

2024 SECSA-CHRIE Conference Proceedings

Where history, culture, and Southern hospitality meet

March 8-9, 2024
Columbia, South Carolina

Hosted by the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management at the University of South Carolina



**School of Hospitality and
Tourism Management**
College of Hospitality, Retail
and Sport Management
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

SECSA-CHRIE 2024 Conference Proceedings

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Dr. Michael Sagas, Dean and Professor, College of Hospitality, Retail, and Sport Management at the University of South Carolina for hosting our 9th Annual SECSA-CHRIE Conference. A special thank you to Dr. Marketa Kubicova who wore two hats as Immediate Past President of SECSA-CHRIE and host conference chair.





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SCHEDULE AT-A-GLANCE

All Times are EST

THURSDAY, MARCH 7, 2024

Time	Event	Location
4:00 PM - 6:00 PM	Registration	HRSM Welcome Center
7:00 PM – 8:30 PM	Board Meeting & Dinner	TBD

FRIDAY, MARCH 8, 2024

Time	Event	Location
7:30 AM - 4:00 PM	Registration	HRSM Welcome Center
8:00 AM - 8:45 AM	Breakfast	HRSM Welcome Center
8:45 AM - 9:00 AM	Opening Session	Lumpkin Auditorium
9:00 AM - 10:00 AM	Keynote Address	Lumpkin Auditorium
10:00 AM - 10:15AM	Coffee Break	Dean's Suites
10:15 AM -11:30 AM	Breakout Session 1	Executive II, Summit East, Summit West, Room 810A, Room 828
11:30 AM - 12:15 PM	Lunch	HRSM Welcome Center
12:15 PM - 1:15 PM	Industry Panel	Lumpkin Auditorium
1:20 PM - 2:30 PM	Breakout Session 2	Executive II, Summit East, Summit West, Room 810A, Room 828
2:30 PM - 2:45 PM	Coffee Break	Dean's Suites
2:45 PM - 4:00 PM	Breakout Session 3	Executive II, Summit East, Summit West, Room 810A, Room 828
4:05 PM - 5:05 PM	Beer Tasting	Beverage Lab
5:05 PM - 6:05 PM	Reception	HRSM Welcome Center
	Dinner on Your Own	

SATURDAY, MARCH 9, 2024

Time	Event	Location
8:00 AM - 10:00 AM	Registration	HRSM Welcome Center
8:00 AM - 8:45 AM	Breakfast	HRSM Welcome Center
8:45 AM - 9:15 AM	SECSA Members Meeting	Lumpkin Auditorium
9:15 AM - 10:15 AM	Pedagogy Panel	Lumpkin Auditorium
10:15 AM - 10:30 AM	Coffee Break	Dean's Suites
10:30 AM - 11:40 PM	Breakout Session 4	Executive II, Summit East, Summit West, Room 810A, Room 828
11:45 PM - 12:20 PM	Lunch	HRSM Welcome Center
12: 20 PM - 12:55 PM	Breakout Session 5	Executive II, Summit East, Summit West, Room 810A, Room 828
1:00 PM – 2:15 PM	Research Workshop with Dr. Faizan Ali	Lumpkin Auditorium
2:20 PM – 3:20 PM	Campus Tour & walk to McCutchen House	
3:30 PM – 4:30 PM	Bourbon Tasting Experience	McCutchen House
4:30 PM – 5:30 PM	Awards Reception	McCutchen House
	Dinner on Your Own	

DETAILED SCHEDULE

All Times are EST		
Time	Event	Location
4:00 PM - 6:00 PM	Registration	HRSM Welcome Center
7:00 PM – 8:30 PM	SECSA Board Meeting & Dinner	TBD

