a few demographic questions. The items in section one and two were measured on a five-point scale (with anchor points 1 = Strongly disagree to 5 = Strongly agree). In section three and four, we adopted multiple choice questions.

For recruiting survey participants, we used Amazon's Mechanical Turk [21, 22]. Data collection took place in August 2019. Finally, we collected 527 valid surveys. Replies arrived from six different countries (Italy 27,13%, N=143; USA 60,15%, N=317; Spain 9,30%, N=49; Germany 2,09%, N=11; United Kingdom 1,14%, N=6; Russia 0,19%, N=1). A total of 55% (N=291) of the respondents were Male and 45% (N=236) Female. The majority of the participants (38%, N=202) were between the ages of 25 and 34. Thirty-three percent (N=175) were between 18 and 24, 19% (N=102) were between 35 and 54, and 9% (N=48) were between 55 and 64. More than half (54,27%, N=286) of the participants had a Master's degree. Fourteen point eight percent (N=78) had a Bachelor's degree, and 30,36% (N=160) had a High school degree. Only one respondent (0.19%) had less than a High school diploma, and two respondents had a Doctorate (0,38%).

4 Results

This study first asked a series of questions related to find which factors fostered consumer desire to travel and activated the customer decision journey. Results revealed that "conversation with friends and acquaintances" (Median = 4), "I saw posts from my Facebook friends" (Median = 5), "I saw vacation posts on Instagram" (Median = 5), and "Motivation, and personality traits" (Median = 5) were the items with the highest score. In contrast, the score of other items, such as "I saw an advertisement while browsing online" (Median = 1), "I saw an ad on an outdoor billboard" (Median = 1), "I watched a video on YouTube" (Median = 1), "I read online news articles about tourism destination" (Median = 2), "I read newspaper/magazine articles about tourism destination" (Median = 1), "I watched a documentary on TV" (Median = 1), "I watched a film/TV series" (Median = 1), and "I received email from travel booking websites" (Median = 1), tented to be considerably lower.

Table 1 contains the descriptive statistics on the main information sources used by consumers before purchasing tourism products or services.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics

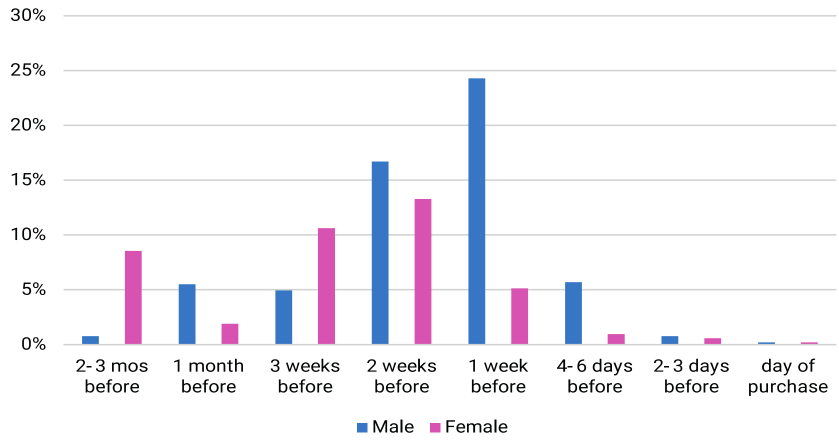
Item	*Mean*	*Median*	*SD*	*Skew*	*Kurtosis*
1. I used a search engine	3,524	4	1,442	-0,985	-0,576
2. I searched on websites for booking flights or other modes of transport	4,856	5	0,699	-5,158	25,514
3. I spent time on the social media profiles of tourism companies	3,793	4	1,450	-1,182	-0,107
4. I visited social networks specialized in tourism	2,150	1	1,532	0,666	-1,409
5. I read/visited a blog specialised in tourism	3,406	4	1,640	-0,650	-1,309
6. I compared hotels and prices on websites for booking hotels	4,653	5	0,967	-3,189	9,177
7. I spoke with travel intermediaries	2,266	1	1,649	0,698	-1,326
8. I used Google Maps	3,065	4	1,602	-0,326	-1,616
9. I searched online for photos and videos	3,216	4	1,599	-0,471	-1,478
10. I paid attention to user-generated contents (e.g., reviews ad ratings)	4,254	5	1,328	-1,804	1,755

Note. SD = Standard Deviation; Skew = Skewness. Ratings are on a 5-point scale (N=527).

Collecting this data is paramount to understand where the ZMOT can happen. Findings indicated that especially younger people are moving away from traditional sources of information such as travel intermediaries (e.g., travel agent, and tour operator), which continued to be preferred by a more mature age group, such as 35-54 (12%) and 55-64 (8%). Items referring respectively to the internet search tools (e.g., 1, 2, 9), hotel price comparison websites such as Booking (e.g. 6), social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and YouTube (e.g., 3), tourism blogs (e.g., 5), online maps (e.g., 8), and user-generated contents such as reviews, hashtags, pictures, videos, and ratings (e.g. 10) achieved a high score. This means that potential travellers are usual to spend their time on such information sources and have access to their ZMOT. In contrast, social networks specialized in tourism (e.g., Travellerspoint, Wikitravel, Foodspotting) seemed less used.

Another aspect that we intended to capture through the survey concerned the length of the pre-purchase phase, that is, the time that consumers spend during ZMOT. As depicted in Figure 2, there are different sampling of purchase journey lengths. However, findings corroborated a tendency towards the two weeks (30%). Research also revealed that male tend to make decision much more quickly than female do. Female are more reflective and are in search of credible sources. For example, female are more likely to report use of travel intermediaries (22%). Finally, we noticed that younger respondents make their choices faster than other groups. The majority of respondents aged between 18-24 (18,41%) take one week to collect information, value the different options and conclude the purchase.

Figure 2: Length of the time consumers spend doing research before purchase



5 Discussion and conclusions

Consumer behaviour in tourism and hospitality industry has seen relevant changes after the explosion of the internet, social media, and mobile technologies. In contrast to past decision-making process, which involved a restricted number of touchpoints such as brochures, books, advertising, and speaking to a travel agent, modern travellers have a plethora of channels and choices at their disposal. Starting from this assumption, the main objective of this study was to explore the fragmented, non-linear customer journey of the contemporary tourism product/service consumers. Specifically, we focused our attention on those specific moments, called ZMOT, when consumers pull the information they want and make choices that affect the success and failure of a particular tourism brand (i.e., a destination, an airline brand, or a hotel).

The results of the survey revealed that consumers, along the path to purchase, could select simultaneously or in a recursive way different types of touchpoints to find information or actively interact with a brand operating in tourism and hospitality industry. In detail, consumers do most of their research using search engines and travel comparison websites (e.g., Booking.com). They learn from travel blog posts, user reviews, star ratings, images and videos posted by other consumers. They can also tap into social media such as Facebook to consult the brand pages of tourism and travel firms.

In other words, from a theoretical standpoint, this study analysed the source of influence on consumers over the length of their customer journey. The empirical evidence might help managers in hospitality and tourism industry reduce uncertainty about where to place the ZMOT and win consumer attention. If a specific tourism firm or brand is available at the ZMOT through engaging brand and user-generated contents, the probabilities to be found by consumers in the very moment they are planning a trip will increase.

This research has some limitations. First, we did not measure the type of device (i.e., laptop, and mobile technologies) used during the customer journey. Second, our analysis did not distinguish between the business and leisure traveller. Such variable could be useful to better understand the length of the customer journey. We may suppose, in fact, that in the case of business travels the duration of the decision journey is shorter.

With regard to the methodology, future research could adopt other techniques such as clickstream analysis, experimental design, or mixed methods. We encourage research in this field because exploring ZMOT on a deeper level will provide in the future significant insight about how, when, and where marketers in tourism sector can engage with consumers.

6 References

157. Court, D., Elzinga, D., Mulder, S., & Vetvik, O. J.: The consumer decision journey (2009). Available from: https://www.mckinsey.com/ Accessed August 20, 2019
158. Edelman, D. C.: Branding in the digital age. Harvard Bus. Rev. (2010), 88(12): 62-69
159. Han, H., & Hyun, S.S.: Role of motivations for luxury cruise traveling, satisfaction, and involvement in building traveler loyalty. Int. J. Hosp. Manag. (2018), 70: 75-84 DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2017.10.024
160. Marder, B., Archer-Brown, C., Colliander, J., & Lambert, A.: Vacation posts on Facebook: A model for incidental vicarious travel consumption. J. Travel Res. (2019), 58(6): 1014-1033 DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287518786465
161. Lecinksi, L.: Winning the zero moment of truth (2011). Available from: https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/marketing-resources/micro-moments/2011-winning-zmot-ebook/ Accessed August 14, 2019

162. Cohen, S.A., Prayag, G., & Moital, M.: Consumer behaviour in tourism: Concepts, influences and opportunities. Curr. Issues Tour. (2014), 17(10): 872-909 DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2013.850064
163. Engel, F., Kollat, D., & Blackwell, R.: Consumer behaviour. New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart and Whinston (1968)
164. Howard, J., & Sheth, A.: The theory of buyer behaviour. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons (1969)
165. Nicosia, F.M.: Consumer decision process: Marketing and advertising implications. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall (1966)
166. Moutinho, L.: Consumer Behavior in Tourism. Eur. J. Mark. (1987), 21(10): 5-44 DOI: https://doi.org/10.1108/EUM0000000004718
167. Sirakaya, E., & Woodside, A.G.: Building and Testing Theories of Decision Making by Travellers. Tour. Manage. (2005), 26(6): 815-832 DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2004.05.004
168. Jeng, J., & Fesenmaier, D.R.: Conceptualizing the Travel Decision-making Hierarchy: A Review of Recent Developments. Tourism Anal. (2002), 7: 15-32 DOI: https://doi.org/10.3727/108354202108749925
169. Choi, S., Lehto, X.Y., Morrison, A.M., & Jang, S.: Structure of Travel Planning Processes and Information Use Patterns. J. Travel Res. (2012), 51(1): 26-40 DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287510394191
170. Dunne, G., Flanagan, S., & Buckley, J.: Towards a decision-making model for city break travel. Int. J. Cult. Tourism. Hospit. Res. (2011). 5(2): 158-172 DOI: https://doi.org/10.1108/17506181111139573
171. Eleftherios, V., & Neuhofer, B.: The influence of social media on the consumers' hotel decision journey. J. Hosp. Tour Mang. (2017), 8(1): 101-118 DOI: https://doi.org/10.1108/JHTT-09-2016-0058
172. Hudson, S., & Thal, K.: The impact of social media on the consumer decision process: implications for tourism marketing. J. Travel Tour. Mark. (2013), 30: 156-160 DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/10548408.2013.751276
173. Xiang, Z., Wang, D., O'Leary, J. T., & Fesenmaier, D. R.: (2015). Adapting to the Internet: Trends in Travelers' Use of the Web for Trip Planning. J. Travel Res. (2015), 54(4): 511–527 DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287514522883
174. Solomon, M.R., Surprenant, C., Czepiel, J.A., & Gutman, E.G.: A role theory perspective on dyadic interactions: the service encounter. J. Mark. (1985), 49: 99-111 DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/002224298504900110
175. Normann, R.: Service Management: Strategy and leadership in service business, 3rd edn. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons (2002)
176. Llodrà-Riera, I., Martínez-Ruiz, M. P., Jiménez-Zarco, A. I., & Izquierdo-Yusta, A.: A multidimensional analysis of the information sources construct and its relevance for destination image formation. Tourism Manage. (2015) 48: 319-328 DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2014.11.012
177. Buhrmester, M., Kwang, T., & Gosling, S. D.: Amazon's Mechanical Turk: A new source of inexpensive, yet high-quality, data? Perspect. Psychol. Sci. (2011), 6(1): 3-5 DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691610393980
178. Chambers, S., & Nimon, K.: Conducting survey research using MTurk. In Crowdsourcing: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications (pp. 410-439). Pennsylvania, USA: IGI Global (2019)

E-tourism: Chinese and Western competition

Danneo V., Battaglia L., Cedrola, E.[20]

Abstract: The research presented in the paper aims to investigate and understand the role of the internet and new technologies in the development of the global tourism market, focusing on the approach of tourism operators in the major online platforms. The method adopted is based on a comparison between China and the Western countries. In particular, the research takes into account both Costumer and Online Travel Agencies (OTA) point of views. The behavior of the young customer is analyzed through a literature review; the behavior of the OTAs is deepened through an observation of their online approach in the period from 2008 to 2018.
Based on the results, the Western OTAs need to reorganize and implement new strategies to better catch the demand and to be more receptive to the international consumers, while the local T.Os need to find their own market position and keep up with trend opportunities.

Key words: E-tourism, OTAs, T.Os, Metasearch, Millennials, Gen Z, Chinese tourism, Western tourism.

1 Introduction

Over the last ten years (from 2008 to 2018), the global tourism market has been affected by several changes, which involved the main players of the sector.

In fact, new tourist consumers, with the highest expectations ever are growing in a market that is more and more aware of customer needs. Due to this phenomenon, operators have been working on the definition of an innovative tourist offer. The growth of the internet and its tools has favored the development of more personalized and differentiated tourism products suitable for a much more active target (Chathoth, Ungson, Harrington, Chan, (2016)). The entry into the market of new, digital generation, and with different needs, requires specific attention and approach to the Millennials and Generation Z. Indeed, the analysis of the new generations –

Millennials and Gen Z - help to outline the new Western and Chinese tourists characteristics, and to examine in detail their purchasing behavior during the Customer Journey (phases pre-purchase, purchase and post-purchase), where Internet plays an important role.

Shifting the focus on tour operators, Internet has made the Online Travel Agencies (OTAs) the main players in the market. As a matter of fact, OTAs with their own platforms build new Destination Marketing strategies in order to attract new tourists and offer them a personalized and unique travel experience. The analysis of various platforms of both Western market - Booking.com, Expedia and Google Trips - and the Chinese one - Ctrip and Fliggy – shows different strategies.

Within the traditional market system, the Digital has been a fundamental tool, mainly for its accessibility and speed particularly appreciated by young consumers. According to that, both Western and Chinese users rely on a regularly basis on the online service. Internet allows them to modify every single detail of their journey. The customization process is so fast and it gives the feeling of having a vacation "just a click away". The only limit depends on the users' confidence with the Net. Therefore, if Western Millennials and Gen Z are attracted by digital tools and platforms, the corresponding users of the Chinese market make it an essential use, now perfectly integrated into everyday life. The reason why companies have invested is to set up digital portals, to be more reachable by this specific type of public, as traditional methods are not effective.

Hence, this paper aims to investigate the market development aspects due to the Internet growth within the traditional system. In particular, we want to answer to the following issues:

(Q.1) - Have Western and Chinese Millennials and Z Gen different behavior in the travel purchase journey?
(Q.2) - Are Western and Chinese OTAs different?
(Q.3) - How do Western and Chinese OTAs operates to attract customers (Millennials and Z Gen) in the global market?

2 Literature review

The Internet growth caused the rise of new players in the tourism market.

On one side, there is a younger and more enterprising user than in the past, facilitated by the accessibility of the internet. On the other side, it is important to highlight several differences in tourist behavior between the digital generations: Millennials and Generation Z. Indeed, these differences derives from the historical-cultural context in which these two generations have grown. Millennials - born between 1981 and 1995 – have discovered the Internet potentiality, but they lost their feeling to the Web due to outbreak of the 2007 economic downturn (Bolton, Parasuraman, Hoefnagels, Kadabayi, Gruber, Loureiro, Migchels, Solnet, (2013)).

Generation Z - born between 1995 and 2010 - did not experience the economic crisis, or at least, did not experience the most serious period. This made Gen Z much more independent than the previous one (Cilliers, (2017)). Some researches (Eldeman, (2010); Bellini, (2017); Buffa, (2017); Mazzotti, (2018)) have outlined the main phases that constitute the customer journey. In particular, the technology revolution added a further step to this process, where the user begins instinctively to search for news and information online, such as official reviews and posts on social network which strongly influence his final decision (Mazzotti, 2018). While Millennials remain reluctant on the selection of destinations, the costs and the choice of further digital tools (Bolton, Parasuraman, (2013)), the members of Gen Z are much more proactive towards the possibilities that the Network offers (Cilliers, 2017).

The Chinese market presents several differences on purchasing behavior. In fact, Internet has become the main tool used by Chinese tourists for travel and holiday management, especially through the use of the well-known apps on smartphones (CNNIC, 2018). According to the Statistical Report on Internet Development in China 2018, online travel booking is constantly increasing: in 2017, the percentage of customers who used Internet to book their holidays is 48.7%, of which 45.1% booked through their mobile devices. The data refer to hotel rooms booking, air and rail tickets and tourist products. In 2016, the survey corresponded to 40.9% and 37.7% respectively for mobile users (CNNIC, 2018). These behaviors are linked to the socio-economic context. Indeed, China boasts very thriving financial resources and has not been influenced by the 2007 economic crisis (Miller, Lu, (2018)). The economic growth led to an income increase for all people classes and to a greater purchasing power for the middle class of the population (CITM, (2018)). Furthermore, the raise in Chinese tourism sector derives from a strong government policy, made by investments in infrastructure, transport and specific services. At the same time, it allowed progressive growth of the outbound tourism (since 1983), at first towards the neighboring destinations (Hong Kong, Macao), and afterward towards all destinations (UNWTO, (2013)). These measures brought China as the fourth place among the most visited countries in the world after France, Spain and the USA, with 270 million tourists in 2017 (up 3.7%) (Nasolomampionona, (2014)). Drawing the attention to the tour operators, the Internet growth has made OTA the main players in the sector, changing the methods and tools that allow customers to choose and book their next holiday. Through online portals, communities, user reviews and social networks - as new promotion platforms - OTAs aim to provide customers a unique and quality travel experience (Webb, (2016)). However, the Western OTAs - Booking.com, Expedia and Google Trips - and the Chinese ones - Ctrip and Fliggy - turn to two different kinds of market. While the Western one presents a plurality of subjects which are in competition one to each other, the Chinese is characterized by only two competitors, instead. In the West, OTAs focus their attention on identifying new strategies, which can help them to emerge between competitors (Meloni, (2018)). In China, the two major OTAs are addressed on 2 different targets: the first one more generalist, the second one youthful and more oriented towards the Digital component.

3 Method and empirical findings

The paper focuses the attention on the analysis of the last 10 years (2008-2018) literature and on the comparison between Western and Chinese tourism players, in particular Millennials and Gen Z tourists, and the Online Travel Agencies.
The paper is based on different information led by Academic reviews, researches on the subject, bibliography concerning the tourism sector and statistical sources of tourist demand, including: UNWTO (United Nations World Tourism Organization), EUROSTAT (European Commission), ISTAT (National Institute of Statistics), OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) and ONT (National Observatory of Tourism), regarding the Western world; CNNIC (Statistical Report on Internet Development in China), for the Chinese one. The behavior of the young travellers is analyzed through a literature review; the behavior of the OTAs is deepened through an observation of their online approach carried out from 2008 to 2018.

Table 1: Western and Chinese sources

Bolton, Parasuraman, Hoefnagels, Kadabayi, Gruber, Loureiro, Migchels, Solnet, (2013)	Millennials have discovered the Internet potentiality, but they lost their feeling to the Web due to outbreak of the 2007 economic downturn.
Chathoth, Ungson, Harrington, Chan, (2016)	The growth of the internet and its tools has favored the development of more personalized and differentiated tourism products suitable for a much more active target.
Cilliers, (2017)	Gen Z much more independent than the previous one and are much more proactive.
CNNIC, (2018)	Chinese consumer behaviors are linked to the socio-economic context. Indeed, China boasts very thriving financial resources and has not been influenced by the 2007 economic crisis.
Cohen, Prayag, Moital, (2014)	The Digital tools allow new generations to personalize their trips more freely and independently. As a result, this sense of freedom has increased their desire to live new and unconventional experiences.
Dall'Ara, (2013)	Western Millennials prefer to approach a Tour Operator to define an important journey and are focused on the emotional aspect of the journey. The Chinese Millennials maintain their autonomy and live their experience as an opportunity to affirm their social status.
Nasolomampionona, R. F. (2014)	Profile of Chinese Outbound Tourists: Characteristics and Expenditures.
Roberti, (2017)	Putting the price at the center of the evaluation of the offers and consulting opinions, reviews and comments from the communities that have already experienced the holiday. Chinese Millennials and Gen Z, they live in a market that is characterized by richer economic resources than the Western counterpart, and by the presence of only two competitors for the entire Customer Journey.
Wang, Chang, Hsieh, (2014)	Ctrip is the mayor Chinese OTA which allows customers to book hotels, flights, to rent a car and other travel services, using different payment methods. The Chinese portal present

	an extra gear, it provides support services for both Chinese citizens wishing to travel abroad and foreign tourists who want to visit China.
Webb, (2016)	West market is interested by high competition and due to that, it focuses the attention on the best-guaranteed price policy, turning to a general target, using a multi-channel strategy. Ctrip aims to meet all the customer needs, willing to spend amounts of money to live a unique travel experience. Moreover, the customer segmentation is more defined. Fliggy - the Alibaba Group's OTA – focuses the attention on Millennials and the Generation Z while Ctrip is looking for new solutions in order to involve the younger target.

The method is based on the comparison between the Western and Chinese markets. This tourist confrontation has been based towards the context in which customers grew up, their personality, their approach to tourism and technologies; the OTAs have been investigated in relation to the sector structure, the marketing policies, the use of technology and their relation with Metasearch to meet the target needs.

In particular, the findings present that both Western and Chinese young customers are mainly linked to the use of technology. Moreover, the Digital tools are considered necessary and extremely useful, since they allow new generations to personalize their trips more freely and independently. As a result, this sense of freedom has increased their desire to live new and unconventional experiences (Cohen, Prayag, Moital, (2014)). (Q.1) However, it is important to underline the differences between these two types of consumer. In particular, while Western Millennials prefer to approach a Tour Operator to define an important journey, the Chinese Millennials maintain their autonomy. Furthermore, while the Western consumer is focused on the emotional aspect of the journey, the Chinese ones live their experience as an opportunity to affirm their social status (Dall'Ara, (2013)). The Western Gen Z are more enterprising than the Millennials and are looking for fun and totalizing experiences, instead. At the same time, they are more fragile and insecure, and when they make a purchase, they look for protection and security. The Chinese counterpart is more positive, proactive, confident and willing to know the world, accepting some risks.

The events that particularly affected purchasing behavior are the 2007 economic crisis for the Millennials, and terrorist attacks for Gen Z. The result is a more fearful attitude towards investments, putting the price at the center of the evaluation of the offers and consulting opinions, reviews and comments from the communities that have already experienced the holiday (Roberti, (2017)). Focusing the attention on Chinese Millennials and Gen Z, they live in a market that is characterized by richer economic resources than the Western counterpart, and by the presence of only two competitors for the entire Customer Journey. (Q.2) Analyzing the operators' point of view (Q.2), the West market present a greater number of players – Booking.com, Expedia, Google Trips and Airbnb – than China, with only Ctrip and Fliggy. As a result, the West is interested by high competition and due to that, it focuses the attention on the best guaranteed price policy, turning to a general target. In China, Ctrip is the main OTA, integrating all the potential competitors in its system, using a multi-channel strategy. With such a complex organization, Ctrip aims to meet all the customer needs, willing to spend amounts of money to live a unique travel experience. Moreover, the customer segmentation is more defined. In fact, Fliggy - the Alibaba Group's OTA – focuses the attention on Millennials and the Generation Z while Ctrip is looking for new solutions in order to involve the younger target (Webb, (2016)). (Q.3)

4 Conclusion

In conclusion, it is important to underline that Internet and the new digital tools are the key factors of the tourism sector development, especially in terms of accessibility and speed.

Young tourists rely on the Web, customizing their holiday "with a click". The tourist behaviors of Western and Chinese Millennials present important differences. While Western still rely on the local Tour Operator to purchase an important journey, the Chinese ones focus more on technologies, both to organize a trip, and to share their experiences in order to affirm their social status. The Gen Z looks more proactive than Millennials: while Western Gen Z is more uncomfortable and seek confirmation from web and community reviews, the Chinese counterpart is much more confident, curious to know the world and to have unique experiences to share on the Net, instead. (Q.1) The Internet growth has made OTAs the main players in the market, bording the traditional TOs into national niches. While the West presents a large number of OTAs, which are in competition between each other in order to provide tourists a unique and personalized experience, the Chinese market presents only two competitors Ctrip and Fliggy, instead. In particular, Ctrip shows a structure which is similar to a corporate, Fliggy is born in recent times, focusing the attention on the Millennials and Gen Z targets. (Q.2) On the one hand, Western OTAs, such as Booking.com, Expedia and Google Trips, adopted several strategies based on offering high-quality promotions at a cheaper price to a wider target. On the other hand, in China, Ctrip and Fliggy present a more complete offer that touches the entire Customer Journey. Moreover, while Ctrip uses a multi-channel strategy and aims to meet any type of consumer needs, national and international, Fliggy, the Alibaba Group OTA, focused itself on Millennials and Generation Z targets. (Q.3) The Digital growth deeply affected the tourism market development relying young public "informed and able to organize their holidays independently".

Over the years between 2008 and 2018 the Customer Journey dynamics has evolved, improving itself in an ever more detailed way. Furthermore, it will be more and more structured thanks to the digital instrument use of the young consumers who will become the new players of the change.

Therefore, the OTAs, especially the Western ones, will need to understand the new trends, especially for new international travelers, in order to reorganize and develop specific strategies to intercept international demand. Moreover, they will have to develop new offers for the different targets and guide them along the Customer Journey providing appropriate motivation.

A limitation of Research consists in the exclusion of TOs from the survey; Tour Operators in the West right now are important national players to whom Western Millennials and Gen Z relate for the final decision of their vacation. It would be more appropriate to gather details regarding national TOs activities to understand their position in respect to the international market and new tourists. This information can be collected with personal interviews, in a second phase of empirical research. Moreover, some interviews have already been carried out with some Italian TOs, but they are not included in this paper.

References

1. Bellini, S.: Channel Relationship (R)Evolution. Come cambiano le relazioni di canale nel contesto di convergenza e omnicanalità , Egea, Milano, 2017.
2. Bolton, R. N., Parasuraman, A., Hoefnagels, A., Kadabayi, S,. Gruber, T., Loureiro, Y. K., Migchels, N., Solnet, D.: Understanding Generation Y and their use of Social Media: A review and Research Agenda, Journal of Service Management, 2013, 24, pp. 245-267, doi: https://doi.org/10.1108/09564231311326987, "https://www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/abs/10.1108/09564231311326987".
3. Buffa, F.: La domanda turistica della destinazione in Martini, U.: Management e Marketing delle destinazioni turistiche territoriali: metodi, approcci e strumenti, McGraw-Hill, Milano, 2017.
4. Chathoth, P. K., Ungson, G. R., Harrington, R. J., Chan, E. S. W.: Co-creation and higher order customer engagement in hospitality and tourism services. A critical review, International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 2016, 28, pp. 222-245, doi: https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-10-2014-0526,"https://www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/abs/10.1108/IJCHM-10-2014-0526".
5. Chinese International Travel Monitor 2018,"https://www.citmhotels.com/" , 2018, p. 17.
6. Cilliers, E. J.: The Challenge of Teaching Generation Z, International Journal of Social Science, 2017, 3, pp. 188-198, doi: https://dx.doi.org/10.20319/pijss.2017.31.188198, "https://grdspublishing.org/index.php/people/article/view/322/2795".
7. Cohen, S., Prayag, G., Moital, M.: Consumer Behaviour in Tourism: Concepts, Influences and Opportunities, Current Issues in Tourism, 2014.
8. CNNIC, *Statistical Report on Internet Development in China (January 2018)*, "https://cnnic.com.cn/IDR/ReportDownloads/201807/P020180711391069195909.pdf", 2018
9. Dall'Ara, G.: Il mercato turistico cinese: marketing, casi e buone prassi, F. Angeli, Milano, 2013.
10. Eldeman, D. C.: Branding in the Digital Age; you're spending your money in all the wrong places, "https://hbr.org/2010/12/branding-in-the-digital-age-youre-spending-your-money-in-all-the-wrong-places", 2010.
11. Mazzotti, M.: Web Marketing Turistico e oltre. Strategie per rilanciare la tua struttura e raggiungere il successo, Hoepli, Milano, 2018.
12. Meloni, A.: L'inarrestabile avanzata delle OTA, "https://www.ttgitalia.com/stories/adriano_meloni/141105_linarrestabile_avanzata_delle_ota/", 2018.
13. Miller, L. J., Lu, W.: Gen Z is set to Outnumber Millennials within a Year, "https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-08-20/gen-z-to-outnumber-millennials-within-a-year-demographic-trends", 2018.
14. Nasolomampionona, R. F.: Profile of Chinese Outbound Tourists: Characteristics and Expenditures, in "American Journal of Tourism Management", "http://article.sapub.org/pdf/10.5923.j.tourism.20140301.03.pdf", 2014.
15. Roberti, G.: Vite da Millennials. Culture e pratiche comunicative della Generazione Y, Guerini Scientifica, Milano, 2017.
16. Wang, H., Chang, Y., Hsieh, M. H.: The Transformation Process of Ctrip.com. International LTD., Management Review, 2014.

17. Webb, T.: From travel agents to OTAs: How the evolution of consumer booking behavior has affected revenue management, Journal of Revenue & Pricing Management, 2016, 15, pp. 276- 282, doi: 10.1057/rpm.2016.16, "https://www.researchgate.net/publication/297605362_From_travel_agents_to_OTAs_How_the_evolution_of_consumer_booking_behavior_has_affected_revenue_management".
18. World Tourism Organization, *Tourism Highlights 2013 Edition,* https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/pdf/10.18111/9789284415427", 2013.

The Imitation Game

Alfano Vincenzo, Ercolano Salvatore, Parenti Benedetta

Abstract Over the last years, more and more tv show decided to offer to their audience *cuisine*-related content. This trend was born with Masterchef, the first and most successful format to drive this kind of shows to a general audience. More and more people watched and get intrigued by high level cuisine, that somehow became part of popular culture. Did this exposition to television programs about this kind of food had an impact on consumers habit? In this work we try to answer to this question, gathering data about Michelin stars restaurants and touristic presences in Italy and estimating via an empirical analysis the effect of the former on the latter, in the months in which the TV-show Masterchef is on air. The results suggest that the gastronomic-driven tourism increases while the program is on air.

Keywords: tv shows, imitation effect, Masterchef, food tourism, consumer behaviour

1 Introduction

Tourists' decisions are a combination of different multiple motives related both to "push factors", rather personal socio-psychological conditions, and "pull factors", dealing with the characteristic of the attraction. Travel motivations rapidly change across time, following the transformation of people habits; over the last years the food has assumed a centrality in this process. In this perspective, according to a branch of economic literature, events related to food supply could constitutes an additional pull factor for some destinations. Hjalanger and Corigliano (2000) assert that food shapes tourism behaviour. The locution of "food tourism" is used to describe the circumstance where the visitation to food producers, food festival restaurant and specific location for which food tasting are the primary motivation for travel (Hall and Sharples, 2003). The academic interest for such domain is growing over the last years:

[21] Vincenzo Alfano, Institute for Studies on the Mediterranean – National Research Council and University of Napoli Federico II, email: vincenzo.alfano@unina.it

Salvatore Ercolano, University of Basilicata, email: salvatore.ercolano@unibas.it

Benedetta Parenti, University of Basilicata, email: bene.parenti@gmail.com

following Lee and Scott (2015), starting from 2000 the number of studies on food tourism have increased significantly since the food is recognised as a factor that motivates tourists to travel to a destination and could become a scope to revisit (Ab Karim & Chi, 2010; Hall, 2006; Kivela & Crotts, 2006). From 2006 it is recognised as a core branding of a country destination.

Different labels have been proposed to define food-based tourism: culinary tourism (Wolf, 2002), gastronomy tourism (Hjalanger and Richards, 2002) and tasting tourism (Boniface, 2003). In such cases, consumers' interest in food is considered a form of "serious leisure" (Hall and Mitchell, 2001). More in detail, the "intensity" of the food-related motivation to visit a destination changes among tourists. When interest is high, namely the main motivation to visit a destination relates to visit a specific restaurant, festival or market, scholars (Hall e Sharples, 2003) define the circumstance as gastronomic tourism.

People are constantly looking for quality food experience that can influence their trip decision. In this process of information research, media exert a relevant role which is not only related to the advertising domain. Indeed, many authors have underlined the power of television to influence human behaviour: Strinati (2000) focuses on the psychological and social control that TV is able to exert on human beings while Uhl (2011) proves the similarity among consumer sentiment and TV sentiment. Assuming that TV can influence consumer behaviour, it is plausible to expect that it could influence also tourists decisions, at least such choices related to food. Over the last years, a growing number of TV shows all over the world offer to their audience cuisine-related content. The most successful is probably Masterchef, a world-wide broadcasted talent show, with several spin-off and clones. The interest of this contribution is to investigate whether Masterchef, representing the most popular cuisine program, does have any impact on gastronomic tourism. More in detail, the question this paper tries to answer is whether the fact that Mastechef is on air influences top-level gastronomic tourism.

2 Data, methodology and results

In this section we present to the reader the data used in the empirical analysis, we proceed justifying the choice of our empirical methodology in order to estimate the effect of gastronomic tourism in the month in which Masterchef is on-air, and finally comment the results of the estimates.

2.1 Data

In order to test our hypothesis about an impact of Masterchef being on air on the touristic presence in Italian provinces with high-quality restaurants, we designed a model to capture this effect quantitatively. Our main aim in doing it is indeed to measure the interaction between the presence of Michelin starred restaurants in a given Italian province and year and Mastechef being on-air, for the touristic arrivals in the given province. In more formal terms, our model may be expressed as

$$Tou_{imt} = \alpha + \beta_1 X_{it} + \beta_2 T_t + \beta_3 STAR_{it} + \beta_4 OnAir_{mt} + \beta_5 STAR_{it} * OnAir_{mt} + \varepsilon$$

Where *Tou* is the number of touristic arrivals at the *i*-th province in the month *m* and year *t*; X is a set of standard control variables, commonly used in the scientific literature to control for the touristic arrivals (please notice that these variables are explained in detail later on, and that varies per province and year); *T* is a set of *N* dichotomous dummy variables included in the model in order to control per possible yearly cyclical effects, and to avoid biases in the estimates due to this temporary changes: please notice that each of this variables assumes the value of 1 per each given year included in the analysis, and to 0 otherwise, and that the number of years included in the analysis is equal to N+1[22]; *STAR* is the number of restaurant in the *i*-th province in the year *t* with some Michelin stars; *OnAir* is a set of dichotomous dummy variables, equal to 1 if in the month *m* of the year *t* Masterchef was on air, and 0 otherwise; and of course *STAR**OnAir* is the interaction between the two last variables; while finally ε, as usual, is the error term.

In this framework the dependent variable aim is to measure the touristic flourishing of the province per each year. This is likely to be affected also by the Michelin starred restaurants in the province, which are a touristic attraction. The variable is operationalised through the monthly arrivals in each Italian province and year of Italian-resident tourists. This was chosen since Italians are more likely to be affected by the number of Michelin Starred restaurants than foreigner, since the high-level gastronomic offer of the province is more likely to affect a short trip rather than a long one. In order to avoid biases due to the different size of the provinces, and thus capture effects due to the density of population of the province rather than our objective, the raw data (from Italian Institute of Statistic, ISTAT) are normalized by dividing the tourist arrivals per the size of the population of the province in the given year (also from ISTAT). A heat map showing the different magnitudes of the arrivals for the Italian provinces included in the analysis is shown in Figure 1.

[22] Indeed, in order to avoid the so-called *dummy trap* issue, a dummy variable per one year needs to be omitted. In our estimates the dummy year per the 2015 is not included.

Following the scientific literature (Canale et al., 2019; De Simone et al. 2018; Huang et al., 2012; Yang et al., 2010, Su & Lin, 2014), our *X* matrix includes the control variables usually included in the models designed to estimate the touristic impact, in order to avoid biased results. More in detail, these variables are: *DW*, the share of the waste in the given province and year that is recycled (data from Superior Institute for the Environmental Protection and Research, ISPRA), a variable that "is supposed to increase international tourist arrivals because it signals the degree of pro-environmental behaviour as well as urban ecosystems' state of health" (Canale et al., 2019); RICH, a variable that represent the richness of the inhabitants of the province, that is operationalised through the total taxable income of the province divided per the number of inhabitants (data from Italian Ministry of Economic and Finance, MEF); HB, a variable used to capture the offer of public hospital facilities for tourist, that of course it is a measure of the potential answer of the territory in case of misadventures: it is operationalised through the number of beds available in the hospitals of the province (data from the Italian Ministry of Health); and finally CRIME, a variable that is meant to control for the perceived danger of the province for the potential tourist, that is operationalised through the number of crimes per inhabitants and it is expected to have a negative sign (once again, data from ISTAT).

The model also includes STAR. This is operationalized in five different ways: indeed STAR may be either the total number of respectively *1, 2* or *3* Michelin stars restaurant, or *Res*, the total number of starred restaurant (regardless of the stars), or *Sum*, the total number of stars. In each case is computed per each and any Italian province and year, with data taken from the Michelin Guide. Once again, to avoid biases due to the different size of Italian provinces, this data has been normalized by dividing the number of restaurants per the population of the year (ISTAT), obtaining the starred restaurants per capita. Please notice that the Michelin Guide is usually (and always in the years included in the analysis) published in the end of the year, and thus it is referred to the performances of the restaurants during the previous year. That is why restaurant in the 2018 published guide are imputed in the dataset to 2017, and so on and so forth. We expect this variable to have a positive impact for tourism, especially in its more general specification (the sum of restaurants and of stars) since it may capture a bigger effect. A heat map of the number of one Michelin star restaurants per inhabitants in 2017 for the 106 different Italian provinces included in the analysis is offered in figure 2.

OnAir is a dichotomous dummy variable, equal to 1 if in the given month and year a previous un-broadcasted season of Masterchef was on air in Italian

TV (data from Wikipedia[23]). Finally Star*OnAir is the interaction between Star and OnAir.

Our final sample includes 106 Italian provinces. Since there have been in the included years institutional redrawing of the Italian provinces, and in order to have a balanced panel dataset, we proceed to a listwise deletion of the provinces that did not exist in at least one of the years included. Our data include three years, from 2015 to 2017, for a total of 3794 observations.

2.2 Methodology

In our framework the best possible option to test the impact of *Masterchef* being on air on touristic arrival is a General Method of Moments (GMM). GMM estimators were introduced by Arellano and Bover (1995) and fully developed by Blundell and Bond (1998). The system GMM takes into account for possible endogeneity, treating the model as a system of equations in the first-differences and in the levels. The endogenous variables in the first-differences equation are instrumented with the lagged values of their levels, whereas the endogenous variables in the levels equation are instrumented with lags of their first differences. According to Roodman (2009), the main concern is that the set of potential instruments conveys all sufficiently lagged variables, which exponentially increase with the number of times. However, an excessive number of instruments may lead to an over-fitting of the instrumented endogenous variables and, thus, lower the consistency of the GMM estimators. In order to use a lower number of instruments, the first suitable lag of the explanatory variables is adopted, and the instrumental variable set is collapsed, if necessary. As further explained by Arellano and Bond (1991), this estimator is especially appropriate in cases in which there is large n and short *t*, which is exactly our case with over 100 provinces and just 3 years. Furthermore, the use of GMM estimator is appropriate since it solves some potential endogeneity issue that may affect the estimates with other parametric estimators.

2.3 Results

Our estimates, in table 1, report the impact of the Michelin Stars on touristic arrival both in the months in which Masterchef is not on air (for the several operationalization of *Star*) and in the months in which Masterchef is on air (in

[23] https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/MasterChef, url consulted on 28/08/2019.

the interaction variables). One-starred restaurants, and both the sum of starred restaurants and the sum of stars, have a positive statistical significant impact on touristic arrivals in the months in which Masterchef is not on air. Please notice that this months, as shown by the coefficient and statistical significance of the OnAir variable, are on average the less touristic ones.

This seems to make sense, since anecdotical evidence suggests that usually prime-time TV shows of success are typically broadcasted in months during which people spend more time at home and less travelling. For this reason is very interesting to see that the interaction variables between OnAir and Star have a positive and statistically significant coefficient for the operationalization of three stars restaurants, of the sum of restaurants and of the sum of stars. This suggest that during the months in which Masterchef is on air, provinces with more three stars restaurants or starred restaurants and a higher sum of Michelin stars, have more touristic arrivals compared to the others. If our framework is correct, this should be the effect of Masterchef being on air on the gastronomic touristic offer of Italian provinces.

Being operationalised per capita, the coefficient suggest that having one more three star restaurant *per capita* in the province, brings an increase of about 143000 tourist arrivals in the province during the months in which Masterchef is on air. Similarly one more star per inhabitant of the province, brings about 20000 extra tourists per month, while an increase of 1 in the sum of stars, either per an increase in the judgment of a starred restaurant or per a new starred restaurant, brings in the months in which Masterchef is on air about 16000 extra tourists.

Table 1: *GMM Arellano-Bond Estimation*

	(1) Tou	(2) Tou	(3) Tou	(4) Tou	(5) Tou
DW	-0.0737 (-0.33)	-0.00906 (-0.04)	-0.0750 (-0.30)	-0.0471 (-0.21)	-0.0353 (-0.16)
RICH	0.0000169 (1.28)	0.0000268* (1.95)	0.0000332** (2.06)	0.0000156 (1.24)	0.0000161 (1.29)
HB	-0.000177* (-1.76)	-0.000173* (-1.69)	-0.000163 (-1.61)	-0.000181* (-1.80)	-0.000184* (-1.83)
CRIME	0.0000101 (1.52)	0.00000955 (1.41)	0.00000879 (1.31)	0.0000104 (1.56)	0.0000106 (1.59)
STAR 1	21887.4*** (3.37)				
OnAir	-0.287*** (-5.23)	-0.293*** (-4.16)	-0.333*** (-4.93)	-0.299*** (-4.15)	-0.300*** (-3.90)
STAR 1*OnAir	11.34 (0.00)				
STAR 2		50464.2 (1.36)			
STAR 2*OnAir		-20095.7 (-0.52)			
STAR 3			-72842.0 (-1.21)		
STAR 3*OnAir			142989.3*** (4.24)		
STAR Rest				19612.3*** (3.01)	
STAR Rest*OnAir				-247.0 (-0.04)	
STAR Sum					15880.2*** (2.68)
STAR Sum*OnAir					-107.4 (-0.02)
Constant	0.272** (2.11)	0.204 (1.42)	0.205 (1.38)	0.276** (2.16)	0.272** (2.11)
ar1p	0.00976	0.00959	0.00984	0.00964	0.00965
ar2p	0.000189	0.000200	0.000183	0.000194	0.000194
hansenp	1	0	1	1	1

t statistics in parentheses * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

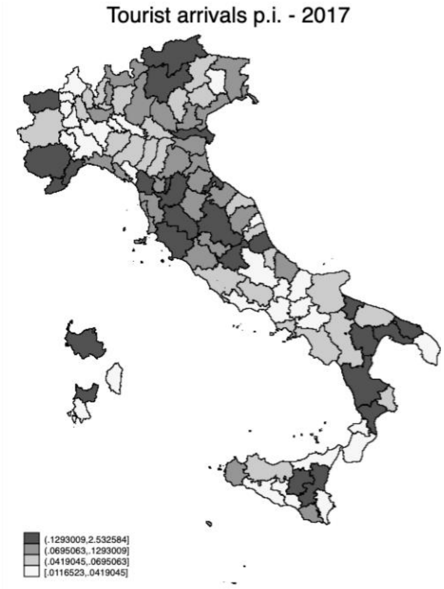


Figure 1: Touristic arrivals per inhabitants, in 2017

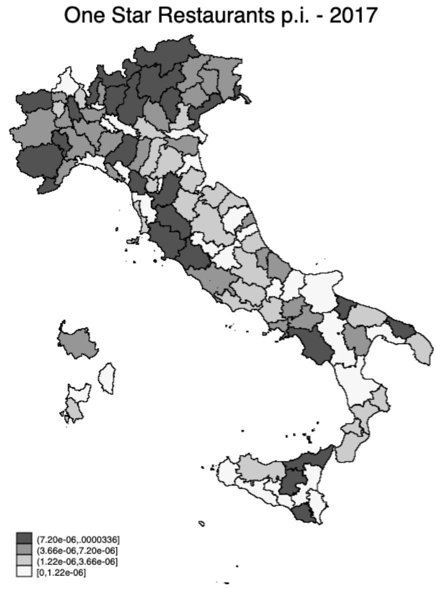


Figure 2: One Starred restaurants per inhabitants, in 2017

3 Conclusions

As pointed out by previous studies (Strinati 2000, Uhl 2011), , TV advertisements and programs, by means of a psychological and social control, are able to affect the individual behaviour, especially in their consumption's choices. Despite the fact that this mechanism is well known in the most of markets involved in the production and sale of goods and services on large scale, probably some economic sectors could exploit so far some suggestions deriving from the contents show by some TV programs. Over the last years food related programs are increasing, especially the ones concerning top level cuisine. Among these shows, the broadcasted talent show Masterchef is probably the most successful.

In this paper we tried to understand if Masterchef, affecting individuals' preferences and choices, has some kind of correlation with touristic flow. In more detail we tried to address the following research question: does the fact that Masterchef is on air impact top level gastronomic tourism?

Our results seem to suggest that a positive and statistical significant relationship between touristic presences in Italian provinces with Michelin starred restaurants and Masterchef could be at work. In more detail, when Masterchef is on air, the presences of tourists in provinces characterized by the presence of starred restaurant tend to increase. We are quite confident in these results since the statistical significance of the interaction term describing the relations between Masterchef and starred restaurant continues to work also using different kind of specifications of starred restaurants.

In our opinion these results can be interesting for different reasons. First of all, as previously pointed out, to the best of our knowledge no contributions exist on the effect of TV programs on tourism. Moreover our results may give some management suggestions. In fact, since Masterchef is on air during the low season, the managers have to keep in mind in planning their marketing strategy, the possibility to exploit the effects of TV programs also (or especially) in this period. Finally, due to the fact that some starred restaurants are sometimes localized in not so renowned localities, these results could also suggest to local policy maker, interested in gastronomic tourism, to exploit possible spillover effects deriving from the presence of starred restaurants, promoting complementary activities focused on food tourism even off-season.