SCHEDULE FRIDAY MARCH 8, 2024

All Times are EST		
Time	Event	Location
7:30 AM - 4:00 PM	Registration	HRSM Welcome Center
8:00 AM – 8:45 AM	Signature Continental Breakfast Buffet	HRSM Welcome Center
8:45 AM – 9:00 AM	Opening Session - Dr. Andrea White-McNeil, SECSA-CHRIE President, Bethune-Cookman University - Dr. Karen Edwards, Interim Associate Dean of Academic Programs, Interim Co-Director of BAIS and Online Programs Senior Instructor & Faculty Mentor, University of South Carolina	Lumpkin Auditorium
9:00 AM – 10:00 AM	State of the Industry Keynote Address Mr. Troy Flanagan Senior Vice President, Government Affairs & Industry Relations American Hotel & Lodging Association Moderator: Dr. Lisa Cain, Florida International University	Lumpkin Auditorium
10:00 AM – 10:15 AM	Coffee Break	Dean's Suites
Concurrent Session 1A - PEDAGOGY Moderator: Dr. Ruth A. Smith, Bethune-Cookman University		
10:15 AM – 10:50 AM	Gamified Learning Quesets in Hospitality Education: Enhancing Engagement and Real-World Application Badr Badraoui University of South Carolina	Executive II
10:55 AM – 11:30 AM	Embracing Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a Tool for Making Management	

	Decisions Dan Remar, John Salazar University of Georgia	
Concurrent Session 1B – RESEARCH Education in Hospitality Moderator: Dr. Kate Price-Howard, Troy University Summit East		
10:15 AM – 10:30 AM	Representation Matters: The Need for Diversity in Higher Education Hospitality Management Programs Onick Lewis, Heather Lewis Troy University	
10:35 AM – 10:50 AM	Generative AI in Hospitality Education: Exploring the Potential Benefits of Generative AI Literacy for Enhancing Learning Experiences Usman Khan, Faizan Ali, Cihan Cobanoglu, Osman Sesliokuyucu University of South Florida	
10:55 AM – 11:10 AM	Putting university teaching enhancement centers and Rate My Professor student reviews to work: A focus on new hospitality educators Yejia Guo, Baker Ayoun, Emmanuella Owens Auburn University	
11:15 AM – 11:30 AM	Perceptions and Importance of Authorship Order, Contributions, and Misbehavior in Academic Research Heather Lewis, Nicole Sellars Troy University	
Concurrent Session 1C – RESEARCH Consumer Behavior & Marketing Moderator: Dr. Mark Traynor, Auburn University Summit West		
10:15 AM – 10:30 AM	Shut-Up and Brew: Consumer Perceptions of Advocacy in the Beer Industry Scott Taylor Jr ^a , Elizabeth Whalen ^b ^a University of South Carolina, ^b Middle Tennessee State University	
10:35 AM – 10:50 AM	I’ll Have Vodka with a Splash of Celebrity”. Pop Culture Influence on Restaurant Consumer Motivations and Purchase Behavior Katheldra Alexander, Scott Taylor Jr. University of South Carolina	
10:55 AM – 11:10 AM	The Impact of Observed Crime Statistics on Intentions to Visit a Destination Elizabeth Whalen, Danielle Lauber Middle Tennessee State University	
11:15 AM – 11:30 AM	Cultivating Community: Strategic Interventions to Enhance Non-Monetary Contributions through Patrons’ Social Belonging Withrow Newell University of Alabama	
Concurrent Session 1D – RESEARCH Tourism & Sustainability Moderator: Dr. Brooke Hansen, University of South Florida Room 810A		
10:15 AM – 10:30 AM	Homelessness in Colorado’s Tourism Destinations Meghan Teumer Colorado State University	
10:35 AM – 10:50 AM	Nuisances and aesthetics in recreational water, the perception of South Carolina residents Xavier Basurto Cedeno, Lori Pennington-Gray, Estefania Basurto University of South Carolina	
10:55 AM – 11:10 AM	Cultivating Sustainability Savvy: The Role of Soft Skills in Shaping Sustainable Practices Svdnev Pons ^a , Jalayer Khalilzadeh ^b , Melvin Weber ^b , Ruth Smith ^c	