References

1. Ab Karim, S., & Chi, C. G.-Q. (2010). Culinary Tourism as a Destination Attraction: An Empirical Examination of Destinations' Food Image. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 19(6), 531-555.
2. Arellano, M. and Bond, S. (1991). Some tests of specification for panel data: Monte Carlo evidence and an application to employment equations. Review of Economic Studies. 58 (2): 277. doi:10.2307/2297968. JSTOR 2297968.
3. Arellano, M. and Bover, O. (1995). Another look at the instrumental variable estimation of error-components models. *Journal of Econometrics* 68: 29-51.
4. Blundell, R., and Bond S. (1998). Initial conditions and moment restrictions in dynamic panel data models. *Journal of Econometrics 87*, 115-43.
5. Boniface, P. (2003), Tasting Tourism: Travelling for Food and Drink, Ashgate, Aldershot.
6. Hall, C. M. (2006). Introduction: Culinary Tourism and Regional Development: From Slow Food to Slow Tourism? Tourism Review International, 9(4), 303-305.
7. Hall, C. M. and Mitchell, R. (2001). Wine and food tourism. In Special Interest Tourism: Context and Cases (Douglas, N., Douglas, N. and Derrett, R., eds), pp. 307–329, Wiley.
8. Hall, C.M., Sharples L., (2003) Consuming places: the role of food, wine and tourism in regional development, in Hall, C.M., Sharples L. Mitchell, R., Macionis, N. and Cambourne, B. (eds.) *Food Tourism around the World: Development, Management and Markets, Butterworth-Heinemann,* Oxford.
9. Hjalager, A. and Richards, G. (2002). Tourism and Gastronomy. Routledge.
10. Hjalanger, A.M. and Corigliano, M.A. (2000), “Food for tourists: determinants of an image”, *International Journal of Tourism Research*, Vol. 2 No. 4, pp. 281-93.
11. Kivela, J., & Crotts, J. C. (2006). Tourism and Gastronomy: Gastronomy's Influence on How Tourists Experience a Destination. Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research, 30(3), 354-377.
12. Roodman, D. (2009). How to Do xtabond2: An Introduction to “Difference” and “System” GMM in Stata. *Stata Journal 9*(1), 86-136.
13. Strinati (2000) An introduction to theories of popular culture, London; New York: Routledge, 1995.
14. Uhl, M. (2011). The Long-run Impact of Media Sentiment on Stock Returns. Swiss Economic Institute Working Paper.
15. Wolf, E. (2002), Culinary Tourism: A Tasty Economic Proposition, available at: www.culinarytourism.org.

Performance of Italian Hotel Companies in the Digital Economy: Application of Anova Method

Pietro Pavone, Guido Migliaccio and Biagio Simonetti*

Abstract This paper offers a study of the economic and financial performance of a sample of hotel companies in the three geographical macro-areas that characterize Italy. Results show that the economic crisis reduced profitability. Than, Italian hotels have a modest capitalization. The values of the current ratio are satisfactory. The profitability indicators record similar trends in the three areas, while financial independence index, current ratio and coverage index show significantly different values. In the digital era, the Italian hotel industry has all the potential to restructure. However, high and growing profitability must favor adequate self-financing processes to improve the capital structure.

Key words: Italian hotel, tourism in Italy, economic-financial performance, 2008 crisis, ratios.

---

* This is collaborative work, but it is possible to attribute to P. Pavone: Method and Empirical Findings with its paragraphs; to B. Simonetti: Some Methodological Problems. Other sections are of G. Migliaccio.

Pietro Pavone, Department of Law, Economics, Management and Quantitative Methods, University of Sannio, Benevento, Italy; email: pietro.pavone @unisannio.it.

Guido Migliaccio, Department of Law, Economics, Management and Quantitative Methods, University of Sannio, Benevento, Italy; email: guido.migliaccio @unisannio.it.

Biagio Simonetti, Department of Law, Economics, Management and Quantitative Methods, University of Sannio, Benevento, Italy; email: biagio.simonetti @unisannio.it.

4 Introduction

Despite growing international competition, Italy still attracts tourist flows, continuing the positive trend (ONT, 2018) and promoting employment and local development. Nevertheless, the degree of aging of accommodation facilities remains, including the hotels that are protagonists, and a particular civil and fiscal regulation that influences the management (Desinano, 2010; Molinari, 2017; Cipolla & Biasion, 2010; Bonfiglietti, 2018; Ricci *et al*., 2007; Liberatore, 2001; Benevolo & Grasso, 2010). In 2017, 33,000 hotels and over 170,000 non-hotel facilities operated, offering around 5 million beds, to which private beds should be added that are not registered (Petrella & Torrini, 2018, and related bibliography).

In recent years, hotels have suffered from the competition of alternative structures, which have almost doubled and have also led to a different quality of the offer, to the advantage of better-quality facilities. However, the prominent role of the hotels remains, which has led us to evaluate their economic, income, capital and financial performances through a national and macro-regional quantitative survey developed on the financial statements of numerous companies with turnover exceeding € 800.000. The balance-sheets have been taken from the "Aida" database - Computerized Business Analysis (update 268, software version 103.00) (https://aida.bvdinfo.com) of the company Bureau Van Dijk.

The ten-year trends (2009-2018) of two profitability ratios (Roe and Roi) and three patrimonial/financial ratios (Financial Independence Index, Current Index and Fixed Assets Coverage Index) are observed in the national context and in the three macro-areas that classically distinguish Italy for social and economic aspects. Numerous statistical elaborations, among which the ANOVA method (Gu, 2013; Solari et al., 2009; Strang, 1980; Ross & Willson, 2017; HackerJoel & Angiolillo-Bent, 1981; Quirk, 2012; Liao & Li, 2018), allow useful propositional conclusions.

5 Purpose

Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to investigate, through balance-sheet analyzes, economic-financial performance of Italian hotels, after the international economic crisis (2009-2017), also considering the possible macro-regional differences induced by a different economic and structural development of the territories.

The hypotheses to verify: H1: global financial crisis has reduced corporate profitability; H2: the necessary restructuring has changed the balance sheet and financial position; H3: national territorial imbalances affect the hotel balance sheets.

From these conditions to be verified, three articulated research questions derive:

RQ1: What was the evolution of main income ratios? So, have the companies survived the crisis reduced their profitability? RQ2: Has the possible change in company profitability had any effect on the assets and financial structure of the hotels? RQ3: How did territorial location affect patrimonial and income results?

The detailed analysis of the economic and financial performance of a tourism industry among the best in the world can provide useful information to all countries interested in tourism development.

6 Literature Review

The international bibliography on the subject is articulated, even if the methodology proposed here is not widespread.

The international doctrine has investigated above all the genesis of profitability, focusing some factors or trying a multifactorial approach. Among the first authors, Taylor *et al.* (2018) that analyzed the relationship between hotel profitability and culinary innovation. The importance of culinary innovation is also confirmed by Sharma (2017). However, innovation cannot be limited only to catering, but to all management; in this sense Sandvik *et al.* (2014).

Numerous studies link profitability and localization. Among these are the studies of Lado-Sestayo *et al.*, 2018; Lado-Sestayo *et al.*, 2016, etc. Some marketing scholars, on the other hand, correlate profitability and distribution channels, especially telematics (Makki *et al.*, 2016; Kang, *et al.* 2007).

Profitability also depends on the quality of the service provided (Aznar *et al.*, 2016), as well as the socio-economic extraction of customers (Iyengar & Suri, 2012 and Krakhmal, 2012). In the context of the globalized economy, this also requires a careful analysis of the market structure, as proposed by Pan (2005). Even the presence of other accommodation facilities, although competing, increases the profitability of the hotels (Aznar *et al.*, 2017 and Georgantzas, 2003). In any case, the price variable continues to affect customer choices (Chen & Chang, 2012). Internal behaviors and dominant values in the organizational structure, are further elements that affect profitability (Simons *et al.*, 2018; Singh *et al.*, 2017).

According to a multifactorial approach, instead, Lado-Sestayo & Vivel-Búa (2018), using a model of least squares modeling, showed that the characteristics of the hotel, their position, the competitive environments and the factors of tourist destination affect the hotel performance and its results.

Finally, international literature presents numerous quantitative studies that seek to measure the effectiveness, efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the production combination. Ben Aissa & Goaied, 2016 using data envelopment analysis and the Return On Assets (ROA) analysis. Singh (2017) also explores the role of revenue management as a strategic choice for indian hotels. The close correlation between operational efficiency and hotel profitability is also the conclusion of the recent contribution by Xu (2017), which can be linked to the research of Sami & Mohamed

(2014) which highlighted the relationships financial and economic performances and technical efficiency. Much also depends on the accommodation capacity and the risk of underutilization of the rooms (Tsai & Gu, 2012; Chiu & Huang, 2011, ecc.).

The studies that adopt a methodology like the one proposed below are those of Diakomihalis (2011) concerning financial structure and profitability analysis of greek hotels, and of O'Neill & Mattila (2006) which proposes an analysis of the effects of revenue drivers on profitability. However, the numerous criticisms regarding the use of traditional financial performance measures should also be considered (Chow *et al*., 2003).

The extensive Italian bibliography includes numerous considerations on the genesis of hotel income in the context of more extensive monographs dedicated to company management (Desinano, 2010; Molinari, 2017; Cipolla & Biasion, 2010; Bonfiglietti, 2018; Ricci *et al.*, 2007; Liberatore, 2001; Benevolo & Grasso, 2010). In it the studies that are more like this paper are, however, the researches of Iovino & Migliaccio (2018a) and especially Migliaccio (2018) who have used a methodology like the one used here, although referring to a different audience with different purposes.

Most scholars have correlated financial performance with some variables to verify their effect. Thus, for example, the marketing experts who have analyzed the relationship between financial results and e-commerce, especially online reviews, which are constantly spreading in the hotel industry (Raguseo & Vitari, 2017; Morosan *et al.*, 2017; DeFranco *et al.*, 2017; Xie & So, 2018; Xie *et al.*, 2017), obviously in the context of the more general commercial, technological and marketing trends (Van Niekerk, 2016; Hua, 2008; Jae Lee & Jang, 2007; Jang *et al.*, 2006). This also considering the diffusion of the brand via the Web (Raguseo & Vitari, 2017) and the effects of its modification (Hanson *et al.*, 2009).

Property (Chen *et al*., 2013) and corporate governance (Al-Homaidi *et al*., 2019) also influence financial performance that seem to be directly related to intellectual capital (human, structural and relational) (Sardo, 2018). Governance is characterized by leadership styles that generate different outcomes (Tran, 2017), also related to the different learning ability of the workers (Nair, 2019). Management is more complex, but it also leads to better financial results, in the context of concentration processes (Yang, 2019; Hsu & Jang, 2007) and collaboration between hotels, especially in the rapidly spreading networks (Rotondo & Fadda, 2018).

Furthermore, numerous studies link financial performance to the more traditional tools that characterize hotel hospitality.

First, the effect of terrorist events or serious international economic crises (Min *et al.*, 2009; Kosová & Enz, 2012). And then the domestic visitors, the employment rate, the year of activity, the adhesion to a chain system (Shieh *et al.*, 2018), or even dimensions and star category (Alarcón *et al.*, 2016), or employee training, investments and government policies (Sharma & Upneja, 2005). Then the relationships between finance and room revenue, rather than occupancy (Rushmore & O'Neill, 2015), or by correlating performance with innovative restaurant services (Chen & Chang, 2012).

There are many correlation analyzes that use accounting results. For example, the reference to ROA - Return on assets is frequent (Al-Homaidi *et al.*, 2019; Chen *et al.*, 2013; Hsu & Jang, 2007) or ROE - Return on equity (Chen *et al.*, 2013; Hsu & Jang, 2007) and ROS – Return on sales (Raguseo & Vitari, 2017). References also to the net interest margin (NIM) and earnings per share (EPS) (Al-Homaidi *et al*., 2019); leverage, liquidity, operational efficiency (Chen *et al*., 2013); net operating income, pre-tax profit and return on assets before tax (Shieh, 2012; Hua *et al.*, 2008), up to hypothesize a system of indexes inserted on fuzzy comprehensive evaluation model (Su & Huang, 2017).

Numerous references to accounting findings are also a symptom of the greater need for an integrated information system that can monitor every service (Steed *et al*., 2003) and provide a dashboard for constant monitoring (Santos Lavrador & Laureano, 2019). Except for Italian study (Iovino & Migliaccio, 2018b) generically referred to tour-operators, there is no systematic study in the international bibliography on the trend of blance-sheet ratios, as an expression of economic and financial performance of Italian hotels. This paper would like to fill this gap.

7 Method and Empirical Findings

The subject of this paper are the balance-sheets of a sample of 5473 hotels with turnover exceeding 800.000 euros, from 2009 to 2018. However, the information is not always available: the elaborations are related to a lower number of data for each year. In addition to the national temporal evolution of the ratios (Roe, Roi, Financial independence index, Current ratio and Fixed asset coverage index), a disaggregated analysis is provided by geographical macro-areas: North (Valle d'Aosta, Piemonte, Liguria, Emilia-Romagna, Lombardia, Trentino-Alto Adige, Veneto and Friuli-Venezia Giulia), Centre (Toscana, Umbria, Marche, Abruzzo and Lazio) and Southern Italy (Campania, Molise, Puglia, Basilica, Sicilia and Sardegna). The research also makes use of the Anova test of variance analysis and the Tukey Kramer test. With the use of the "columnwise" technique we consider all the observations available for each ratio: on average 2910 observations for the ROE, 2151 for the ROI, 3216 for the financial independence index, 3176 for the current ratio and 2929 for the fixed assets coverage index. There are 2578 hotel companies located in Northern Italy, 1578 in Central Italy and 1317 in the South. There is high concentration of hotels in Lazio (838, over half of the companies in Central Italy) and in Lombardia (711, almost a third of the hotels in the North); the southern region with the greatest presence of hotels is Campania (460 out of a total of 1317).

Size profile could be expressed by the average number of employees which is growing (from 21 in 2009 to 29 in 2018): these are mainly small hotel companies.

The prevailing legal form is S.r.l. (over 90% of the total), while 5,2% is constituted by S.p.a. Other legal forms (consortiums, cooperatives, S.a.s., S.n.c.) have only a residual value in the sample.

7.1 ROE – Return on Equity (%)

It is the relationship between net profit and equity and measures the overall profitability of the company.

From the evolution of the index it is possible to consider two periods: before 2013 values, almost always negative, show the scarce convenience of equity risked in hotel-type entrepreneurial initiatives, while the strong growth in average values (especially since 2015), it seems to have rewarded the ability to hold capital in previous years, especially considering very low interest rates in the same period. The worst year is the first after the global economic crisis (in 2009 -5 in the North, -3 in the Center, -2.3 in the South and -3.8 on national basis). In the last three years of the period, the highest values are recorded (almost always above 10), preferring hotel companies in the North and the South compared to those in the Center which, on the other hand, record good profitability but below the national average.

Table 1 shows the results of the analysis, assuming the geographical area as an independent variable. The results lead to accept the null hypothesis (H0), with a level of reliability of 95%, indicating the absence of statistically significant differences between the groups: it results that $F < F$ crit.

Table 1: ROE – analysis of variance

Source var.	*SQ*	*gdl*	*MQ*	*F*	*Sig.*	*F crit.*
Between groups	4,520427	2	2,260213	0,0620733	0,939947696	3,354131
Within groups	983,1238	27	36,41199			
Tot.	987,6443	29				

Significant level 0,05

7.2 ROI – Return on Investment (%)

It compares operating income with invested capital (sum of net working capital and fixed assets). The profitability of core operations seems to follow the trend observed for ROE, without ever assuming negative values. The trend is growing, at a more sustained speed once again after 2013. The widest range of variation is found in the South: from 1,16 to 7,03.

The analysis of variance (table 2) does not show statistically significant differences between macro-areas: F (2, 27) < F crit (p-value: 0,916596034).

Table 2: ROI – analysis of variance

Source var.	*SQ*	*gdl*	*MQ*	*F*	*Sig.*	*F crit.*
Between groups	0,647547	2	0,323773	0,08736994	0,916596034	3,354131
Within groups	100,0559	27	3,705775			
Tot.	100,7035	29				

Significant level 0,05

7.3 Financial Independence Index (%)

The ratio between net equity and total assets is particularly useful for judgments on the measurement of the balance between the different types of financing.

The values range from a minimum of 26,35 of the companies in the Center (2015) to a maximum value of 35,28 in the South (2009). From the highest values at the beginning of the period, a capacity for financing with own resources is progressively decreasing with the continuation of the entrepreneurial initiative and the increase, therefore, of the debt exposure to third parties. A timid sign of a trend reversal can be seen starting from 2015-2016 when the index values return to growth, in many cases reaching levels above 2009 levels. Graphically distanced from the other groups is the South, with a financial independence index on average higher and with a trend, first decreasing and then increasing, more pronounced in the trend variations.

Table 3 shows differences between groups considered relevant, because statistically significant, relative to the financial independence index. Indeed: F (2, 27) = 15,74, p value = 2,93135E-05, F > F crit (p value < 0,05). Therefore, having rejected the null hypothesis, a further statistical test is required (table 4) to identify where the differences found with Anova are located.

Table 3: Financial independence index – analysis of variance

Source var.	*SQ*	*gdl*	*MQ*	*F*	*Sig.*	*F crit.*
Between groups	103,9357	2	51,96787	15,7487001	2,93135E-05	3,354131
Within groups	89,09513	27	3,29982			
Tot.	193,0309	29				

Significant level 0,05

Table 4: Financial independence index – Tukey Kramer test

Compariso n	*Absolute difference*	*Critical range*	*Result*
North-Centre	0,491	10,10838167	not different
North-South	3,68	10,10838167	not different
Centre-South	4,171	10,10838167	not different

Therefore, in relation to this index, the rejection of the zero hypothesis is not due to a particular group.

7.4 Current Ratio

The current index, the ratio between current assets and short-term debts, provides a measure of hotel liquidity.

The range varies from 0,94 (North, 2013) to 1,3 (South, 2018). A prudent business management should tend to a current ratio always higher than 1, instead there are values slightly lower than 1 before 2013 and only marginally higher in the second part of the observed period. Therefore, the general level of liquidity does not seem to indicate an optimal balance between current assets and short-term liabilities, also considering the exposure to third-party lenders previously analyzed. The Southern area differs for higher values, always greater than the national data and the average values of the other groups, even graphically more distant from the set of Northern enterprises.

Table 5 shows statistically significant differences between geographical areas with respect to the values of the current ratio: $F (2, 27) = 5,92$, p value = 0,007372875, F > F crit (p value < 0.05). However, since ANOVA does not allow to identify the exact source of the statistically significant difference, a second test is performed (table 6) to fill this information gap.

Table 5: Current ratio – analysis of variance

Source var.	*SQ*	*gdl*	*MQ*	*F*	*Sig.*	*F crit.*
Between groups	0,08736	2	0,04368	5,92167101	0,007372875	3,354131
Within groups	0,19916	27	0,007367			
Tot.	0,28652	29				

Significant level 0,05

Table 6: Current ratio – Tukey Kramer test

Comparison	*Absolute difference*	*Critical range*	*Result*
North-Centre	0,072	0,095870537	not different
North-South	0,132	0,095870537	different
Centre-South	0,06	0,095870537	not different

The genesis of the variability of the current ratio is mainly attributable to the differences between companies in the North and South of Italy.

7.5 Fixed assets Coverage Index (%)

With the analysis of patrimonial solidity, we study "the possibility of maintaining a stable financial balance with reference to not a short time" (Caramiello *et al*., 2003). Fixed assets coverage index relates tangible assets to equity.

Range of variation is between 2,06 in 2018 in Central Italy and 2,64 in the North in 2010. As shown in figure 8, the values are on average higher in the North (2,53 on average), while the lower values are recorded in the Center (2,1). Southern hotel companies record values that do not differ much from the national average.

Also with regard to the fixed asset coverage ratio, the Anova test (table 7) leads to reject the null hypothesis and to accept the alternative one, highlighting statistically significant differences: F (2, 27) = 58,15, p value = 1, 63699E-10, F > F crit (p value < 0,05).

Table 7: Fixed assets coverage index – analysis of variance

Source var.	*SQ*	*gdl*	*MQ*	*F*	*Sig.*	*F crit.*
Between groups	0,794207	2	0,397103	58,1505043	1,63699E-10	3,354131
Within groups	0,18438	27	0,006829			
Tot.	0,978587	29				

Significant level 0,05

Table 8: Fixed assets coverage index – Tukey Kramer test

Comparison	*Absolute difference*	*Critical range*	*Result*
North-Centre	0,394	0,092247215	different
North-South	0,145	0,092247215	different
Centre-South	0,249	0,092247215	different

Significant differences between all the groups are shown (table 8) as regards the fixed assets coverage index.

8 Some Methodological Problems

The complexity of the phenomenon to be investigated has made it necessary to analyze a consistent volume of data. The data processing was carried out not with the sole purpose of achieving a high statistical significance, but to highlight a trend of information that is sufficiently useful for the purpose of analyzing the sector and the management of individual companies. However, for necessary precision, it is important to underline some limits of the methodological approach.

First of all, it should be noted that the high number of companies corresponds to a high percentage of missing data. Table 10 quantifies the percentage of data that can be used on those available, comparing the total number of hotels in the sample with useful observations.

Table 10: % of observations on the total number of companies

	2009	*2010*	*2011*	*2012*	*2013*	*2014*	*2015*	*2016*	*2017*	*2018*
Roe	44,2%	47,1%	49,1%	50,5%	52,4%	56,3%	60,1%	62,6%	64,0%	45,2%
Roi	34,2%	35,7%	42,3%	43,1%	43,8%	42,5%	42,7%	39,3%	39,9%	29,3%
Fin. indep.	50,0%	52,6%	55,1%	57,6%	59,6%	62,8%	65,6%	67,9%	68,7%	47,4%
Current ratio	49,1%	51,5%	54,4%	56,9%	58,8%	62,2%	65,0%	67,4%	68,2%	46,7%
Asset cov.	45,24 %	47,03 %	49,26 %	51,87 %	53,72 %	57,01 %	60,20 %	62,38 %	63,93 %	44,60 %

It is clear that the data processed vary from a minimum of 34,24% (ROI in 2009) to a maximum of 68,77% (Financial independence index of 2017). In absolute terms, the data is significant and therefore leads to the information sought, but its availability varies greatly over the years and for the various indices. We must also consider that it is possible that, in the same year, data from a company are available for an index, while they are missing for another index, an element that makes heterogeneous the universe of data. In a subsequent elaboration it is possible to replace the "columnwise" technique used in this paper with an alternative methodology, skimming the available data and therefore observing only the companies that present all the data for the decade. However, it is believed that the trend information would not change substantially.

Another critical element is the absence of companies that have ceased their activity in the decade, given that the company Aida eliminates these companies from the database. Instead, the data relating to companies that have deposited their first balance sheet in any of the years of the considered period are present. In this way, information relating to more recently established companies coexist alongside companies that have been operating for several years. It is clear, for example, that some financial statement information reflects the different degree of aging of the structures. It would therefore be appropriate to further select the mass of data by comparing those deriving from companies that have the same year of activity, thus obtaining a "cohort homogeneity". Additional critical factors derive from the use of Variance Analysis (ANOVA), in particular with regard to the basic hypothesis of independence of the samples. It is not necessarily true, in fact, that the hotels located in the three macro areas of the country are substantially independent, considering that they sometimes respond to a single governance. Particular attention must be paid to the selection of the sample of companies to be considered.

9 Conclusion and Implication

Italy is an emblem of tourism-oriented countries (Ont, 2018). The hotel offer is affected by recent trends that favor alternative structures. However, the hotels remain numerous and provide better quality services (Petrella & Torrini, 2018). This quantitative research has highlighted the performance of their economic and financial performace from the years of the global financial crisis to the present, making use of the critical analysis of the trends of five balance-sheet indices that characterize the large sample. Alongside the national data, a disaggregated analysis has also been provided for geographical macro-areas (North, Central and South Italy), also using some statistical tools to better interpret the phenomenon.

The first hypothesis is confirmed (H1): global economic crisis has reduced corporate profitability, which has grown in subsequent years, although not constantly, as shown by the evolution of ROE and ROI (RQ1) profitability ratios. In the different geographical areas the trend was similar, albeit with slightly different values.

Italian hotels have a modest capitalization that requires significant debts, probably also induced by the low cost of money in recent years: there is still a tendential improvement probably due also to self-financing. The values of the current ratio are satisfactory, despite the fact that the stock has a modest importance compared to fixed assets. The fixed assets coverage ratio has different values in the various geographical areas, confirming the low capitalization of hotels forced to borrow to cover fixed investments. As a first approximation it is not possible to identify close connections between profitability and the performance of the capital and financial ratios (H2 and RQ2), a more detailed analysis being necessary. The trends of two indices (Roe and Roi) are similar in the different geographical areas (H3 and RQ3). The geographical location of hotel businesses, on the other hand, affects financial and capital balances, especially with regard to financial independence. In conclusion: in the digital age the Italian hotel industry has the potential to restructure. However, high and growing profitability must favor adequate self-financing processes to improve the capital structure, strengthening internal financing and thus reducing debt. This study may have further developments, also analyzing other profitability, productivity and financial indicators to confirm or refute the outlined interpretative hypotheses. The relevant theme of tourist networks and destinations should also be explored (Migliaccio *et al.*, 2018). Its main limitation however is its almost exclusively quantitative nature, based on balance sheet data for hotels with at least € 800,000 in turnover. A more comprehensive picture could be made by extending the sample even to smaller hotels, especially those with family size.

The analysis would also improve the trend analysis of indexes for cohorts of companies, tracing trends for activities started in the same year, paying attention to the younger ones, considering the characteristics and risks typical of the newly established companies (Nicolò, 2017; Nicolò and Nania, 2017; Nicolò and Ricca, 2019). Balance-sheet considerations should then also be integrated with qualitative analyzes, also intercepting variables that are notoriously neglected in the context of economic-financial reporting. Everything, then, should be related to an interdisciplinary evaluation, considering that tourist dynamics must however conform to higher ethical values as correctly affirmed (Nicolaides, 2018a; 2018b, 2018c, 2019; Ramphal & Nicolaides, 2018; Nicolaides & Grobler, 2017).

This study may have different implications. It can certainly be useful for the development of empirical research related to public or private companies, with balance-sheet data available for at least a decade. It favors data-based analyzes and therefore develops a culture of comparison, favoring the identification of possible disadvantages of the single company with respect to the sector average. Thus, the importance of the balance-sheet for management purposes is reevaluated. Moreover, it can also be useful to those who govern the sector that can base their choices of intervention on certainly significant information. It also contributes to the knowledge of the Italian situation which, however, can be considered a useful reference for all the countries that want to develop tourism.

This research is part of a larger project to analyze the performance of Italian companies before, during and after the 2008 economic crisis. In addition to the aforementioned writings by Iovino & Migliaccio (2018a & 2018b) and Migliaccio (2018) related to tourism, the project investigated Italian cooperative companies (Fusco & Migliaccio, 2015, 2016a, 2016b, 2018, 2019), with particular attention to the social cooperatives that manage socio-welfare residences for the elderly (Migliaccio & Losco, 2018). More recently, a similar methodology, *mutatis mutandis*, has also been extended to corporations belonging to different sectors relevant to the national economy: plastic (Migliaccio & De Blasio, 2017), tanning (Migliaccio & Arena, 2018a e 2018b), energy (Iovino & Migliaccio, 2019a e 2019b; Migliaccio & Ciotta, 2019); social enterprises (Migliaccio & Molinaro, 2019) and the football sports industry (Migliaccio & Corea, 2019). The ambitious goal of the project is to develop an intersectoral comparison to evaluate differences and similarities that could lead to focus the most successful strategies useful in the unfortunate hypothesis of new crises.

10 Citations and References

1. Alarcón, J.P.A., Maspera, J.M.S. & Galiana, J.: Key drivers of the financial performance in the hospitality industry: Barcelona hotel industry. International Journal of Business Research, 16 (Special Issue), 9-16 (2016)
2. Al-Homaidi, E.A., Almaqtari, F.A., Ahmad, A. & Tabash, M.I.: Impact of corporate governance mechanisms on financial performance of hotel companies: Empirical evidence from India. African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 8(2), 21 (2019)
3. Aznar, J.P., Bagur, L. & Rocafort, A.: Impact of service quality on competitiveness and profitability: The hotel industry in the Catalan coast. Intangible Capital, 12(1), 147-166 (2016)
4. Aznar, J.P., Sayeras, J.M., Rocafort, A. & Galiana, J.: The irruption of Airbnb and its effects on hotel profitability: An analysis of Barcelona's hotel sector. Intangible Capital, 13(1), 147-159 (2017)
5. Ben Aissa, S., Goaied, M.: Determinants of Tunisian hotel profitability: The role of managerial efficiency. Tourism Management, 52, 478-487 (2016)
6. Benevolo, C., Grasso, M.: Ricettività e imprese alberghiere. Produzione, strategie e politiche di marketing. Milano, Italy: Franco Angeli, 1-256 (2010)
7. Bonfiglietti, F.: La gestione professionale dell'azienda alberghiera. Milano, Italy: Franco Angeli, 1-314 (2018)
8. Caramiello, C., Di Lazzaro, F. & Fiori, G.: Indici di bilancio: strumenti per l'analisi della gestione aziendale. Milano, Italy: Giuffrè, 1-487 (2003)
9. Chen, C.-M. & Chang, K.-L.: Diversification strategy and financial performance in the Taiwanese hotel industry, International Journal of Hospitality Management, 31(3), 1030-1032 (2012)
10. Chen, C.-M. & Chang, K.-L.: Effect of price instability on hotel profitability. Tourism Economics, 18(6), 1351-1360 (2012)
11. Chen, M.-H., Wu, K.L. & Chen, B.T.: Research note: The impact of state ownership on hotel firms' characteristics and financial performance in China. Tourism Economics, 19(5), 1207-1214 (2013)
12. Chiu, Y.-H., Huang, C.-W.: Evaluating the optimal occupancy rate, operational efficiency, and profitability efficiency of Taiwan's international tourist hotels. Service Industries Journal, 31(13), 2145-2162 (2011)
13. Chow, C.W., Haddad, K.M., Leung, S. & Sterk, W.: Using value-based performance measures to improve hotel profitability. International Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Administration, 4(1), 23-50 (2003)
14. Cipolla, C., Biasion, G.: Le emozioni dell'ospitalità. Come valutare la qualità di un albergo. Milano, Italy: Franco Angeli, 1-160 (2010)
15. DeFranco, A.L., Morosan, C. & Hua, N.: Moderating the impact of e-commerce expenses on financial performance in US upper upscale hotels: The role of property size. Tourism Economics, 23(2), 429-447 (2017)
16. Desinano P.: Hotel revenue management. Un approccio consapevole. Milano, Italy: Franco Angeli, 1-164 (2010)
17. Diakomihalis, M.N.: Financial structure and profitability analysis of greek hotels. Journal of Hospitality Financial Management, 19(1), 51-70 (2011)
18. Fusco, F. & Migliaccio, G.: Cooperatives and global economic crisis 2008-2013: financial dynamics. Some Considerations From Italian Context, in Vrontis, D., Weber, Y., Tsoukatos, E. (Eds), Conference readings book proceedings, 8th Annual Conference of the EuroMed, Verona, September 16th-18th, 2015, EuroMed Press: Cyprus, 877-890 (2015)
19. Fusco, F. & Migliaccio, G.: Cooperatives and Crisis: Financial Dynamics on the Italian Primary Sector Cooperatives". In Marchi, L., Lombardi, R, & Anselmi, L. (Eds), Il governo aziendale tra tradizione e innovazione. Milano, Italy: Franco Angeli, VII 99-114 (2016a)
20. Fusco, F. & Migliaccio, G.: Profitability of Italian cooperatives: the impact of geographical area and business sectors, in Vrontis, D., Weber, Y., Tsoukatos, E. (Eds), Conference readings book proceedings, 9th Annual Conference of the EuroMed, Varsavia, September 14th-16th, 2016, EuroMed Press: Cyprus, 757-770 (2016b)
21. Fusco, F. & Migliaccio, G.: Crisis, Sectoral and Geographical Factors: Financial Dynamics of Italian Cooperatives, Euromed Journal of Business, 13(2), 130-148 (2018)
22. Fusco, F. & Migliaccio, G. (In press), Cooperatives and Crisis: Economic Dynamics in Italian Context. International Journal of Business and Globalisation, 22(4), 638-654

23. Georgantzas, N.C.: Tourism dynamics: Cyprus' hotel value chain and profitability. System Dynamics Review, 19(3), 175-212 (2003)
24. Gu, C.: Smoothing Spline ANOVA Models, II ed., Springer, New York, Usa (2013)
25. HackerJoel, M.J. & Angiolillo-Bent, S.: A BASIC package for N-way ANOVA with repeated measures, trend analysis, and user-defined contrasts. Behavior Research Methods & Instrumentation, 13(5), 688-688 (1981)
26. Hanson, B., Mattila, A.S., O'Neill, J.W. & Kim, Y.: Hotel rebranding and rescaling: Effects on financial performance. Cornell Hospitality Quarterly, 50(3), 360-370 (2009)
27. Hsu, L.-T. & Jang, S.C.: The Postmerger Financial Performance of Hotel Companies. Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research, 31(4), 471-485 (2007)
28. Hua, N., O'Neill, J., Mattila, A.S.: More marketing expenditures, better hotel financial performance?, Journal of Hospitality Financial Management, 16(1), 88-88 (2008)
29. Iovino, F. & Migliaccio, G.: Profitability dynamics of tourism companies during the crisis period 2007-2015, in Vrontis D., Weber Y., Tsoukatos E. (Eds), Conference readings book proceedings, 11th Annual Conference of the EuroMed: Research Advancements in National and Global Business. Theory and Practice, Valletta, Malta, September 12th-14th, EuroMed Press: Cyprus, 663-677 (2018a)
30. Iovino, F. & Migliaccio, G.: Financial dynamics of tourism companies, travel agencies and tour operators, during the crisis period. In Conference Proceedings: 2nd International Scientific Conference on Economics and Management - EMAN 2018: Economics & Management: How to Cope With Disrupted Times, Ljubljana, Slovenia, March 22th, Printed by: All in One Print Center, Belgrade, 693-702 (2018b)
31. Iovino, F. & Migliaccio, G.: Financial Dynamics of Energy Companies During Global Economic Crisis. International journal of Business and Globalisation, 22(4), 541-554 (2019a)
32. Iovino, F. & Migliaccio, G.: Energy companies and sizes: An opportunity? Some empirical evidences, Energy Policy, 128, 431-439 (2019b)
33. Iyengar, A. & Suri, K.: Customer profitability analysis - An avant-garde approach to revenue optimisation in hotels. International Journal of Revenue Management, 6(1-2), 127-143 (2012)
34. Jae Lee, M., & (Shawn) Jang, S.: Market diversification and financial performance and stability: A study of hotel companies. International Journal of Hospitality Management, 26(2), 362-375 (2007)
35. Jang, S., Hu, C. & Bai, B.: A Canonical Correlation Analysis of E-Relationship Marketing and Hotel Financial Performance. Tourism and Hospitality Research, 6(4), 241-250 (2006)
36. Kang, B., Brewer, K.P., Baloglu, S.: Profitability and survivability of hotel distribution channels: An industry perspective. Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing, 22(1), 37-50 (2007)
37. Kosová, R. & Enz, C.A.: The Terrorist Attacks of 9/11 and the Financial Crisis of 2008: The Impact of External Shocks on U.S. Hotel Performance. Cornell Hospitality Quarterly, 53(4), 308-325 (2012)
38. Krakhmal, V.: Customer profitability accounting in the context of hotels. Accounting and Financial Management: Developments in the International Hospitality Industry, 188-210 (2012)
39. Lado-Sestayo, R., Otero-González, L., Vivel-Búa, M. & Martorell-Cunill, O.: Impact of location on profitability in the Spanish hotel sector. Tourism Management, 52, 405-415 (2016)
40. Lado-Sestayo, R. & Vivel-Búa, M.: Profitability in the hotel sector: a PLS approach. Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology, 9(3), 455-470 (2018)
41. Lado-Sestayo, R., Vivel-Búa, M. & Otero-González, L.: Connection between hotel location and profitability drivers: an analysis of location-specific effects. Current Issues in Tourism, Article in Press (2018)
42. Liao, Q. & Li, J.: An adaptive reduced basis ANOVA method for high-dimensional Bayesian inverse problems, arXiv:1811.05151 [math.NA] (2018)
43. Liberatore, G.: Nuove prospettive di analisi dei costi e dei ricavi nelle imprese alberghiere. Milano, Italy: Franco Angeli, 1-202 (2001)
44. Makki, A.M., Singh, D. & Ozturk, A.B.: HotelTonight usage and hotel profitability. Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology, 7(3), 313-327 (2016)
45. Migliaccio, G. & Arena, M.F.: Economic and financial balance of Italian tanning manufactures during the crisis (2007-2015), in Vrontis D., Weber Y., Tsoukatos E. (Eds), Conference readings book proceedings, 11th Annual Conference of the EuroMed, Valletta, Malta, September 12th-14th, EuroMed Press: Cyprus, 949-964 (2018a)
46. Migliaccio, G. & Arena, M.F.: La redditività delle industrie conciarie italiane durante la crisi (2007-2015), in Corbella, S., Marchi, L. e Rossignoli, F. (Eds.), La comunicazione agli stakeholders tra vincoli normativi e attese informative, Franco Angeli, Milano, Italia, 2018, pp. 1237-1264 (2018b)
47. Migliaccio, G. & Ciotta, C.: Asset Balance of Italian Fuel Distribution Companies During and after the Crisis, in Vrontis D., Weber Y., Tsoukatos E. (Eds), Conference readings book proceedings, 12th

Annual Conference of the EuroMed: Business Management Theories and Practices in a Dynamic Competitive Environment, September 18-20, Thessaloniki, Greece, EuroMed Press: Cyprus, in press (2019)
48. Migliaccio, G. & Corea, M.M.: Economic-Financial Dimension of Italian Soccer Teams and Sports Results: some Relationships, in Vrontis D., Weber Y., Tsoukatos E. (Eds), Conference readings book proceedings, 12th Annual Conference of the EuroMed: Business Management Theories and Practices in a Dynamic Competitive Environment, September 18-20, Thessaloniki, Greece, EuroMed Press, in press (2019)
49. Migliaccio, G. & De Blasio, V.: Economic and financial balance of italian plastic manufacturers during the crisis (2008-2015), in Vrontis, D., Weber, Y., Tsoukatos, E. (Eds), Conference readings book proceedings, 10th Annual Conference of EuroMed, Roma, September 13th-15th, EuroMedPress: Cyprus, 1056-1070 (2017)
50. Migliaccio, G. & Losco, F.: Balance of assets of social welfare home during the crisis period (2007-2015), in Vrontis, D., Weber, Y., Tsoukatos, E. (Eds), Conference readings book proceedings, 11th Annual Conference of the EuroMed, Valletta, Malta, September 12th-14th, EuroMed Press: Cyprus, 965-979 (2018)
51. Migliaccio, G. & Molinaro, M.A.: Social Entreprises' Profitability in Italy: Results of a Study on 161 Financial Statements over the Five-Year-Term, in Vrontis D., Weber Y., Tsoukatos E. (Eds), Conference readings book proceedings, 12th Annual Conference of the EuroMed: Business Management Theories and Practices in a Dynamic Competitive Environment, September 18-20, Thessaloniki, Greece, EuroMed Press: Cyprus, in press (2019)
52. Migliaccio, G.: The profitability of Italian hotels during and after the 2008 Economic Crisis, African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 7 (6), article No 2, pp. 1-21 (2018)
53. Migliaccio, G., Lurgi, M. & Aufiero, V.A.: Business networks in Italian tourism. Case study: "Rete destinazione sud". International Journal of Leisure and Tourism Marketing, 6(2), 117-135 (2018)
54. Min, H., Min, H., Joo, S.J., Kim, J.: Evaluating the financial performances of Korean luxury hotels using data envelopment analysis. Service Industries Journal, 29(6), 835-845 (2009)
55. Molinari, V.: Profit Management alberghiero. Filosofia, tecniche e strategie per l'ottimizzazione dei ricavi dell'albergo. Milano, Italy: Franco Angeli, 1-114 (2017)
56. Morosan, C., Hua, N., Defranco, A.: E-commerce expenses and financial performance of american upper midscale hotels. Tourism Analysis, 22(3), 295-308 (2017)
57. Nair, G.K.: Dynamics of learning orientation, innovativeness, and financial performance of the hotel industry. Journal of Hospitality Financial Management, 27(1), 27-38 (2019)
58. Nicolaides, A.: Ethical leadership in a morally driven hospitality organisational culture. African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 8(5) (2019)
59. Nicolaides, A.: The role of spirituality in moderating hospitality industry conflict management and promoting sustainability. African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 7(2) (2018a)
60. Nicolaides, A. A Marcusean philosophy for restoring workplace dignity, and curbing the excesses of capitalism and the dehumanisation of labour: Lessons for the hospitality Industry. African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 7(3) (2018b)
61. Nicolaides, A.: Ethical hospitality marketing, brand- boosting and business sustainability. African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 7(1) (2018c)
62. Nicolaides, A. & Grobler, A.: Spirituality, Wellness tourism and quality of life. African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 6(1) (2017)
63. Nicolò, D. & Nania, I.: Risk, Capitalization and Survival of Young Firms: Empirical Survey on Italian Companies, Diem - Dubrovnik International Economic Meeting, 3(1), 2-15 (2017)
64. Nicolò, D. & Ricca, B.: Under-Capitalization and Other Factors that Influence the Survival of Young Italian Companies. International Journal of Advances in Management and Economics, 8(2), 37-51 (2019)
65. Nicolò, D.: Young Firms Sustainability and Corporate Reputation: A Comparison of the Survival Rates in the US and EU, in Andrei Jean Vasile, A.J. and Nicolò, D. (Eds), Sustainable Entrepreneurship and Investments in the Green Economy, Hershey, PA, USA: IGI Global,1-27 (2017)
66. O'Neill, J.W. & Mattila, A.S.: Strategic hotel development and positioning: The effects of revenue drivers on profitability. Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly, 47(2), 146-154 (2006)
67. Osservatorio Nazionale del Turismo - ONT WTTC: in crescita il contributo del turismo al PIL, http://www.ontit.it [Accessed 09/01/2019] (2018)

68. Pan, C.-M.: Market structure and profitability in the international tourist hotel industry, Tourism Management, 26(6), 845-850 (2005)
69. Petrella, A. & Torrini, R. (Eds.): Turismo in Italia. Numeri e potenziale di sviluppo. Roma, Italy: Banca d'Italia, 1-108 (2018)
70. Quirk, T.J.: One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), in Quirk, T.J. (Ed.), Excel 2010 for Social Science Statistics. A Guide to Solving Practical Problems, Springer, New York, 175-193 (2012)
71. Raguseo, E. & Vitari, C.: The effect of brand on the impact of e-WOM on hotels' financial performance. International Journal of Electronic Commerce, 21(2) (2017)
72. Ramphal, R.R. & Nicolaides, A. Intelligent consistency- Ethical practices of Lean Six Sigma in quality service provision in the hospitality industry. African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 7(3) (2018)
73. Ricci, P., Jannelli, R. & Migliaccio, G.: Profili gestionali e rivelazioni contabili delle imprese alberghiere. Milano, Italy: Franco Angeli, 1-258 (2007)
74. Ross, A. and Willson V.L.: One-Way Anova, in Ross, A. and Willson V.L. (Eds.), Basic and Advanced Statistical Tests, SensePublishers, Rotterdam, Olanda (2017)
75. Rotondo, F. & Fadda, N.: The influence of being part of a tourist network on hotels' financial performance. International Journal of Hospitality Management, Article in Press (2018)
76. Rushmore, S. & O'Neill, J.W.: Updated Benchmarks for Projecting Fixed and Variable Components of Hotel Financial Performance. Cornell Hospitality Quarterly, 56(1), 17-28 (2015)
77. Sami, B.A. & Mohamed, G.: Determinants of tourism hotel profitability in Tunisia. Tourism and Hospitality Research, 14(4), 163-175 (2014)
78. Sandvik, I.L., Duhan, D.F. & Sandvik, K.: Innovativeness and Profitability: An Empirical Investigation in the Norwegian Hotel Industry. Cornell Hospitality Quarterly, 55(2), 165-185 (2014)
79. Santos Lavrador, A.M. & Laureano, R.M.S.: Dashboard to monitor performance of an hotel in the financial perspective, Iberian Conference on Information Systems and Technologies, CISTI, 2019-June, art. no. 8760853 (2019)
80. Sardo, F., Serrasqueiro, Z. & Alves, H.: On the relationship between intellectual capital and financial performance: A panel data analysis on SME hotels. International Journal of Hospitality Management, 75, 67-74 (2018)
81. Sharma, A. & Upneja, A.: Factors influencing financial performance of small hotels in Tanzania. International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 17(6), 504-515 (2005)
82. Sharma, S.: Culinary innovation in indian hotels and building cost efficiencies that spur profitability growth. The Indian Hospitality Industry: Dynamics and Future Trends, 252-274 (2017)
83. Shieh, H.-S.: Does cost efficiency lead to better financial performance? A study on taiwan international tourist hotels. Journal of Hospitality Financial Management, 20(1), 17-30 (2012)
84. Shieh, H.-S., Hu, J.-L. & Chang, Y.-C.: An investigation of factors affecting financial performance of taiwanese international tourist hotels. Journal of Hospitality Financial Management, 26(1), 25-35 (2018)
85. Simons, T., McLean Parks, J. & Tomlinson, E.C.: The Benefits of Walking Your Talk: Aggregate Effects of Behavioral Integrity on Guest Satisfaction, Turnover, and Hotel Profitability. Cornell Hospitality Quarterly, 59(3), 257-274 (2018)
86. Singh, A.: Competing for profitability: The role of revenue management as a strategic choice for indian hotels. The Indian Hospitality Industry: Dynamics and Future Trends, 86-104 (2017)
87. Singh, H., Saufi, R.A., Tasnim, R. & Hussin, M.: The relationship between employee job satisfaction, perceived customer satisfaction, service quality, and profitability in luxury hotels in Kuala Lumpur, Prabandhan. Indian Journal of Management, 10(1), 26-39 (2017)
88. Solari, A., Salmaso, L., Pesarin, F. & Basso, D.: Permutation Tests for Stochastic Ordering and ANOVA. Theory and Applications with R, Springer-Verlag, New York, Usa (2009)
89. Steed, E., Brody, R.G. & Gu, Z.: Financial performance related to accounting treatments at hotels with breakfast included: A case analysis, Journal of Hospitality Financial Management, 11(1), 85-96 (2003)
90. Strang, H.R.: A BASIC factorial ANOVA program with a repeated-measures option for microprocessors, Behavior Research Methods & Instrumentation, 12(4), 477-478 (1980)
91. Su, W. & Huang, L. Financial performance evaluation of hotel listed tourism companies based on fuzzy comprehensive evaluation model, ICIC Express Letters, Part B: Applications, 8(5), 875-880 (2017)
92. Taylor, D.C., Snipes, M. & Barber, N.A.: Indicators of hotel profitability: Model selection using Akaike information criteria. Tourism and Hospitality Research, 18(1), 61-71 (2018)

93. Tran, X.: Effects of leadership styles on hotel financial performance. Tourism and Hospitality Management, 23(2), 163-183 (2017)
94. Tsai, H. & Gu, Z.: Optimizing room capacity and profitability for Hong Kong hotels. Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing, 29(1), 57-68 (2012)
95. Van Niekerk, M.: Business, technology, and marketing trends influencing the financial performance of the hotel industry. Journal of Hospitality Financial Management, 24(2), 153-157 (2016)
96. Xie, K.L. & So, K.K.F.: The Effects of Reviewer Expertise on Future Reputation, Popularity, and Financial Performance of Hotels: Insights from Data-Analytics. Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research, 42(8), 1187-1209 (2018)
97. Xie, K.L., So, K.K.F. & Wang, W.: Joint effects of management responses and online reviews on hotel financial performance: A data-analytics approach. International Journal of Hospitality Management, 62, 101-110 (2017)
98. Xu, X.: Evaluating operating and profitability efficiencies of hotel companies. International Journal of Information and Decision Sciences, 9(4), 315-333 (2017)
99. Yang, Y.: Effects of the size of acquisition on a hotel group's financial performance. Journal of Hospitality Financial Management, 27(1), 49-54 (2019)

Preliminary results from a pilot study regarding estuary valuation in urban areas with a view to tourism development in south africa

Radu Mihailescu[24]

Abstract: South Africa's estuaries have been impacted by increased demand for freshwater needed for human development. This has led to inadequate water inflows and a degradation of many estuaries. The situation has had tourism development implications and great consequences on biodiversity. One of these cases is the Nahoon River estuary in East London. This research contributes to the current management approach towards estuaries in South Africa. It seeks to rebalance conservation orientation with enhancing tourism. The methodology used is that of choice modelling in form of choice experiments. The preliminary results of the research found that both locals and visitors to Nahoon Estuary place a high value on the improvement of the factors that contribute to an increase of its recreational potential.