	^a The Pennsylvania State University, ^b East Carolina University, ^c Bethune-Cookman University	
Concurrent Session 1E – RESEARCH Consumer Behavior & Marketing Moderator: Dr. Faizan Ali, University of South Florida		Room 828
10:15 AM – 10:30 AM	Play, Pause, Engage: Unveiling the Social Dynamics and Value Patterns of Gameful Events Osman Sesliokuyucu, Faizan Ali, Gokhan Sener, Cihan Cobanoglu University of South Florida	
10:35 AM – 10:50 AM	A Longitudinal Study of Southeastern Seafood Festival Attendees Pre- and Post-Covid Sean Barth ^a , JB Ward ^b , Eva Smith ^a ^a University of South Carolina Beaufort, ^b Florida Atlantic University	
10:55 AM – 11:10 AM	What do Generation Y Consumers prefer in Wellness Tourism? A Comparative Qualitative Study between US and Türkiye Tugce Uner, Eda Alphan, Faizan Ali, Cihan Cobanoglu University of South Florida	
11:15 AM – 11:30 AM	A Holistic Examination of Solo Female Travel Experiences Using the COM-B Model Inci Polat ^a , Scott Ambrose ^b , Faizan Ali ^c ^a Suleyman Demirel University, ^b Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, ^c University of South Florida	
11:30 AM – 12:15 PM	Buffet Lunch	HRSM Welcome Center
12:15 PM – 1:15 PM	Industry Panel • Mr. Milan Patel - COO Naman Hotels • Mr. Jason Snyder – Peak Drift Brewing • Ms. Twila Jones – Senior Sales Manager, Experience Columbia • Mr. Christian Stegmaier – President of Collins & Lacy, P.C. Moderators: Dr. James Williams, University of Tennessee Dr. Wei Wei, University of Central Florida	Lumpkin Auditorium
Concurrent Session 2A – PEDAGOGY Moderator: Dr. Heather Lewis, Troy University		Executive II
1:20 PM – 1:55 PM	Council Meetings: Empowering Critical Engagement in Tourism Education Sunwoo Park, Lauren Duffy, Seunggji Cindy Lee Clemson University	
1:55 PM – 2:30 PM	Leveraging Honors Classes for Community Engagement in Destination Stewardship Brooke Hansen University of South Florida	
Concurrent Session 2B – RESEARCH Finance & Economy Moderator: Dr. Fang Shu, Florida International University		Summit East
1:20 PM – 1:40 PM	Non-linear Impacts of Harmful Algae Blooms on the Coastal Tourism Economy Sergio Alvarez ^a , Christina Brown ^b , Marc Garcia-Diaz ^a , Heather O'Leary ^c , Daniel Solis ^d ^a University of Central Florida, ^b United States Department of Agriculture,	

	^c University of South Florida, ^d Florida A&M University	
1:45 PM – 2:05 PM	Exploring Nomadic Sex Worker Tourists: Motivations, Economics, and Self-Determination Stephen Pratt ^a , Wantanee Suntikul ^b ^a University of Central Florida, ^b University of Cincinnati	
2:10 PM – 2:30 PM	Could virtual reality be a viable option to replace physical travel if inflation and cost of living continue to rise? Emily Groves, Yi Liu Middle Tennessee State University	
Concurrent Session 2C – RESEARCH Tourism Management Moderator: Dr. Andrew Moreo, Florida International University		Summit West
1:20 PM – 1:40 PM	Traveler vulnerability and trust in government: A configural analysis of protective behavior Swechchha Subedi, Drew Martin, Marketa Kubickova University of South Carolina	
1:45 PM – 2:05 PM	Blockchain in Travel and Tourism: Insights from Leading Companies Mahala Geronasso, Murat Kizildag University of Central Florida	
2:10 PM – 2:30 PM	The effect of cultural capital on theme park visit intention Juliana Tkatch, Carissa Baker, Nan Hua, Youcheng Wang University of Central Florida	
Concurrent Session 2D – RESEARCH IT Adoption & Application Moderator: Ms. Laur-Ann Daley, University of South Florida		Room 810A
1:20 PM – 1:40 PM	Beyond Speed: Exploring the Impact of Typing Indicator on Communication Dynamics and Emotional Support in Digital Interactions Ghazal Shams ^a , Kawon Kim ^a , Kaeun Kim ^b ^a University of South Carolina, ^b Dong-A University	
1:45 PM – 2:05 PM	Robotic Gastronomy Experience and its Consequences Faizan Ali, Kashif Ali Khan, Osman Sesliokuyucu University of South Florida	
2:10 PM – 2:30 PM	Exploring Service Robots and Employees' Turnover Intention in the Hospitality Industry: A Generational Perspective Halyna Horpynich ^a , Trishna G. Mistry ^a , Seden Dogan ^b ^a University of South Florida, ^b Ondokuz Mayıs University	
Concurrent Session 2E – RESEARCH Consumer Behavior & Marketing Moderator: Instructor Ashley Richardson, University of South Carolina		Room 828
1:20 PM – 1:40 PM	The post-colonial embodiment of national identity and branding Alex Arhin ^a , Belinda Ledi ^b ^a University of South Carolina, ^b University of Girona	
1:45 PM – 2:05 PM	Harmony in the Skies: Exploring the Influence of Music on the Passenger Journey Omid Oshriyeh, Ercan Sirakaya-Turk University of South Carolina	
2:30 PM – 2:45 PM	Coffee Break	Dean's Suites
Concurrent Session 3A - PEDAGOGY Moderator: Dr. Kate Price-Howard, Troy University		Executive II