KEY WORDS: willingness to pay, choice modelling, estuary, tourism, fresh water, resources.

1. Introduction

The impact of development on rivers, estuaries and adjacent coastline is a subject that is generating great interest in South Africa. Increased demand for freshwater needed for irrigation as well as human development has led to inadequate water inflows and a degradation of the estuary.

This situation has had tourism development implications and great consequences on biodiversity. However, research regarding coastline biodiversity in Europe shows that 80 percent of tourists enjoy less developed coastlines that host a large degree of biodiversity (Marcin et al., 2005), highlighting that there is a strong demand for biodiversity protection and for environmentally sustainable tourism.

[24] NHL-Stenden University of Applied Sciences, The Netherlands

Tourism in South Africa is experiencing a steady increase. SA Tourism's analytics indicate that 8.6 million international tourists have visited South Africa this yeartourism generating a revenue of around 8.6% of the country's GDP (SATourism, 2019). The increase in the country's popularity as a tourist destination puts a lot of pressure in the development of estuaries and threatens the healthy functioning of the river and estuary systems. This could have as a result a decrease in the biodiversity and the esthetical image of estuaries which in turn will lead to a decrease in their appeal to visitors.

For this reason, the management of South Africa's water supply and estuaries is a critical development issue for the country. For South Africa, the challenge is that the growth of the tourism sector can affect its biodiversity and further impact its natural beauty, which at present are one of its most important tourist resources.

The proposed approach to such a complex problem of sustainability focuses on a particular natural resource, which is the estuaries and adjacent coastline. This resource represents the object of an increasing demand for tourism destinations. A central idea behind the research is that the current policy of damage cost containment with respect to the environment places insufficient weight on income (recreational value) generation. The hypothesis is that there are many under exploited income generating opportunities and interventions for exploiting the natural capital of South Africa's estuaries that lie within its metropolitan areas.

An example of the threat to a South African estuary due to overdevelopment is the Nahoon in East London in the province of Southern Cape. The Nahoon River Estuary (32º59'S, 27º57'E) has been described as an important environmental asset and recreational area (Heydorn, 1986). Five key problems were identified in the Nahoon River Estuary in the early 1990s: increased sedimentation due to reduced river floods, poor water quality, the reduced abundance and diversity of estuarine organisms, inappropriate development on the floodplain, and increasing demand for recreational resources (Wiseman *et al.* 1993).

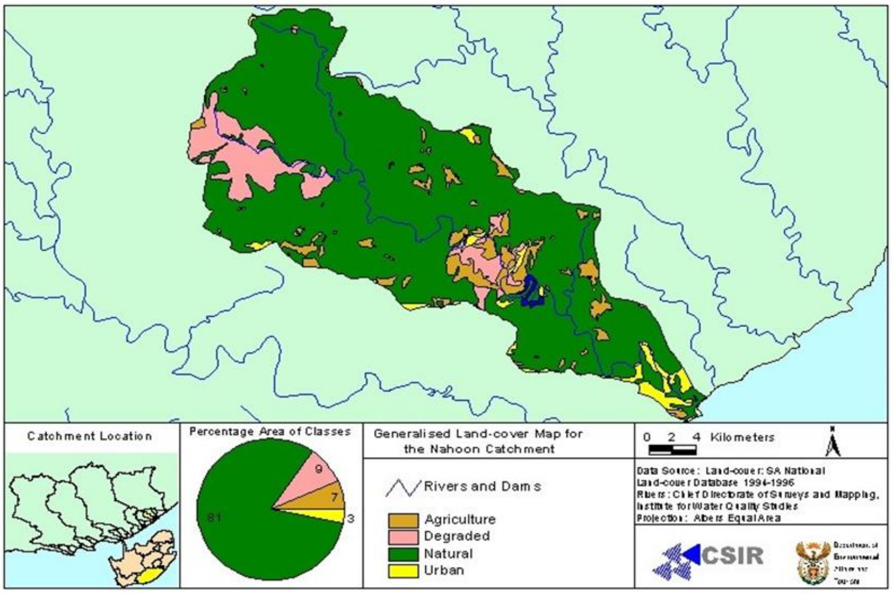


Figure 1. Generalized Map for Land use in the Nahoon Catchment (Eastern Cape Economic Development and Environmental Affairs, 2018)

The final purpose of the study is to estimate the total economic value of the natural resources under investigation, by assessing the water benefit to the Nahoon estuary to compare the effect that the development has having on them, and to evaluate the willingness to pay of tourists the usage of those resources.. Because the river estuaries are non-market goods, this objective will be achieved by applying a stated preference approach (Nillesen and Ruijgrok, 2001).

2. Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are:

1. to provide a description of the extent and impact that overdevelopment had on the estuary;
2. to carry out a choice experiment to estimate the willingness to pay of tourists the use and the preservation of the natural resources;
3. to provide conclusions and recommendations based on the results of the above mentioned analysis.

3. Methodology

The project analyses tourists preferences by means of the choice modelling, a survey-based technique often used to place a value on a non-marketable or semi-public good. The choice modelling is a stated-preference approach which investigates individual behaviour and estimates the value of goods (or projects) by asking people to choose among scenarios whose differences are due to systematic combinations of diverse attribute levels.[25] This methodology develops through three main steps (Hanley *et al*., 2001, Mazzanti, 2003): i) identification of the basic characteristics (attributes) of the good or project to be evaluated, which can take different values (levels); ii) each respondent has to decide among alternative hypothetical scenarios characterised by different combinations of the attribute levels; iii) the econometric analysis of their answers allows to estimate the relative importance of different attributes and, if a monetary factor or a price is included as attribute, the willingness to pay for different levels.

The use of choice modelling has spread in many research fields (marketing, cultural, health, transport and environmental economics) and in recent years it has also been applied in tourism economics to analyse tourists' preferences with respect to trip attributes, recreational and heritage demand, to the attractiveness of the destination, the quality of natural resources and to tourism policies.[26]

Interviews among representative samples of the tourists using the estuary estimate the willingness to pay (WTP) for (hypothetical) changes in the composition of the holiday and in the quality of natural resources. Stated preference methods offer advantages in analysing trade-off between different attributes of the level. In this respect, the "holiday" is seen as a set of different characteristics which compose a generic good. For the complex nature of the holiday, choice experiments seem to fit better than others stated preference methods.

5. Results

In total 128 respondents were interviewed. The sample included local and foreign tourists that made use of the estuary and its adjacent beaches.

A majority (approximately 69 percent) of the respondents believe that the water in the estuary is not safe for swimming, boating or fishing and thus poses a threat to the quality of the recreational services provided. A vast majority, 97.14 percent, of respondents believe that the estuary should be safe, i.e. crime free for recreational users. Respondents were presented with four choice sets showing various options for

25 For an overview of the main differences among alternative stated preferences methodologies, see Bennet and Blaney (2001), Louvière *et al*. (2000), Bateman *et al*. (2002), and Mazzanti (2003).

26 Among the many papers that in tourism economics recently used this methodology, a few names can be mentioned: Apostolakis and Shabbar (2005), Brau and Cao (2006), Breffle and Morey (2000), Crouch and Louviere (2004), Huybers and Bennett (2000), Huybers (2005), Morey *et al*. (2002) and Papatheodorou (2001).

their water uses (See Table 1 for a sample choice set). The respondents had to choose from a total of 32 choice sets.

One of the methods used for the estimation of the for estimation of the choice model is the conditional logit model (CL). The results can be observed in the table below.

Table 2: Estimation of pilot results of the CE – Nahoon River Estuary

	CL	
	Coeff.	**Std err.**
Water Safety	.31509969**	.06595099
Interest in Facilities	.14877594**	.05357794
Public Safety	.14212519**	.06245571
Payment	-.00667844**	.00100678
No. of respondents	128	
No. of choice sets	512	
Pseudo R^2	.06029	

**indicates that parameter is statistically significant at the 5 percent level*

*** indicates significance at the 1 percent level*

The results of the CL model indicate that all the coefficients are significantly different from zero at the 99 percent confidence level.

The probability that an alternative would be chosen was reduced:

The lower the quality of the water in the estuary;

The lower the amount of interest in support facilities around the estuary;

The lower the level of public safety; and

The higher the payment solicitated as a levy perceived as a cost.

The explanatory power of the model is fair, with a Pseudo R2 of 6 percent.

5. **Conclusions and implications**

The preliminary results from the pilot study shows that the sample of interviewed tourists has a high WTP for the improvement of the water quality, improvement of the camping facilities and the increase in security. The security issue was strongly advocated by many of the tourists that used not only the estuary for their recreational activities but also the beach on the coastline adjacent to the estuary. Many of the participants have also expressed concerned for any degradation of the natural beauty of the area as well as loss of biodiversity.

The model further shows that an increase in the payment solicited in a form of

levies is associated with a decrease in overall welfare.

The inclusion of a larger sample of respondents will present a better view of the WTP of both the local community as well as the tourists to the region. A major policy implication of the results of this study is that policymakers can choose from a set of scenarios, which includes different levels of attributes and WTP estimates for each attribute. In assessing these different scenarios informed decisions can be taken in order to better manage the water resources of the Nahoon river and the economic development of the local area.

References

1. Apostolakis, A., Shabbar, J.: Stated preferences for two Cretan heritage attractions, Annals of Tourism Research, 32(4): pp 985-1005 (2005).
2. Bateman. I.J., Carson, R.T, Day B., Hanemann, M., Hanley, N., Hett, T., Jones-Lee, M., Loomes, G., Mourato, S., Ozdemiroglu, E., Pearce, D.W., Sugden, R., and Swanson, J.: Economic Valuation with Stated Preference Techniques, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, UK (2002).
3. Bennett, J., R. Blamey (eds.): The Choice Modelling Approach to Environmental Valuation, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham (2001).
4. Breffle, W., Morey, E.: Investigating Preference Heterogeneity in a Repeated Discrete-Choice Recreation Demand Model of Atlantic Salmon Fishing, Marine Resource Economics, 15: 1-20 (2000).
5. Crouch, G.I., Louviere, J.J.: The Determinants of Convention Site Selection: A Logistic Choice Model from Experimental Data, Journal of Travel Research, 43(2): 118-130 (2004).
6. Eastern Cape Economic Development and Environmental Affairs. South African Estuaries: Catchement Land-Cover. Government Publication (2018).
7. Hanley N., Mourato, S., Wright, R., Choice Modelling: A Superior Alternative for Environmental Valuation, Journal of Economic Surveys, 15: 435-462 (2001).
8. Heydorn, A.E.F. An Assessment of the State of the Estuaries of the Cape and Natal in 1972/73. Pretoria: CSIR (1972).
9. Huybers T., Destination choice modelling: what’s in a name?, Tourism Economics, 11(3): 329-350, (2005).
10. Huybers T., J. Bennett, Impact of the environment on holiday destination choices of prospective UK tourists: implications for Tropical North Queensland, Tourism Economics, 6: 21-46 (2000).
11. Louviere J.J., D.A. Hensher, J.D. Swait, Stated Choice Methods, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. (2000).

12. Marcin, J., Lorenzo, C., Colombini, I., Scapini, F. & Weslawski, J.M. Bridging Biodiversity and towards sustainable development of sandy beaches. Paper presented at ESA 2005 Annual Meeting (2005).
13. Mazzanti, M.,. Discrete choice models and valuation experiments, Journal of Economic Studies, 30:584-604 (2003).
14. Morey E., K.G. Rossmann, L.G. Chestnut, S. Ragland, Valuing Reduced Acid Deposition Injuries to Cultural Resources: Marble Monuments in Washington DC. In Applying Environmental Valuation Techniques to Historic Buildings, Monuments and Artifacts. Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, UK, (2002).
15. Nillesen E.E.M. and Ruijgrok E.C.M., , The socio-economic value of natural riverbanks in the Netherlands, Working Paper No 2004.64, Fondazione Eni Enrico Mattei, Italy (2001).
16. Papatheodorou A., 2001. Why people travel to different places, Annals of Tourism Research, 28(1): 164-179 (2001).
17. Wiseman, K.A., Burns, M.E.R. & Vernon, C.J. . Nahoon (CSE 44), Qinira (CSE 45) and Gqunube (CSE 46). (*In* Morant, P.D. (ed). Estuaries of the Cape Part II: Synopses of Available Information on Individual Systems. Stellenbosch: CSIR Research Report No. 441, (1993).

Sustainability and Tourism: the Tourism Observatory of Skyros Island

V. Vitalis[1], V. Plaka[1], K. Antonopoulos[2] and C. Skanavis[3]

Abstract While tourism is one of the most important sectors of the world economy, it has a serious impact on the environment. The trend of sustainable tourism has evolved through the search for strategies, ensuring tourist development without affecting the environment (Karavitakakis & Chondromatidou, 2016). In this research, the tourism impact data derived from the 2nd Tourism Observatory of Skyros Island will be presented. The Tourism Observatory formulates and implements sustainable management strategies, policies and procedures based on the use of Sustainable Tourism Indicators and Information Assessment Techniques (UNWTO, 2015). In particular, the Observatory gathered relevant data from questionnaires that were distributed to tourists and residents of the island. This way, conclusions about participants' preferences, as well as their place selection for summer holidays were drawn. The purpose of this research is to analyze the profile of tourists and their tourists' characteristics before, during and after their arrival at Skyros Island. Also, it attempts to assess the important and unique aspects of the relationship between tourism and sustainable development (UNEP, 2005) of Skyros Island, which happen to be the interaction, awareness and dependency ones. It is of crucial importance to determine whether tourists' and locals' actions have a long-term sustainable effect on the island.

Key words: tourism observatory, sustainability, climate-change, small-island, Skyros Island

27 V. Vitalis, University of the Aegean; email: valantis.vitalis@gmail.com

1 V. Plaka, University of the Aegean, email: plaka@env.aegean.gr

2 K. Antonopoulos, Linaria Port Fund; email: litasky@otenet.gr

3 C. Skanavis, Professor, University of West Attica; email: kskanavi@uniwa.gr

1 Literature Review

Since the mid-twentieth century, the tourism sector has been thriving. It is set on a trajectory of fast-pace growth on a global scale without showing any signs of deceleration (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2017). This trend has put excessive pressure on tourism destinations and their resources, leading to a gradual deterioration that subsequently compromises their touristic appeal and even their very existence (Liu, 2003; Michalena et al., 2009; TorresDelgado & Palomeque, 2014; Carayannis et al., 2018).

Tourism has significant effects on economies, environments, societies and cultures around the globe (Pan et al., 2018; Wearing, Stevenson, & Young, 2010), and can "be a factor for environmental preservation, promotion and cultural appreciation and understanding among people" (UNWTO, 2016).Whilst sustainable development is an overarching goal for most nations engaging tourism as a tool for development (Ellis & Sheridan, 2014), many have argued that implementing sustainability principles is a difficult task (Pan et al., 2018; Tosun, 2001; Waligo et al., 2013).Good destination governance is, therefore, recognized as key to achieving sustainability goals (Bramwell, 2011; Hall, 2011). Destination governance refers to the process of tourism planning, policy- and decision-making, through stakeholder interaction and participation in collective actions, and it is aimed to improve stakeholder and destination performance (Beritelli, Bieger, & Laesser, 2007; Padurean, 2010; Pechlaner, Volgger, & Herntrei, 2012).

Many countries declare that they are pursuing, or wish to pursue, policies for 'sustainable tourism'. Despite this interest, there remains a degree of uncertainty over the scope and priorities for making tourism more sustainable and only partial appreciation of how to put this into practice (UNEP, 2005). Leiper (2004) views tourism stakeholders as a system of individuals and organizations involved in tourism activities within the generating region, the transit region, and the destination region.

The development of community- based tourism (CBT) increases the number of facilities, roads, parks, and recreational and cultural attractions, which benefits residents' quality of life and respects their culture (Brunt & Courtney, 1999). In some developing countries, scholars and NGOs provide education on sustainable tourism to train residents on how to protect local natural and socio-cultural resources (Rodríguez-Martínez, 2008; Sebastian & Rajagopalan, 2008; Sebele, 2010). Moreover, the interaction between residents and tourists may be limited, which leads to limited tourism revenues in this stage of CBT development (Uysal, Woo, & Singal, 2012); thus, the perception of economic sustainability is lower in the involvement stage than that in the consolidation and development stages. Tourism is considered an effective method of reducing poverty in some traditional communities (Croes, 2014) because tourism offers jobs other than traditional livelihoods (World Tourism Organization, 2002) as well as opportunities to sell local products (Lee, 2013, Lepp, 2007). Consequently, traditional communities such as rural communities (Wang, Cater, & Low, 2016), fishing communities

(Thompson, Johnson & Hanes, 2016), small islands (Teh & Cabanban, 2007) Indigenous communities (eg Reggers, Grabowski, Wearing, Chatterton, & Schweinsberg, 2016) could develop the CBT to improve their financial situation. In exotic communities, tourism offers residents the opportunity to appreciate and respect the local culture of the socio-economic system, thereby increasing the sustainability of the socio-ecosystem (Ruiz-Ballesteros, 2011).

As UNEP (2009) emphasized that, "*tourism is in a special position in the contribution it can make to sustainable development and the challenges it presents. It is because tourism is an activity, which involves a special relationship between consumers (visitors), the industry, the environment and local communities. This special relationship arises because, unlike most other sectors, the consumer of tourism (the tourist) travels to the producer and the product. This leads to three important and unique aspects of the relationship between tourism and sustainable development:*

• *Interaction: The nature of tourism, as a service industry that is based on delivering an experience of new places, means that it involves a considerable amount of interaction, both direct and indirect, between visitors, host communities and their local environments.*

• *Awareness: Tourism makes people (visitors and hosts) become far more conscious of environmental issues and differences between nations and cultures. This can affect attitudes and concerns for sustainability issues not only while travelling but throughout people's lives.*

• *Dependency: Much of tourism is based on visitors seeking to experience intact and clean environments, attractive natural areas, authentic historic and cultural traditions, and welcoming hosts with whom they have a good relationship. The industry depends on these attributes being in place*."

This close and direct relationship creates a sensitive situation, whereby tourism can be both very damaging but also very positive for sustainable development (UNEP, 2005). In recent years in Greece, the important issue of tourism development has shown a very significant deficit, in terms of the systematic recording of current statistics. Their evaluation should depend on the corresponding redistribution of tourism development in order to improve its results and sustainable development of destinations (Spilanis, 2014). For this reason, it is necessary to use a tourist observatory, the tool for managing, monitoring and evaluating tourism and aims to develop and create an attractive landscape for buyers and suppliers, improve business competitiveness, income and create new ones, jobs, work, but also in the conservation of environmental resources (UNWTO, 2019a; Spilanis, 2014).

Each year, islands are a top destination for millions of tourists, because their special geographical situation and their natural and cultural heritage richness make them unique for visitors, but at the same time, confront them, with a number of challenges and vulnerabilities (UNWTO, 2019a). The UNWTO International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories (INSTO) was created in 2004 with the main objective to support the continuous improvement of sustainability and resilience in the tourism sector through systematic, timely and regular monitoring of tourism performance and impact and to connect dedicated destinations in order to better understand destination-wide resource use and foster the responsible management of tourism (UNWTO, 2019b). Through the systematic application of monitoring, evaluation and information management techniques, the initiative provides policy makers, planners, tourism managers and other relevant stakeholders with key tools to strengthen institutional capacities to support the formulation and implementation of sustainable tourism policies, strategies, plans and management processes. In Greece, there is the Aegean Islands Observatory, which is sited only on the island of North Aegean (UNWTO, 2019b).

2 Method and Empirical Findings

2.1 Study Area

A world-wide environmental campaign, under the brand name "SKYROS Project", has launched in a small Greek island, known as Skyros Island. This Project has attracted the interest and respect of travelers (Antonopoulos et al., 2016). It is the product of an innovative cooperation initially with University of the Aegean and the Skyros Port Authority and presently the University of West Attica has joined the collaboration. In Greece, Skyros Island is an island in the heart of Aegean Sea. Linaria Port, the island's small harbor, has distinguished itself in environmental infrastructures and influences. The Research Center of Environmental Education and Communication of University of the Aegean had set a remote research spot there, enforcing environmental campaign activities. The enthusiastic students through their daily environmental investments led the way to a permanently established training site that invested in environmental research and education practices (Skanavis et al., 2018a; Antonopoulos et al, 2017). This campaign project received the brand name SKYROS Project (Foundas et al., 2018). Based on another tedious research about "SKYROS Project", a Tourism Observatory at Skyros Island was established (Skanavis et al., 2019b), having its collected data, twice evaluated, once in 2016 (Karavitakis & Chondromatidou, 2016) and then in 2018. It is significant to mention that this Tourism Observatory has been awarded with a GOLD Award on Greek Tourism Awards in 2015 and a SILVER Award on Greek Tourism Awards in 2016.

2.2 Methodology

Successful tourism development depends on the evaluation of up-to-date statistics and the redesign of strategies aimed at increasing the sustainability of destinations (Spillanis I., 2014). This assessment can be based on both quantitative data from questionnaire surveys and from qualitative data through public opinion polls (Ko, TG 2005). For the operation of the tourist observatory and for the development of sustainable tourism, it is necessary to inform and raise the awareness of all operators, residents and tourists visiting each destination area. In addition, it is necessary to cooperate with all the above in providing the necessary information (I. Spilanis, E. Vagianni, S. Karabella 2011).

For the purposes of this research a questionnaire was developed in order to collect data on the behavior of tourists at the destination and the impact of their decision (costs, accommodation, travel, etc.).

The questionnaire is written in 2 languages (Greek-English) for the convenience of foreign tourists. To identify the tourist profile, we have included a set of behavioral and pre-travel questions, as well as the total cost and degree of satisfaction related to their destination. There is also a set of personal questions, placed at the end. According to the guidelines given in previous studies (Spilanis I., Vagianni E., Karabella S., 2011), respondents should be tourists, holidaymakers or visitors and not permanent residents of the destination. Questionnaires were anonymous and data was only used for research purposes. In order to obtain, a sufficient number of questionnaires, the researchers had to be at the tourist destination before the ships or planes arrived. For optimum results, only one person per family should complete the questionnaire. Respondents should be able to answer all the questions, so questionnaires were only given to adults. Tourists were mainly interviewed in the port and airport area going through final preparation for their departure, having therefore free time to answer questions. The processing of the results aims to study the above three important and unique aspects of the relationship between tourism and sustainable development.

2.3 Empirical Findings

The means of transportation to reach Skyros is by plane or by boat or by private or rented boat. Out of the 100 respondents 26 chose a plane, out of which 6 are Greek and 20 foreigners, and 74 chose the ferry line or came by private boat, of which 66 were Greek and 8 were foreigners. Of the total questionnaires collected, 72% were Greeks and 28% were foreigners. For Greeks 64% were men and 36% were women, while for foreigners 46% were men and 54% women. The Greek tourists surveyed had an average age of 32 years for men and 31 for women. On the other hand, foreign tourists had an average age of 41 years for men and 34 for women. In terms of educational level, the majority of, both Greeks and foreigners had a university education. For the Greeks, 75.27% responded on single status and 34.72% were married with many of them stating that they had children. On the other hand, foreigners were 57.14% single and 42.85% married.

The majority of Greeks visit the island, mainly for recreation (56.94%), to meet acquaintances and relatives (36.11%) and to get to know the place (20.83%). A percent of 71.42 of foreigners responded that they came to Skyros to relax, 46.42% said they are visiting relatives and friends, and 32.14% said they came to see the place.

According to the survey, the majority of tourists were visitors, who chose to come to Skyros for the first time. A 62.5% of surveyed Greeks come to Skyros for the first time, as well as the 67.85% of the foreigners. The average number of visits per person is about 9 times. For Greeks, the majority responded traveling with friends (43.05%) while foreigners were traveling with their families (50%). According to our survey, Greeks chose Skyros for its natural beauty (41.66%), because they haven't been to Skyros before (33.33%) and for getting together with relatives (34.72%). Almost for the same reasons and in the same order of priority foreigners chose to visit Skyros with the only difference being that 32.14% of them were interested in sightseeing.

Both Greeks and foreigners, were informed about Skyros, first came as information source the relatives and friends and then via Internet. Of the 100 people asked, no one came through a tourist holiday package. Visitors either Greeks or foreigners mainly chose to stay at the port, Linaria. Greeks and foreigners preferred for accommodation, rented rooms at a ratio 44.44% and 57.14% respectively. The results showed that both Greeks and foreigners chose only a room as a place to stay, with 44.44% and 35.71% respectively. Average overnight staying was stated as 7.85 nights per person. The majority of Greeks (56.94), preferred to visit the various local settlements. The same applied to foreigners at 85.71%. Last, but not least is the mode of transport chosen by visitors for their trips to the island. The results differ because Greeks prefer their private car or motor with a percent of 43.0, while foreigners preferred to rent a car or motor from the island with a percent of 57.14.

The largest percentage of Greeks (55.55%) said that they spent up to 500 euros for their holidays, while foreign visitors between 1000 and 1500 euros. When they were asked if the money, they spent on the trip was generally in line with the benefits they received, Greek tourists responded with 43.05% satisfaction, while foreigners with 57.14%. The Greeks were impressed by the cleanliness, the service in the port and the food with a response rate 43.05%, 48.61% and 22.22% respectively. On the other hand, foreign visitors left positive comments on the management of the port, for hospitality and cleanliness services with 39.28%, 35.71% and 35.71% response rates respectively. Most of the negative impressions from Greek visitors were recorded for the high prices (12.5%), while foreign visitors highlighted with a 46.42% for the scattered trash seen out in the streets and generally throughout the island. A 97% of tourists would visit the island again. A 98% of tourists would recommend it to others.

3 Conclusions and implications

In the last sixty years, tourism has experienced a continuous diversification and expansion, becoming one of the world's greatest and fastest-growing economic challenges of the sustainable development agenda (Butler, 1999; Weaver, 2006; UNWTO, 2018). Enforcing policies in this area is quite important, if conservation of the environment is to be placed in parallel with the values of the locals, while improvement of competitiveness and tourist productivity take place (Exceltur, 2017). Sustainable tourism implies carrying out a medium- and long-term planning of the specific activity, which is being defined with benchmarking practices aimed at improving competitiveness (Lozano-Oyola, et al., 2019).

There are five major challenge areas that need specific attention in the sustainable tourism research, if promoting successfully sustainable tourism is the end desire. These are: grappling with complexity, changing working practices, encouraging changes in the way research findings are being reported, changing the thinking approach of many academics and finally working with industry and policy makers much more effectively (Lane, 2018). SKYROS Project, this academically oriented environmental campaign, assesses and promotes solutions on sustainable tourism through the establishment of the Tourism Observatory of Skyros Island.

The important and unique aspects of the relationship between tourism and sustainable development (UNEP, 2005) at Skyros Island have been assessed. Specifically, the following concepts have been pointed out.

Interaction: tourists did not choose a vacation destination based on weather expectations. The determining factor was the economic one. Air quality was a consideration that affected the spot of preference on the island, based on responses of the ones who arrived with their own boat. Selection of the island based on its beaches, was highly rated as a reason, in the recorded responses, justifying their destination choice. Weather temperatures did not influence individuals' survey responses because individuals had a clear expectation of what the temperatures at their destination would have been, before they arrived (Chapman &Johnson, 2002).

Awareness: Seventy five percent of tourists chose ferry line or a private boat for arriving at the island and preferred to stay at Linaria Port, enjoying the environmentally friendly lifestyle that the port of reference promotes.

Dependency: tourists mainly come for reasons as relaxing on this quiet Aegean island, reuniting with relatives or just enjoying the beauty of Skyros Island' natural environment.

Investing in wise tourism happens to be an attractive attribute if maintaining sustainable development of Skyros Island is a priority. This island, being recorded as a holiday destination from many of tourists, has the potential to become a model one in sustainable tourism industry.

References

1. Antonopoulos K., Plaka V. and Skanavis C. (2016). "Linaria port, Skyros: An environmentally friendly port community for leisure crafts". Proceedings of the 13thInternational Conference on Protection and Restoration of the Environment, Mykonos Island.p1054-1062.
2. Antonopoulos K., Plaka V., Mparmpakonstanti A., Dimitriadou D. and Skanavis C. (2017). "The Blue Port with a Shade of Green: The Case Study of Skyros Island". Innovation Arabia 10: Health and Environment Conference, Dubai. p175-187.

3. Beritelli, P., Bieger, T., & Laesser, C. (2007). Destination governance: Using corporate governance theories as a foundation for effective destinationmanagement. Journal of Travel Research, 46(1), 96–107.
4. Bramwell, B. (2011). Governance, the state and sustainable tourism: A political economy approach. Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 19(4–5), 459–477.
5. Brunt, P., & Courtney, P. (1999).Host perceptions of sociocultural impacts.Annals of Tourism Research, 26(3), 493–515.
6. Butler, R.W.,(1999). Sustainable tourism: a state-of-the-art review. J. Tour. Geogr. - Int. J. Tour. Space, Place and Environ. 1 1. 7-25.
7. Carayannis, E., Ferreira, F., Bento, P., Ferreira, J., Jalali, M., Fernandes, B., (2018).Developing a socio-technical evaluation index for tourist destination competitiveness using cognitive mapping and MCDA.Technol. Forecast. Soc. Change 131, 147e158.
8. Chapman, G. B., & Johnson, E. J. (2002). Incorporating the irrelevant: Anchors in judgements
of belief and value. In T. Gilovich, D. Griffin, & D. Kahneman (Eds.). Heuristics and biases: The psychology of intuitive judgement (pp. 120–138). New York: Cambridge University Press.
9. Croes, R. (2014). The role of tourism in poverty reduction: An empirical assessment. Tourism Economics, 20(2), 207–226.
10. Ellis, S., & Sheridan, L. (2014).A critical reflection on the role of stakeholders in sustainable tourism development in least-developed countries.Tourism Planning & Development, 11(4), 467–471.
11. Exceltur, (2017). (2016). URBANTUR. Monitor de CompetitividadTurística de los destinosurbanosespañoles (Monitor of Tourist Competitiveness of Spanish urban destinations). http://www.exceltur.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/URBANTUR-2016- 240516-documento.pdf, Accessed date: 13 June 2017.
12. Fountas Ch., Skanavis C. and Plaka V. (2018).“Circular Tourism Through Small Eco-Marinas”.10th International Conference on Islands Tourism, Palermo, p195-206.
13. Hall, C. M. (2011).A typology of governance and its implications for tourism policy analysis.Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 19(4–5), 437–457.
14. Karavitakis Eleftherios, Chondromatidou Anna-Maria. (2016). “The tourist observatory as a tool for sustainable tourism development .The Case of Skyros”.
15. Ko, T.G., (2005). Development of a tourism sustainability assessment procedure: a conceptual approach. Tour. Manag. 26 (3), 431–445.
16. Lane, B. (2018). Will sustainable tourism research be sustainable in the future? An opinion piece, 161 – 164.
17. Lee, T. H. (2013). Influence analysis of community resident support for sustainable tourism development. Tourism Management, 34, 37–46.
18. Leiper, N. (2004). Tourism management (3 ed.). Australia: Pearson Education.
19. Lepp, A. (2007). Residents' attitudes towards tourism in Bigodi village, Uganda. Tourism Management, 28, 876–885.
20. Liu, Z., (2003). Sustainable tourism development: a critique. Journal ofSustainable Tourism 11 (6), 459e475.
21. Lozano-Oyolaa, M., Blancasa, F.J., Gonzálezb, M., Caballerob, R. (2019). Sustainable tourism tags to reward destination management , Journal of Environmental Management 250 (2019) 109458.
22. Michalena, E., Hills, J., Amat, J.P., (2009). Developing sustainable tourism using a multicriteria analysis on renewable energy in Mediterranean Islands.Energy for Sustainable Development 13 (2), 129e136.

23. Padurean, L. (2010). Implementing destination governance.Networking for sustainable tourism (pp. 193–201).BEST EN Think Tank X.
24. Pan, S.-Y., Gao, M., Kim, H., Shah, K. J., Pei, S.-L., & Chiang, P.-C. (2018). Advances and challenges in sustainable tourism toward a green economy. Science of the Total Environment, 635, 452–469.
25. Pechlaner, H., Volgger, M., & Herntrei, M. (2012). Destination management organizations as interface between destination governance and corporate governance. Anatolia – An International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Research, 23(2), 151–168.
26. Reggers, A., Grabowski, S., Wearing, S. L., Chatterton, P., &Schweinsberg, S. (2016). Exploring outcomes of community-based tourism on the kokoda track, Papua New Guinea: A longitudinal study of participatory rural appraisal techniques. Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 24(8–9), 1139–1155.
27. Rodríguez-Martínez, R. E. (2008). Community involvement in marine protected areas: The case of puertomorelos reef, méxico. Journal of Environmental Management, 88(4), 1151–1160.
28. Ruiz-Ballesteros, E. (2011). Social-ecological resilience and community-based tourism: An approach from Agua Blanca, Ecuador. Tourism Management, 32(3), 655–666.
29. Sebastian, L. M., & Rajagopalan, P. (2008). Socio-cultural transformations through tourism: Comparison of residents' perspectives at two destinations in Kerala, India. Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change, 7(1), 5–21.
30. Sebele, L. S. (2010). Community-based tourism ventures, benefits and challenges: Khama rhino sanctuary trust, central district, Botswana. Tourism Management, 31(1), 136–146.
31. Skanavis C., Antonopoulos K., Plaka V., Pollaki S.P., Tsagaki-Rekleitou E., Koresi G. and Oursouzidou Ch. (2018b). "Linaria Port: An Interactive Tool for Climate Change Awareness in Greece". In Leal Filho W., Lackner B. and McGhie (eds) *Addressing the Challenges in Communicating Climate Change Across Various Audiences*, Springer, Switzerland, p281-295.
32. Skanavis C., Antonopoulos K., Plaka V., Zouridaki F. and Ganiaris M. (2018a). "SKYROS PROJECT: A paradigmatic ecovillage". 10th International Conference on Islands Tourism, Palermo,p 56-67.
33. Spilanis, I. (2014). Government report: STRUCTURE AND METHODOLOGY OF EDUCATION Tourism OBSERVATION IN THE SPACE OF SOUTH AEGEAN.
34. Spilanis, I., Vagianni, E. & Karabela, S. (2011) THE METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF DPSR SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT 201 AS A POLITICAL TOOL OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY (3))
35. Teh, L., &Cabanban, A. S. (2007).Planning for sustainable tourism in southern pulauBanggi: An assessment of biophysical conditions and their implications for future tourism development.Journal of Environmental Management, 85(4), 999–1008.
36. Thompson, C., Johnson, T., & Hanes, S. (2016). Vulnerability of fishing communities undergoing gentrification. Journal of Rural Studies, 45, 165–174.
37. Torres-Delgado, A., Saarinen, J., (2014).Using indicators to assess sustainable tourism development: a review.Tourism Geogr. 16 (1), 31e47.
38. Tosun, C. (2001). Challenges of sustainable tourism development in the developing world- the case of Turkey.Tourism Management, 22, 289–303.
39. UNEP. (2005). MAKING TOURISM MORE SUSTAINABLE: A Guide for Policy Makers. United Nations Environment Programme and World Tourism Organization.

40. UNWTO. (2015). “Observatory on Sustainable Tourism under the auspices of the World Tourism Organization: Provisional Rules for the Operation and Management of Observatories”.
41. UNWTO. (2016).Tourism and the sustainable development goals.(Retrieved from Madrid, Spain:).
42. UNWTO. (2018). UN Tourism Highlights: 2018 Edition. https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/ book/10.18111/9789284419876, Accessed date: 31 July 2019.
43. UNWTO. (2019a). Tourism and Small Islands Developng States: http://sdt.unwto.org/content/tourism-and-small-islands-developing-states-sids , Accessed date: 15 September 2019.
44. UNWTO. (2019b). Observatories: http://insto.unwto.org/observatories/ , Accessed date: 15 September 2019.
45. Uysal, M., Woo, E., &Singal, M. (2012). The tourist area life cycle (TALC) and its effect on the quality-of-life (QOL) of destination community.Handbook of tourism and qualityof-life research (pp. 423–443).Springer Netherlands.
46. Waligo, V. M., Clarke, J., & Hawkins, R. (2013).Implementing sustainable tourism: A multi-stakeholder involvement management framework.Tourism Management, 36, 342–353.
47. Wang, C. C., Cater, C., & Low, T. (2016). Political challenges in community-based ecotourism. Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 24(11), 1555–1568.
48. Wearing, S. L., Stevenson, D., & Young, T. (2010). Tourist cultures: Identity, place and the traveller. Thousand Oaks: SAGE
49. Weaver, D., (2006). Sustainable Tourism.Routledge, London.
50. World Tourism Organisation (2002) Tourism Highlights. Edition (2003). Madrid: WTO. WWF International (2001) Destruction of Mediterranean by mass tourism poses a challenge for industry, warns WWF.WWFInternational press release, 1 March. Retrieved at http://www.panda.org/about_wwf/where_we_work/europe/where/mediterranean/threats.cfm.
51. WTTC e World Travel & Tourism Council, 2017. Travel & tourism: global economic impact & issues 2017. available online at: https://www.wttc.org/-/media/files/ reports/economic-impact-research/regions-2017/world2017.pdf [September, 2018].

Tourist Approaches to Sustainable Destination: Evidence from Eco-Kibbutz Customer Experiences

Letizia Lo Presti, Giulio Maggiore, Mara Mattana

Abstract This paper aims to study the tourist's behavior and attitude towards the sustainable destination during three phases of the decision-making process: choose of destination, booking destination and post-visit. Cluster analysis and discriminant analysis methods are used to detect the main approaches to tourism destination choice basis on the judgment of tourists visiting an eco-kibbutz in Israel. Two main clusters' approaches emerge from the data analysis: an eco-sustainable tourist approach and a self-oriented tourist approach. Between these two clusters, there are differences in their sustainable tourism attitude and behavior during the decision-making process of destination with regards to the environment and social sustainability. The results can guide hospitality and tourism service providers on how to improve customer experience by allocating investment to satisfy the increasingly eco-tourists during all the customer journey.

Key words: sustainable behaviour, sustainable destination, tourism approach, ecotourism, decision-making process.

1 Literature Review

Different movements in favor of social and environmental sustainability are generating, in tourists, pro-sustainable behaviors that are taking shape in a reduction of the impact on the environment of custom choices, consumption of local goods and a preference for services respectful of the local community and environment. As a

[28] Letizia Lo Presti, University of Rome Unitelma Spaienza; email: letizia.lopresti@unitelmasapienza.it

Giulio Maggiore, University of Rome Unitelma Sapienza; email: giulio.maggiore@unitelmasapienza.it

Mara Mattana, University of Rome Unitelma Sapienza; email: m.mattana@studenti.unitelmasapienza.it

consequence, today there is a greater preference for eco-friendly destinations. Ecotourism is a model of sustainable tourism development.

In Ecotourism, tourists, local communities, local governments, and firms directly contribute to the nature protection and community for keeping the natural and local resources unaltered [1, 2, 3]. Ecotourism is included in Sustainable tourism, because it contains all the following elements: a respectful behavior toward environmental and local inhabitants, along with a strong attitude to travel in natural areas. It has the potential in fostering environmental sustainability and economic development of destinations [2]. Recent research shows that the percentage of awareness toward sustainability principles is growing very fast [4]. Today people are conscious about the negative impact of tourism on the environment and they seem open to visiting sustainable destinations and stay in "green" structures. Nevertheless, studies have demonstrated that low support from customers is one of the main barriers to progress towards sustainable tourism. Indeed, despite people's positive attitudes toward sustainability, the results do not support this trend [3].

Only a small number of tourists are highly concerned about the environment and are traveling in an environmentally responsible way, by choosing eco-friendly transportation, buying green products, respecting local communities etc. Budeanu [5] examined the interplay between reasons for tourist's choice of products and services and environmental motivations. The Author individuated two types of barriers: internal and external barriers. The internal barriers refer to the individuals' lack of knowledge and ability to understand the consequences of their acts and habits, while the external barriers concern the convenient to access the environmentally friendly products. Indeed, tourists are willing to pay more to visit a more sustainable tourism destination if the price of the touristic product does not increase.

The reasons for all this are different, for example, the lack of proper regulations, incentives, and guidance from the government. For these reasons, more precise knowledge about tourist environmental profiles is requested. In this regard, insights come from some studies that try to describe eco-tourist profiles [6, 7]. In particular, this is a niche segment that spends more money per person per day at the destination. This segment explicitly states to respect the natural environment and it does not engage in one single activity [6]. While another study individuated three segments (reflective, unconcerned and prosustainable tourist) with different levels of commitment, attitude, knowledge and/or behavior concerning sustainability [7]. Even if the literature demonstrated that positive attitudes towards sustainable tourism and higher levels of affinity towards diversity can predict sustainable tourism choices [8], other studies [2] state that behavior (not intentions) and the destination attractiveness lead to a more realistic estimation and evaluations on future tourist behavior. Nevertheless, it is still unclear if this trend is affecting tourist behavior during three important steps of the purchasing process: choice of the travel destination, booking phase and post-visit actions (satisfaction, word of mouth and re-visit). This information can help service providers with responsive sustainability practices.

2 Method and Empirical Findings

A two-step cluster analysis was used to individuate groups according to the similarity of their attitudinal variables and their behaviours towards sustainability development. It is an appropriate method for clustering large data sets with categorical and continuous variables, and it is broadly used in the studies investigating customer behavior [e.g. 9, 10]. Cluster analysis is an exploratory technique that has been widely applied in diverse disciplines for its partitioning ability.

The analysis carried out through the two-step cluster analysis method identifies the profiles of international tourists based on those behaviors relevant for environmental and social sustainability and detects if there are differences in the choice of travel destination and booking as well as in Tourism Relationship Management Performance (TRM) indicators. A discriminant function analysis is used to assess the stability of the cluster solution.

Based on the questionnaires currently administered to tourists visiting Israel, two main clusters emerge from the data analysis: eco-sustainable tourist approach and self-oriented tourist approach. The first cluster includes those who have active behaviours towards environmental and social issues of the travel destination and who, when choosing and reserving the travel destination, are careful about the sustainability principles. The latter cluster includes those who, despite positively evaluating behaviours that respect the environment and the host society, do not seem to have green attitudes and look to other aspects during the choice and reservation of the travel destination, such as accessibility and comfort. Between these two clusters, there are differences in their sustainable tourism attitude towards the environment; we find the eco-tourist more pro-active in making every effort to conserve the ecosystem, improve environmental conditions for future generations and respect the wildlife and natural habitats than the ego-tourist.

Comparing the main indicators of Tourism Relationship Management Performance between the two clusters, differences emerge as well. While satisfaction and word-of-mouth do not seem to be two aspects that differentiate the behaviours of the tourists in the two clusters, there are differences in the intention to visit the location again, with the eco-tourist less inclined if the holiday location does not show concrete eco-friendly actions.

3 Conclusions and Implications

These findings have very important managerial implications for those who want to position themselves as eco-sustainable destinations because they imply a serious and convincing commitment in favor of social and environmental sustainability. The findings also impose to tourism destinations still lacking actions aimed at social and environmental responsibility to adapt to sustainability principles since these factors are decisive in the choice of tourists before and after the trip.

References

1. Fennell, D. A.: Ecotourism. Routledge, New York (2007)
2. Montaguti, F., Mingotto, E.: Ecotourism in natural parks: An assured sustainable success? Tourist behavior, attractiveness and sustainable development issues in two Italian parks. Tourism Planning & Development, (2005) 12(1), 99-110. doi: 10.1080/21568316.2014.960598
3. Stefanica, M., Vlavian-Gurmeza, M.: Ecotourism–model of sustainable tourist development. Studies and Scientific Researches. Economics Edition, 15, 1-17 doi: 10.29358/sceco.v0i15.161
4. Barber, N. A., Deale, C.: Tapping mindfulness to shape hotel guests' sustainable behavior. Cornell Hospitality Quarterly, (2014), 55(1), 100-114. doi: 10.1177/1938965513496315
5. Budeanu, A.: Sustainable tourist behaviour–a discussion of opportunities for change. International Journal of Consumer Studies, (2007), 31(5), 499-508. doi: 10.1111/j.1470-6431.2007.00606.x
6. Dolnicar, S.: Insights into sustainable tourists in Austria: A data-based a priori segmentation approach. Journal of Sustainable Tourism, (2004), 12(3), 209-218. doi: 10.1080/09669580408667234
7. López-Sánchez, Y., Pulido-Fernández, J. I.: In search of the pro-sustainable tourist: A segmentation based on the tourist "sustainable intelligence". Tourism Management Perspectives, (2016) 17, 59-71. doi: 10.1016/j.tmp.2015.12.003
8. Passafaro, P., Cini, F., Boi, L., D'Angelo, M., Heering, M. S., Luchetti, L., ... & Sassu, F.: The "sustainable tourist": Values, attitudes, and personality traits. Tourism and Hospitality Research, (2015) 15(4), 225-239. doi: 10.1177/1467358415576086
9. Marino, V. and Lo Presti, L. (2019), "Stay in touch! New insights into end-user attitudes towards engagement platforms", Journal of Consumer Marketing, Vol. 36 No. 6, pp. 772-783. https://doi.org/10.1108/JCM-05-2018-2692
10. Athanassopoulos, A. D. (2000). Customer satisfaction cues to support market segmentation and explain switching behavior. Journal of business research, 47(3), 191-207.

THE NEW WAVE OF DISRUPTION AND THE EVOLUTION IN INSURANCE SERVICES FOR THE ITALIAN TRAVEL SECTOR.

Giovanni Di Trapani[29]

ABSTRACT The aim of this work is to investigate the evolution of the behaviour of the tourist/consumer who takes an increasingly hybrid form (prosumer) and simultaneously, to investigate the relationship with insurance companies which, necessarily, must strive for a "seamless" experience, with no solution of continuity between reality and the virtual.

Prosumers approach mobile internet and virtual mobility, continuous connectivity, the access to the service "anytime, anyway, anywhere" with the consequent growth in the number and change in the interaction methods with the tourism companies. A phenomenon which forces insurance companies to re-design the customer journey with a logic of "seamless experience", an interruption-free shopping experience enabling customers to enjoy physical and digital services on an ongoing basis.

KeyWords: *Insurance, Digital Transformation, CRM, InsurTech, Tourist coverage.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In the insurance sector, the innovation comes from changes of the environment and of the market. The results of these changes are concrete and proactive issues for the insurance company, in terms of reactivity and proactivity: identifying developments in the external context and forecasting change.

Insurance Innovation needs several conditions (internal and external) and its underlying assumption is the creation of new ideas, although only the internal organizational context of such companies contributes efficiently in the creative process of new ideas(Selleri, 2014).

Innovative capacity is a complex phenomena affecting a wide number of subjects and institutions: the result of human intelligence, the application of

[29] *CNR – IRISS g.ditrapani@iriss.cnr.it*

available knowledge and the resources allocated to R&D. All new initiatives need adequate financial support, a capital market able to focus on the most promising projects in the medium to long term, which are often not covered by capital guarantees.Also for Insurance Companies, the innovation should be related to the conversion of new ideas in new products and / or in new processes, designed to modify the insurance company's position on the Market to generate, protect and expand its competitive advantage.The innovation of these companies, and specifically for their management features, has to be properly framed in order to capture its characteristic strokes(Aicardi & Pompella, 2007).

In order to provide a focused response to the growing policyholder expectations, the insurance companies aim to modify the risk coverage and additional services of their insurance products through time.The insurance company operates in a network structure and, therefore, is called upon to interact continuously and to develop a complex system of communications with numerous other actors, located in different nodes.Players, ascribable not only to Agents, brokers, banks, financial networks.But also to utilities, to the other insurance and reinsurance companies (through which it operates co-insurance, reinsurance, and realignment), and to other financial intermediaries(Coviello & Di Trapani, 2010).

2. A NEW WAVE OF DISRUPTIONS INTO THE ITALIAN TOURISM MARKET.

Innovative and disruptive technologies are bringing new demands to bear. In the tourism sector, consumer-spending decisions dominate by preference and experience.An industry that is developing at an unceasing rate, where the combination of mobile devices, big data and artificial intelligence will transform the whole market.

A market in which consumer expectations increasingly play a role as well as being faced with a new wave of "disruption" (Di Trapani, 2018b) affecting operators in general and traditional business models naturally. In Literature, a lot to use the term disruption and disruptive innovation interchangeably with every kind needed of innovative solution(Coviello & Di Trapani, 2016).

Use of the disruption concept, highly onomatopoeic and capable to convey the impression of an upward wave able to crumble anything along its journey, is not new.

The best-known example of disruption:

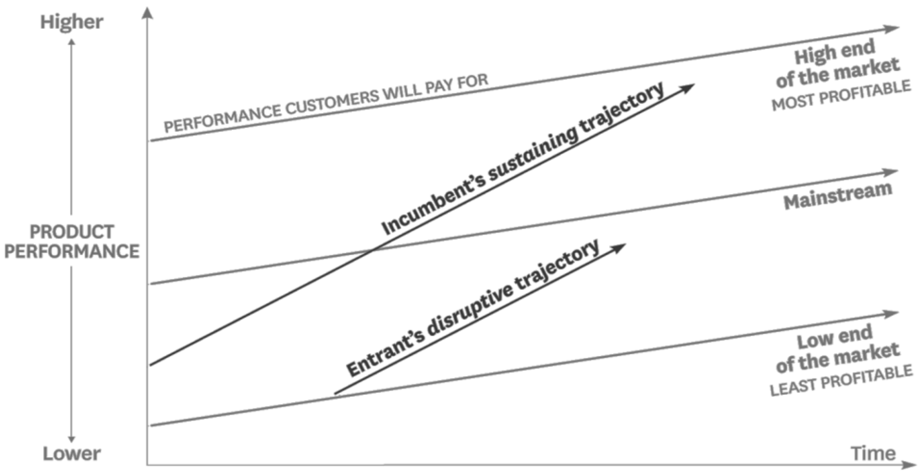
The smartphone disappears the clock. Now it' s selling, but it' s no more for time!

The difference in understanding the distinction made between innovation and distruptive innovation needs to be explained: how we see the new technologies as well as the new systems and how we approach the desire to be innovative.

Researchers, authors and advisors many use the term "disruptive innovation" to refer a process where a company with fewer resources and a smaller size can successfully tackle a dominant industry.Disruptive innovation are made possible by starting out in two different markets which are neglected in the past:

- New-market footholds - disruptors make a market where they didn't exist.
- Low-end footholds - Incumbents usually strive for better and more profitable and discerning customers with better products and services as well as reduced attention to their customers.

Figure1 *Visual Representation of Theory of Disruptive Innovation*



Source – (Christensen & Bower, 1995)

The diagram (Figure1) shows product throughput trajectories (red lines indicate that products or services improve over time) versus customer throughput trajectories (blue lines show customers' propensity to afford for their services).With the introduction of higher quality products or services (higher red line) to meet the higher end of the market (where profitability is higher), the companies currently present in the market outperform the requirements of low-end customers and many traditional customers.This opens up the opportunity of new entrants to penetrate markets considered less profitable by incumbents(Christensen & Bower, 1995).

New competitors on a Disruptive trajectory (lower red line) can improve their offer performance by moving into a higher end market (where profitability is also higher for them) and defy the predominance of other incumbents.

A series of ongoing Disruptions started prior also to the latest ICT wave, however, with the introduction of smartphones and tablets.Changing economic periods are naturally a source of major fears looking at the disruption, as well as opportunities to reposition in a new market.However, opportunities must be pursued resolutely, focusing on resources for the future and not wasting them - more than is necessary for the transition process to be simpler, more socially acceptable - in artificially maintaining a reality that is destined for safe death.

In the last years, innovation has changed its own nature: it is quicker and has far stronger effects. The sharp drop in innovation, IT and R&D costs have reduced and changed the life-cycle of change.For companies to be successful or simply to cope successfully from the big bang disruption, it is necessary first to learn the rules of new strategy and competition.

3. MULTI-CHANNEL COMMUNICATION FOR THE PROVISION OF INSURANCE SERVICE.

The complexity of the information to provide and the services to deliver, the diversity of the audience that businesses are confronted with, increase the necessity of diversifying the ways of contact with customers.The high push for multi-channel is attributable to new technologies which have made several communication tools widely used.

Multichannel, though, is not just meant as "use of different channels", it is also a genuine client-relationship strategy.Multichannel communication is a crucial factor for the success of the supply for services, an effective management method and the performance monitoring system provided, in a perspective of Citizen/Customer Relationship Management(CRM).

Multichannel therefore means using and combining several channels and tools, but it is not confined to the latter: multi-channel is a systemic approach to managing communication activities, supported with the implementation of new technologies.In Italy, too, we are witnessing an increasing multichannel diffusion.60% of the population over fourteen years old improves their purchasing process with a mix of traditional and digital touchpoints, where multi-channel is no longer an isolated or voluntary factor in the customer journey ((Nielsen, 2016).

The significant shift in consumer behavioris being accompanied by a first relevant data: 63% of Users are connected to the Internet via smartphones.Users using the tablet to gain access to the web are also increasing and there are fewer accesses from the PC. As a result, the role played by the physical point of sale is also changing, no longer and not only a touchpoint for direct sales, but also a reference point for gathering information, providing additional services and a preferred setting for the brand-consumer relationship. In some cases, to become a strategic place where personal experiential paths with the brand can be built. Clusters are changing as well, as new ones are emerging and new patterns are emerging. In fact, we now distinguish between InfoShopper and eShopper. InfoShoppers represent individuals who use digital touchpoints only for product and/or brand information. E-Shoppers, instead, are all those people who use the network both to inquire and to buy, and prefer the web to the physical point of sale(Cini, 2016).

In 2018, the travel sector achieved a volume of sales of 58.3 billion euros, an increase of 2% compared to 2017. The Travel market is becoming increasingly digital, and includes all types of tourism, from culture to wellness, from nature to tourist attractions up to amusement parks. The number of bookings through smartphones increased by 46 percent compared to 2017. The web is mainly used, to the extent of '83 percent, for informational queries, for searches oriented to obtain information about the destination and the offer of tourist services and places to visit.

Italian tourists/consumers are now used to living the network in everywhere logic and in a seamless perspective, that is, as a unique environment composed of a multiplicity of channels. Changes in purchasing methods and brand interrelation also present clear opportunities for the insurance industry. In comparison to a journey custodian where more and more offline and online processes are combined, an integrated multi-channel strategy is required to ensure an "anytime, anyway, anywhere" service, by offering a seamless day-to-day experience from agency to digital.

Experience, safety and minimal decision-making effort dominate consumer purchasing choices in the Travel industry too.(Cohen, Prayag, & Moital, 2014). A constantly evolving sector, where the mix of mobile devices, large data and artificial intelligence will transform the market overall. A very expected sector for consumers, now facing a wave of "perturbations", with a huge impact on all actors and, of course, on traditional business models.

In Figure 2 three key phases of the clients' tourist journey can be identified: before, during and after.

Figure2*The customer tourism journey.*

Source Social Media and the Travel & HospitalitySector

Against a backdrop such as the current one, in which tourism is constantly growing and changing, it is crucial to be able to anticipate market tendencies and trends. Mainly because, today, the operators are still struggling to get used to continuous changes, accustomed for years to a regularity and automaticity in tourist flows, when the fidelity of visitors did not seem a dream but a reality(Hsu, Cai, & Li, 2010).

There's no doubt: tourism has really changed.It has suffered from very strong disruption.What matters is that today, more than ever, innovation and the ability to reinvent oneself are necessary to ensure steady income.Above and beyond, what really matters for destinations and tourism businesses is to be attentive to market and demand evolutions, so that proposals, services and products can be adapted.The current tourism, both the Italian and the international one, complies to the parameters of globalization.

4. THE DIFFERENT INSURANCE POLICY OPTIONS FOR THE ITALIAN TOURIST SECTOR.

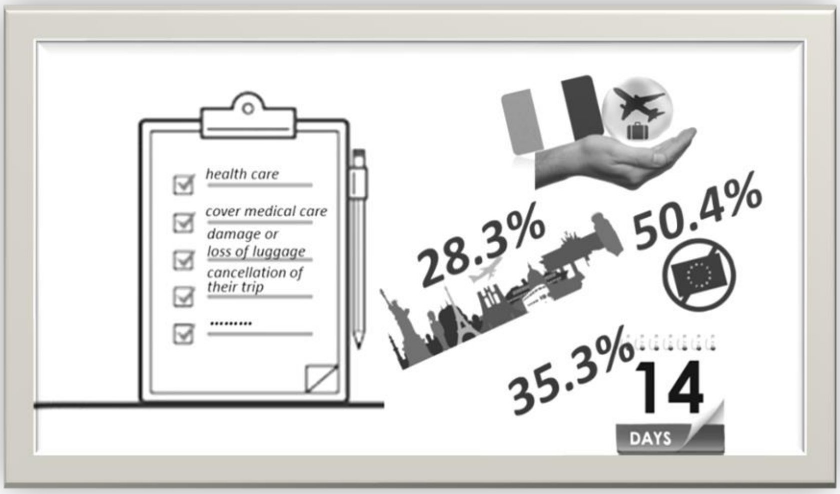
More than 20% of the 1.2 billion tourists who travel around the world annually request assistance; health and safety are still the primary insurance product.

According to a survey commissioned by Allianz Global Assistance - a leading company in travel insurance, assistance and personal services - 92.8% of tourists demand the assistance of travel insurance during their holidays, to recover ordinary illnesses or minor injuries, and only 7.2% require assistance for problems more serious because they need medical transport, a medical operation or the use of orthopedic surgery(Coviello & Di Trapani, 2015).

However, travel insurance is still little used by Italians.Almost 70% are familiar with travel insurance, but less than 15% are insured.Italians who travel insurance are more inclined to cover themselves in regards to health care and coverage of medical expenses, baggage loss or damage and cancellation of the trip.People who purchase these insurance policies are used to often travel, they mainly go to long-haul destinations, for longer periods of time.

The study shows, in fact, that 28.3% of Italians who buy travel insurance is a so-called "hard-traveller", 50.4% travel primarily to destinations outside Europe and 35.3% do so generally for longer periods, more than 14 days.

Figure3 *The demand for assistance with travel insurance during the holidays*



The most well-known policies among Italians are health care and medical expenses coverage (45.9%), cover for loss of or damage to luggage (36.8%) and travel cancellation coverage (30.1%).

Figure4 *The most well-known policies among Italians*

With security becoming more and more a fixed factor for those who decide to reserve or plan a holiday, travel insurance has become less and less a minor issue and increasingly a necessity to keep in mind.

As insurance becomes progressively more integrated into ecosystems like home sharing and travel sharing, insurers are testing episodic insurance products, i.e. instant insurance.Partnerships are growing, the reaction of customers is just waiting to be grasped, but the trend is in progress and in 2019 new applications of instant insurance may emerge for non-life insurance.

5. NEW TRENDS IN THE INSURANCE MARKET AND ANALYTICS FOR THE TOURISM SECTOR.

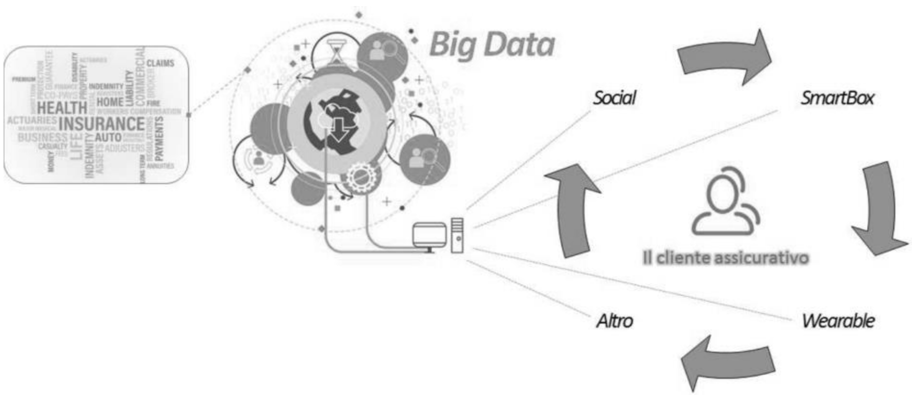
Knowledge and the ability of data synthesizing represent the forefront of economic theories for insurance companies; elements that are at the basis of change, innovation and development.In a context of increasingly tough competition and more and more complex challenges, innovation is the primary source of competitive advantage.(Miller & Wedell-Wedellsborg, 2013; O'Sullivan & Dooley, 2008).

Most insurance companies are approaching Analytics to improve efficiency and remove typical insurance barriers.(Ollila & Elmquist, 2011). To be innovative, insurance companies must be increasingly empathetic and must understand their behaviour by observing potential consumers in the tourism sector.

The analyses carried out by actuaries have always been considered of fundamental importance for the survival and profitability of an insurer.But one of the main consequences of an approach to Big Data Analytics is found in the travel insurance sector.As a rule, the companies relied on the mere evaluation of historical data, i.e. internal data.Recently, on the other side, insurers are increasingly incorporating reliability ratings based on new elements of analysis into their analyses: the behaviour of tourists(Di Trapani, 2018b).

Recently, a new wave of innovation and advanced analytics applications has emerged across all types of insurance product portfolio.Although insurers have been lagging far behind other sectors (e.g. the financial industry), they are catching up in the adoption of (predictive) forecasting models and are slowly seeing process optimization, particularly in sales and marketing(Di Trapani, 2017).The flow of digital data from social media, multimedia devices, smartphones, computers and other technological devices is increasingly providing insurance companies with a comprehensive source of information on tourist behavior.

Figure5 Digital data flow



Source: Di Trapani G., 2018 "Il ruolo della Big Data Analytics nella trasformazione digitale dei servizi assicurativi" ClioEdu 3, pag 99.

Real-time monitoring and management is radically changing the relationship between insurers and tourists. For example, in Travel Insurance, new technologies can help to track tourists' behaviour in real time and restore their data to the insurance company.It is therefore to be hoped that this phenomenon, as in other areas such as car liability, can influence the travel behaviour of potential customers.

The revolution in question consists in the development of new generation digital platforms and a back-office infrastructure able to sustain Omni-experience processes, services and products that meet the expectations of both tourists and intermediaries.The model to emerge, then, is the living services: a customer-centric approach that, by combining digital technologies and partnerships with specialized operators, converts the offer of companies from passive to active.In other words, it is able to learn from the behaviour of tourists and to provide relevant and contextualized services, while integrating the world of online with offline assistance.

With the application tools of Big Data, predictive analytics and cognitive (Di Trapani, 2018a), the data inferred from the visiting behaviour of tourists are converted into a true and proper source of competitive advantage.

6. CONCLUSION

Innovating for insurance companies means therefore combining the distinctive elements of the traditional approach based on physical contact in agencies and the flexibility of digital media in all phases of the customer journey:

- Searching for information, also and especially in a "comparative" logic;
- The purchase of products and services, including by means of distribution channels free from "physical points of contact" and accessible throughout the day;
- The "continuous" after-sales management system, also in this case by means of a plurality of contact methods (e.g. "on line", "mobility"), characterized by the elimination of possible restrictions imposed on the opening times of "physical" sales points, which can be adapted and combined according to the customer's demands.

Insurance companies, especially traditional ones but also direct ones, in order to interact with a customer who puts more and more importance in flexibility and innovation, have to think over strategies, products and processes to make them faster, more efficient, digital and innovative.

Figure 6 *Digital interactions in the insurance industry*

So the combination of physical and digital space is the focus of the discussion on Digital Transformation and its impact on patterns of behaviour. Creating continuity in these two spaces and offering to customers the ability to interact, inquire and buy by switching between them, ensuring the customer a seamless experience, became a priority for insurance companies.

The tourist-consumer is evolving as a user of online services to a user of digital technologies in an enhanced form, basing his customer journey on moving from digital touchpoints to physical ones and integrated multi-channel. This type of advanced user is defined in the literature as everywhere-shopper: a customer who optimizes time and activities accessing services by smartphone, moving across the online and offline; conscious of the "seamless experience" and demands a high level of service. The consumer-tourist exploits technology to scan the purchase process and often uses the physical channel to showcase online purchases or to create an "experiential" space. (i,e, experiential room, co-thinking…). Everywhere-shopper is also searching in its interaction with the insurance world for such an hybrid approach, where offline and online phases are alternating in a seamless experience and a "anytime, anyway and anywhere" service is guaranteed.

REFERENCES

1. Aicardi, P., & Pompella, M. (2007). *Innovazione, strategie ed esperienze nel settore assicurativo. Dalla bancassicurazione al «private insurance»* (I). Giappichelli Ed.
2. Christensen, C. M., & Bower, J. L. (1995). Disruptive Technologies: Catching the Wave. *Harvard Business Review 73*, *1*(January–February), 43–53.
3. Cini, S. (2016). Digital Shoppers in the Age of Impatience. In *Atti del Convegno*

Shopping (R)evolution.
4. Cohen, S. A., Prayag, G., & Moital, M. (2014). Consumer behaviour in tourism: Concepts, influences and opportunities. *Current Issues in Tourism*, *17*(10), 872 –909.
5. Coviello, A., & Di Trapani, G. (2010). The management of the relationship with the customer/insured: CRM. *Economy & Business*, *4*, 501–509.
6. Coviello, A., & Di Trapani, G. (2015). The system risk in smaller Italian companies. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, *9*, *2015*. Retrieved from http://www.scientific-publications.net
7. Coviello, A., & Di Trapani, G. (2016). ICT and new Service experience in italian insurance industry. In T. Russo-Spena & C. Mele (Eds.), *26th Annual RESER Conference* (pp. 512–517). Napoli: RESER, University of Naples "Federico II" 2016. Retrieved from http://www.reser2016.com/
8. Di Trapani, G. (2017). Le insurtech: nuove sfide ed opportunità per le compagnie assicurative. *Rivista Elettronica Di Diritto, Economia, Management*, *3*, 79–93. Retrieved from https://www.clioedu.it/marketplace/elenco-completo/item/rivista-elettronica-di-diritto-economia-management-n-3-2017
9. Di Trapani, G. (2018a). Big Data Driven Marketing: innovazione e cambiamento nel settore assicurativo. *Rivista Elettronica Di Diritto, Economia, Management*, *3*, 80–91. Retrieved from https://www.clioedu.it/marketplace/elenco-completo/item/rivista-elettronica-di-diritto-economia-management-n-3-2018
10. Di Trapani, G. (2018b). Il ruolo della Big Data Analytics: la trasformazione digitale dei servizi assicurativi. *Rivista Elettronica Di Diritto, Economia, Management*, *3*, 92–104. Retrieved from https://www.clioedu.it/marketplace/elenco-completo/item/rivista-elettronica-di-diritto-economia-management-n-3-2018
11. Hsu, C. H. C., Cai, L. A., & Li, M. (2010). Expectation, motivation, and attitude: A tourist behavioral model. *Journal of Travel Research*, *49*(3), 282 –296.
12. Miller, P., & Wedell-Wedellsborg, T. (2013). *Innovation as Usual: How to Help Your People Bring Great Ideas to Life*. Harvard Business Review Press.
13. Nielsen. (2016). *The consumer evolution*. Retrieved from https://www.adcgroup.it/static/upload/pre/0001/presentazione_osservatorio-multicanalita-2018.pdf
14. O'Sullivan, D., & Dooley, L. (2008). *Appling innovation*. SAGE Publications.
15. Ollila, S., & Elmquist, M. (2011). Managing open innovation: Exploring challenges at the interfaces of an open innovation arena. *Creativity and Innovation Management*, *20*(4), 273–283.
16. Selleri, L. (2014). *Strategie e marketing dell'impresa di assicurazione. Testo e casi*. EDUCatt Università Cattolica.

Investment dynamics of tourism micro level firms…how to support local economic development?

Rui Costa[30], Carlos Costa[31]

ABSTRACT The economic, social and political significance of the tourism sector is an unquestionable reality. Its expression and ability to induce economic development in terms of other sectors, is increasingly important.

Despite the dynamics shown, the tourism sector faces a number of structural problems to be solved. In recent years, tourism in Portugal has been growing in quantity, but sometimes without much quality. Moreover, we could observe the existence of cases of excessive spatial concentration in certain areas of the territory considered and presenting different dynamics of tourism growth and development.

The aim of this research is to analyze how the investment dynamics of small and micro-sized enterprises in the tourism sector can contribute to the creation of a strong and dynamic business sector, that contributes to the qualification, diversification and improvement of destinations, and reduce the spatial concentration of the investment in major tourist destinations to areas where the tourism sector is not yet so developed.

This research allows concluding that it is not enough for the tourism sector to create wealth in terms of investment, income and employment. It is also crucial that the sector plays a central role in qualifying, diversifying and improving the quality of supply, so that economic gains are also conducive to the improvement of the quality of life of local populations and local development in general.

Key words: *Tourism, Private investment, Small and micro-sized enterprises, Investment dynamics, Portugal*

INTRODUCTION

[30] University of Aveiro/Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, Management and Industrial Engineering, Campus Universitário Santiago 3810-193 Aveiro - E-mail: <rui.costa@ua.pt>

[31] University of Aveiro/Full Professor, Department of Economics, Management and Industrial Engineering, Campus Universitário Santiago, E-mail: ccosta@ua.pt

The economic, social and political significance of the tourism sector is an unquestionable reality. Its expression and ability to induce economic development in terms of other sectors, is increasingly important.

The private sector of tourism demonstrates a great vitality and dynamic, however this sector is mainly constituted of small and micro-sized enterprises, which present a set of constraints in terms of financing and investment. Despite the dynamics shown, the tourism sector faces a number of structural problems to be solved.

It's important to evaluate the investment and the financing system in the tourism sector, to understand the philosophy and objectives that guide the entire system (strategic policy) and the territorial and sectoral dynamics of tourism enterprises.

To this end, this paper is organized as follows. After the introduction, the second section presents the theoretical framework of the specificities and importance of small and micro-sized enterprises in the tourism sector. The third section describes the research methodology, the sample and the data collected. The fourth section presents the analysis and discussion of results. Finally, section five covers the study's synthesis and main conclusions, and future research studies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The tourism private sector demonstrates a great vitality and dynamic, and plays a central role in tourism. These enterprises provide the majority of tourism services and activities, and perform most of the investment in the different subsectors that comprise the value chain of the sector. However, the tourism private sector is mainly constituted of small and micro-sized enterprises, which, given their small size and family structure present a set of constraints which hinder their growth and development.

Many studies that have been conducted in this area highlights the main advantages of this type of enterprises in terms of job creation (Costa, 2012; Costa and Costa, 2013; Getz, Carlsen & Morrison, 2004; Wanhill, 2000); destination competitiveness (Jones & Haven-Tang, 2005; Novelli, Schmitz & Spencer, 2005; OECD, 2008); economic development (Andriotis, 2002; Armstrong & Taylor, 2000; Joo & Rosentraub, 2009; Milne & Ateljevic, 2001; Tinsley & Lynch, 2001); creation of business networks (Breda et al., 2005, 2006; Buhalis & Peters, 2006; Costa, 2005, 2012; Ozturk, 2009; Tremblay & Wegner, 2009); effectiveness and efficiency (Audretsch, 1999;

Mouzas, 2006), and innovation and entrepreneurship (Buhalis, 2002; Jones & Tilley, 2003).

According to Thomas et al. (2011), despite frequent references in the literature, this theme remains under-theorized and under-researched. "Sub-theorized, in so far as have been few attempts to explain how the characteristics of these organizations can be understood, trying to describe only its characteristics and behavior (e.g., its genesis, growth and its articulation with the rest of the socio-economic environment in which it is located)"(Thomas et al., 2011, p.964).

The same applies to job creation and the importance of large enterprises in the creation of a greater number of jobs. No particular attention has been paid to the debate on whether job creation is driven by small and micro-sized enterprises or of large sized enterprises (Bridge, O'Neill, Crombie, 2008; Steinhoff and Burgess, 1993; Thomas, 2000).

In Portugal, according to statistical data provided by Statistics Portugal (INE), and considering the Code of Economic Activities that integrate the characteristic activities defined by the Tourism Satellite Account, 99.6% of the companies that comprise the business structure of the tourism sector are small or medium-sized firms, being 96.7% of them micro scale companies.

It is, thus, essential to understand the dynamics and the main characteristics of this type of enterprises in order to articulate and adapt the definition of policies and strategies for increasing and strengthening the tourism private sector (Costa, 2005, 2012; Costa and Costa, 2013; Graetz and Becton, 2001; Hall, 1995; Nilsson, Petersen and Wanhill, 2005; Phelps, 1996; Thomas, 1995; Thomas and Thomas, 2006).

METHOD

This research is based on a quantitative analysis, of private investment in Portugal with public funding, of the two periods of investment: the 2nd CSF (1994-1999) and the 3rd CSF (2000-2006), and intends to demonstrate the importance of the small and micro-sized enterprises in the development of a solid and dynamic tourism sector.

Considering this data, statistical analyses were made, combining the following variables: (i) total investment; (ii) eligible investment; (iii) incentive, and (iv) number of jobs created. The analysis was based on the following parameters: (i) the importance of small and micro-sized enterprises in terms of number of projects and total investment; (ii) the capacity of small and micro-sized enterprises in absorving incentive per project; and (iii) their capacity in terms of jobs created.

RESULTS

In the period of 1994-2006, 1,823 enterprises had 1,983 approved projects in the tourism sector. The approved projects involved a total investment of 2,076,984,181.18 Euros, an eligible investment of 1,844,175,437.09 Euros, an assigned incentive of 724,817,847.98 Euros, and 8,607 jobs created.

Considering the **total investment**, it is observed that 91.2% of the enterprises are small and micro-sized and executed a total investment of 58%. Taking into attention only the micro-sized enterprises, it is noted that 65.7% of them are responsible for only 10.2% of the total investment, which demonstrate the lesser representativeness of these enterprises in terms of total investment capacity.

The **number of projects** executed by small and micro-sized enterprises represents 88.5% of all investment projects implemented, which represents 42% of the total investment in the period 1994-2006. Focusing the analysis only in the small and micro-sized enterprises it's possible to demonstrate their difficulty in terms of investment, as these enterprises obtained the approval of 62.9% of the projects, representing only a total investment of 10.2%.

In terms of **incentive obtained**, small and micro-sized enterprises receive, overall, most of the incentive (51.9%), slightly higher than the incentive granted to medium and large enterprises (48.1%). Considering only micro-sized enterprises (65.7%), we concluded that these companies have the smallest part of the total allocated incentive (13.8%), although they represent the majority of enterprises in the tourism sector over this period. The number of large (2.8%) and medium-sized (6%) enterprises that invested in the tourism sector is low; however, the incentive granted is clearly higher, 30.4% for medium-sized enterprises and 27.6% for large enterprises, than that obtained by micro-sized enterprises.

The data analysis also shows that micro-sized enterprises had a lower ability for **job creation,** given the number of enterprises obtaining funding (65.7%) and the rate of job creation (16.7%), compared to enterprises of other dimensions (small, medium and large). Small enterprises show the highest capacity of job creation (36.3%), however, large (4.1% projects) and medium-sized (7.5% projects) enterprises have the best ratio of job creation, the number of projects implemented by these type of enterprises allowed the creation of 22.3%and 24.7% of jobs, respectively.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The tourism private sector shows a great dynamic in terms of implementation of projects and investment in the tourism sector, mainly constituted by small and micro-sized enterprises. It is observed that 91.2% of enterprises are small and micro-sized and executed a total investment of 58%, reflecting a high investment capacity by project, compared to the medium and large enterprises.

For the majority of investment projects in the tourism sector, between 1994 and 2006, small and micro-sized companies absorb most of the incentives and are responsible for the generation of a great number of jobs, compared to medium and large-sized firms, that demonstrates a high investment capacity per project, allowing them to get a higher incentive value per project, and also demonstrating a greater ability to create jobs.

The analysis of the investment and the financing system in the tourism sector is very important, because it will help to understand the philosophy and objectives that guide the entire system (strategic policy) and the territorial and sectorial dynamics of tourism enterprises. The tourism private sector is central in terms of investment, income and employment, but also in terms of the qualification, diversification and improvement of the quality of the supply, inducing gains and improvement in the quality of life of the local people.

REFERENCES

1. Andriotis, K. (2002). Scale of hospitality firms and local economic development: Evidence from Crete. *Tourism Management, 23*, 333-341.
2. Armstrong, H., & Taylor, J. (2000). *Regional economics and policy* (3rd ed.) Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
3. Audretsch, D. B. (1999). Small firms and efficiency. In Z. J. Acs (Ed.), *Are small firms important?: Their role and impact*. Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
4. Breda, Z., Costa, R., & Costa, C. (2005). Clustering and networking the tourism development process: A market driven approach for a small backwards tourist region located in central Portugal (Caramulo). In C. Petrillo & J. Sawrbrooke (Eds.), *Networking and partnerships in destination development and management* (Vol. II, pp. 469-484). Naples: Enzo Albano.
5. Breda, Z., Costa, R., & Costa, C. (2006) *Do clusters and networks make small places beautiful?: The case of Caramulo (Portugal)*. In L. Lazzeretti & C. Petrillo (eds), *Tourism local systems and networking*. (pp. 67-82). Oxford: Elsevier.

6. Buhalis, D. (2002) *Conference report: Entrepreneurship in tourism and the contexts of experience economy*. *Tourism Management, 23*, 366-378.
7. Buhalis, D., & Peters, M. (2006). *SMEs in tourism*. In D. Buhalis & C. Costa (eds), *Tourism management dynamics: Trends, management and tools* (pp. 116-129). Burlington: Butterworth-Heinemann/Elsevier.
8. Costa, R. (2005). *Avaliação do potencial de crescimento e desenvolvimento das pequenas e micro empresas do sector do turismo*, Master dissertation, University of Aveiro, Aveiro.
9. Costa, R. (2012). Dinâmicas territoriais geradas pelo investimento privado no turismo, PhD Thesis, University of Aveiro, Aveiro.
10. Costa, R., & Costa, C. (2013). Importância das empresas de pequena e micro dimensão em termos de investimento e criação de emprego no sector do turismo no período de 1994-2006. *Journal of Tourism and Development, 19*, 85-98.
11. Getz, D., Carlsen, J., & Morrison, A. (2004). *The family business in tourism and hospitality*. Oxfordshire: CABI Publishing.
12. Graetz, B., & Becton, S. (2001). Small business: Small minded? Training attitudes and needs of the tourism and hospitality industry. *International Journal of Tourism Research, 3*, 105-113.
13. Hall, G. (1995). *Surviving and prospering in the small firm sector*. London: Routledge.
14. Jones, E., & Haven-Tang, C. (eds.) (2005). *Tourism SMEs, service quality and destination competitiveness*. Wallingford: CABI.
15. Jones, O., & Tilley, F. (2003). *Competitive advantage in SMEs: Organising for innovation and change*. West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons Ltd.
16. Joo, M., & Rosentraub, M. S. (2009). Tourism and economic development: Which investments produce gains for regions?. *Tourism Management, 30*, 759-770.
17. Milne, S., & Ateljevic, I. (2001). Tourism, economic development and the global-local nexus: Theory embracing complexity. *Tourism Geographies, 3*(4), 369-393.
18. Mouzas, S. (2006). Efficiency versus effectiveness in business networks. *Journal of Business Research, 59*, 1124-1132.
19. Nilsson, P. A., Petersen, T., & Wanhill, S. (2005). Public support for tourism SMEs in peripheral areas: The arjeplog project, northern Sweden. *The Service Industries Journal, 25*(4), 579-599.
20. Novelli, M., Schmitz, B., & Spencer, T. (2005). Networks, clusters and innovation in tourism: A UK experience. *Tourism Management, 27*, 1141-1152.
21. OECD (2008). *OECD competitiveness and sustainable global tourism markets*, Briefing paper for the high level ministerial tourism committee meeting, Riva del la Garde, Italy.
22. Ozturk, H. E. (2009). The role of cluster types and firm size in designing the level of network relations: The experience of the Antalya tourism regions. *Tourism Management, 30*, 589-597.
23. Phelps, N. (1996). Small firms and local economic development in South London. *Local Economy, 11*, 202-220.
24. Thomas, R. (1995). Public policy and small hospitality firms. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 7*(2/3), 69-73.
25. Thomas, R., & Thomas, H. (2006). Micro politics and micro firms: A case study of tourism policy formation and change. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development, 13*(1), 100-114.
26. Tinsley, R., & Lynch, P. (2001). Small tourism business networks and destination development. *International Journal of Hospitality Management, 20*, 367-378.
27. Tremblay, P,, & Wegner, A. (2009). *The costs and implications of inter-firm collaboration in remote area tourism*. Queensland: CRC for Sustainable Tourism Pty Ltd.
28. Wanhill, S. (2000). Small and medium tourism enterprises. *Annals of Tourism Research, 27*(1), 132-147.

Budget Accommodation: Social Media and its uses

Sara Dominguez-Navarro and M. Rosario González-Rodríguez
Facultad de Turismo y Finanzas, Universidad de Sevilla
sardomnav@gmail.com , rosaglez@us.es

Abstract Social Media emerged in the late twentieth century and quickly penetrated most aspects of people's lives, including travel choices and travel planning. Over the course of 3 decades, platforms such as Instagram and Facebook became a commonplace source of information, both for travellers and travel business. Despite the shift in corporate practices and values that were brought upon by Social Media's overwhelming power, there is insufficient research on the topic of Social Media in Tourism - particularly regarding budget travelling. This study aims to help bridge some of that gap, by offering theoretical advice and practical guidelines that a budget accommodation venue can follow in order to improve their Social Media performance.

Key words: Social Media, Budget Accommodation, Facebook, Instagram, Tourism, Hospitality

1 Introduction

The main focus of this research is to compare and analyse the opportunities and weaknesses of Instagram and Facebook platforms, within the context of a Social Media strategy, applied at a Budget Accommodation venue.
The venue that was observed for the purposes of the research is an upscale backpackers' hostel, located in the centre of the capital city of Andalusia - Seville.
An amateur Community Manager with two decades of experience in professional photography was in charge of the hostel's Social Media campaign. Certain patterns of similarity between the two platforms were demonstrated, as well as substantial differences that will be discussed further on in the paper.
Seville is a tourist-friendly city that has boasted a steady growth in tourism arrivals and numbers of new venues over the past few years, as well as in the overall quality of its tourism product. The tourist season is moderately steady in Seville, with peaks in spring, autumn and early winter, and slight drops in arrivals during the months of July, August, November and December. A wide range of events and rich cultural heritage make this city a well-rounded destination (Visita Sevilla, 2018).
Since Social Media emerged and penetrated most aspects of people's lives, the business sector around the world was hard-pressed to adjust to the changes that impacted marketing efforts in various ways (Black-Shaw, 2006). Potential clients had to be targeted in more personal ways, using various social platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010; Smith 2018). This involved making a conscious effort to monitor the behavioural patterns and needs of those clients, using emerging tools and statistical online applications, in order to fashion more genuine-looking campaigns (Capatina, et al. 2017). Secondly, marketing strategies that involved a two-way communication between the business and the market were needed, as customers and potential customers gained the power to openly judge and

demand online. New PR models and increased corporate social responsibility became necessary (Miguens et al. 2008).

2 Literature Review

Social Media provides an online environment where free exchange of thoughts, opinions and personalised content is encouraged, through the use of specialized applications and websites (BlackShaw and Nazzaro 2006). The latest technological advancements, combined with the people's need to share and connect in a safe way, have turned Social Media into one of the most widely utilised communication outlets that affects most aspects of people's lives (Kim, et. al 2015; Tang-Mui and Chan-Eang, 2017).

Tourism, as opposed to Social Media, essentially refers to changing one's physical environment (for business or leisure) (UNWTO, 2007). Nevertheless, socializing and experiencing novelty are among the core motivators for travelling. Therefore, it can be noted that Social Media and tourism are not unrelated, in regards to the needs that the two activities fulfill (Lickorish, and Jenkins.1997; Safko, 2012). Poon (1993) and Sheldon (1997) demonstrated that tourism and the Internet technology grew hand-in-hand over the last decades of the twentieth century. Sharing holiday experiences, watching recordings with friends and showing holiday photographs, gradually became an online activity that's usually performed on Social Media platforms (Van-Dijck, 2013).

According to Buhalis and Law (2008), trip planning and tourism research transformed entirely since the occurrence of the Internet. Social Media are becoming the preferred platforms, not only for sharing user-generated content, but also for getting an idea of what the experience will include at a specific venue and destination (Miguens et. al 2008). As Miguens et. al pointed out, the content that exists on these platforms guides and threatens the companies' marketing efforts, creating an exceedingly competitive business environment, where reputation matters more than ever; businesses are ultimately forced to adapt to the demands of the Social Media realm, by getting personally involved with customers through the use of specialised online tools and strategies.

Wang and Fesenmaier (2004) and Lanz et. al (2010) analysed the performance of Social Media strategies of various hotels and major hotel chains. According to the authors, active participation of these venues on various Social Media platforms brought positive results, not only in terms of hard promotion, but also for creating stronger bonds with the former clients and learning how to exceed expectations; genuine commitment to Social Media bridged the gap between Businesses and individuals.

However, to this date, budget venues remain unexplored, and the lack of clear Social Media strategies for this type of businesses is creating an even larger discrepancy between corporate giants and small venues (Lu et al. 2018). And as Sancho and Buhalis (UNWTO, 1998) pointed out, low-cost travel represents a significant portion of the travel industry. This research focuses on reviewing the Social Media efforts of a budget venue, using the same tools and investigatory practices as upscale venues use. The main goal is to create practical and reproducible guidelines that help managers build and evaluate personalised Social Media strategies that clearly represent the venue's culture and features, while allowing the venue to have increased presence and better opportunities on these highly-competitive platforms.

3 Methodology

This research is primarily descriptive and relies on statistical data analysis, in addition to the literature review. The relevant data was collected at The Nomad Hostel in Seville, using statistical services provided by Facebook and Instagram, known as Insights. These tools observe and analyse the essential usage data and divide them into categories related to the channel's visitor's behaviour. Indicators such a Page Reach, Page View, Post Engagement, New Followers, and Total Likes, are some of the categories that were used.

The Nomad Hostel is a budget accommodation venue in the center of a well-known tourist destination - Seville. The results obtained at this hostel demonstrated a tendency to grow in regard to numbers of followers and likes, in the case of both applications; however, when identical Social Media strategy was followed, the two platforms showed significantly different results. For instance, upon analyzing various types of posts, it was demonstrated that Facebook users favoured practical travel-related information, whereas Instagram users reacted most favourably to posts that showcased daily life at the hostel. Additionally, Instagram showed no importance regarding the time of the day when content was posted, whilst Facebook Insights recorded obvious peaks and drops throughout the day. In case of the Stories (short videos that can be posted on the profile and disappear within 24h), according to (Driver, 2018), Facebook profiles can benefit greatly from them; as the competition is lower, the impact of these Stories is greater; in case of instagram, the competition is vast, making the stories more of a must than an opportunity.

Consequently, Facebook and Instagram were observed and assessed separately.

Separate guidelines were given for the two applications.

3.1 Tables and Figures

Table 1: *Number of total followers/likes until (and including) 22 August 2019*

	Followers/Likes
Facebook	**1036**
Instagram	**430**

Table 2: *Total number of posts until (and including) 22 August 2019*

	Total Posts
Facebook	**209**
Instagram	**104**

Conclusions

Over the past few years, good Social Media Management has become an essential part of any company's marketing efforts. Billions of travellers are scanning the web for answers to travel-related questions, relying heavily on Social Media platforms and the experiences of other tourists (Nasihatkon and Kheiri 2016; Hudson et al. 2016). Thus, good Social Media strategies can help gain advantage on the increasingly competitive Tourism Market.

Exhaustive research has been done in regard to proper Social Media Management techniques for upper-scale accommodation venues (Lu et al. 2018). Budget venues, on the other hand, are left to their own devices when it comes to Social Media presence. Adding to the problem, the vague image and the limited word-of-mouth outreach for budget venues takes a toll on their survival chances, especially when confronted with famous chains and hotels with large marketing budgets at their disposal.

Proper strategies for managing the Social Media realm can help bridge this gap between accommodation classes, even when the marketing budget is severely limited.

Recommendations

● Keep your company's Social Media profiles active on a daily basis, engaging often with the "followers" and potentially interested parties
● Choose various related groups to join and accounts to follow, and be active in those groups (making sure that their mission and topics are related to your company's own)
● "Like" and comment on any content being posted by other users and related to your business (always with thoughtful comments)
● Use "tags" in order to draw the attention of a number of people; in that way, you will also reach out to their own friends and "followers"
● Experiment with various post styles and topics early on and publish them at various times of the day, in order to discover what works best; keep track of the results and use the free statistical tools (such as Insights); if done correctly, the followers' behaviour and preferences will become more Obvious
● Do not engage with profiles, groups or followers that clash with your own company's culture and philosophy; keep an eye on the existing followers and remove those who can harm the company's image with their content or Social Media behaviour
● Learn what your friends and followers like; review their profiles and take care of their needs; this approach can help create highly personalised Social Media campaigns that are adapted to your audience and guarantee to attract the attention of new followers
● Social Media is a form of personal expression; any profile that appears overly focused on product promotion will be perceived as insufficiently genuine, and therefore unwanted
● Keep an eye on the Social Media trends; the platforms constantly grow and change, and the competition is bigger each day

References

1. Blackshaw, P., & Nazzaro, M. Consumer-generated media (CGM) 101: Word-of-mouth in the age of the web-fortified consumer. New York: NielsenBuzzMetrics (2006).
2. Capatina, A., Micu, A., Micu, A. E., Bouzaabia, R., & Bouzaabia, O. Country-based comparison of accommodation brands in social media: An fsQCA approach Journal of Business Research, 89, 235-242 (2018).
3. Driver, S. Facebook Stories vs. Instagram Stories: What's Best for Your Business?. https://www.businessnewsdaily.com/10867-facebook-stories-vs-instagram-stories.html (2018). (last accessed 04 August 2019).
4. Gretzel, U. Travel in the network: Redirected gazes, ubiquitous connections and new frontiers. Post-global network and everyday life, 41-58 (2010).
5. Miguéns, J., Baggio, R., Costa, C. Social media and tourism destinations: TripAdvisor case study. Advances in tourism research, 26(28), 1-6 (2008).
6. Smith, S. P. Instagram abroad: performance, consumption and colonial narrative in tourism. Postcolonial Studies, 21(2), 172-191 (2018).
7. Xiang, Z., Gretzel, U. Role of social media in online travel information search. Tourism management, 31(2), 179-188 (2010).
8. VisitaSevilla https://www.visitasevilla.es/profesionales/datos-de-actividad-turistica-2018 (accessed 04 August 2019).