2:45 PM – 3:20 PM	Professional development in hospitality: Improving student preparedness through role play Nicole Sellars, Heather Lewis, Robert Mathner Troy University	
3:25 PM – 4:00 PM	Cultivating Positive Learning Environments: A Workshop on Student-Centered Approaches in Hospitality Education Ruth Annette Smith Bethune-Cookman University	
Concurrent Session 3B – RESEARCH Food & Beverage Management Moderator: Dr. Drew Martin, University of South Carolina		Summit East
2:45 PM – 3:00 PM	Consumers' Attitudes Towards 3D-Printed Food Ilayda Zeynep Niyet ^a , Seden Dogan ^a , David Edwards ^b ^a University of South Florida, ^b St. Thomas University	
3:05 PM – 3:20 PM	To drink or not to drink: An evaluation of non-alcohol spirits-based cocktails. Cortney Norris ^a , Scott Taylor Jr. ^b , Marissa Orlowski ^c ^a Oklahoma State University, ^b University of South Carolina, ^c MV Hospitality Solutions, LLC.	
3:25 PM – 3:40 PM	Crafting Authentic Culinary Journeys: Navigating Cultural Hospitality in the Restaurant Industry. Nasiba Khodieva, Faizan Ali University of South Florida	
3:45 PM – 4:00 PM	Eco-Fit Flavors: Crafting Meal Kit Satisfaction with Means-End Theory. Damla Sonmez, Scott Taylor Jr. University of South Carolina	
Concurrent Session 3C – RESEARCH Consumer Behavior & Marketing Moderator: Dr. Lori Pennington-Gray, University of South Carolina		Summit West
2:45 PM – 3:00 PM	An Exploration of Determinants of Tipping Behavior in Casino Table Games Badr Badraoui, Scott Smith University of South Carolina	
3:05 PM – 3:20 PM	Turning Shadows into Spotlight: The Transformative Power of Memory Distortion in Shaping Positive Festival Experiences Jae Eun Park ^a , Hhye Won Shin ^b , Alei Fan ^a ^a Purdue University, ^b The University of Alabama	
3:25 PM – 3:40 PM	Interactivity, engagement, and intention to return in virtual conference networking Abigail Hoag, Marisa Ritter, Brianna Clark, Jessica Wiitala High Point University	
3:45 PM – 4:00 PM	Is there a gender difference when a robot service failure happens? Hui Jiang, Fang Meng University of South Carolina	
Concurrent Session 3D – RESEARCH IT Adoption & Application Moderator: Dr. Fang Shu, Florida International University		Room 810A
2:45 PM – 3:00 PM	Adopting the Extensions of the TAM Model to Determine Event Professionals' Resiliency Toward AI Integration Charlotte Miller, Jessica Wiitala, Brianna Clark, Marisa Ritter High Point University	
3:05 PM – 3:20 PM	How and when does the technology harm? Exploring the association between AI-Induced Stress and Hotel Employees' Sabotage Behaviour Selim Bakir, Baker Ayoun	

	Auburn University	
3:25 PM – 3:40 PM	Hospitality and Tourism Student's Openness to AI Assistance: Investigating Generative Technology Adoption Among Academia's Future Industry Leaders David Rivera Jr Flagler College	
Concurrent Session 3E – RESEARCH HR, Leadership & Strategies Moderator: Dr. Don Schoffstall, Johnson & Wales University, Charlotte Room 828		
2:45 PM – 3:00 PM	Linking Workplace Friendship to Job Performance: The Role of Empathy, Organizational Identification, and Employee Voice Amir Abbas, Faizan Ali, Cihan Cobanoglu University of South Florida	
3:05 PM – 3:20 PM	An Exploration of Informal Sector Tourist Worker Experiences and Well-being in St. Lucia Seungji Cindy Lee, Lauren Duffy, Sunwoo Park Clemson University	
3:25 PM – 3:40 PM	Managing Hospitality Operations in Conflict of Policies and Procedures: A Modern-Day Labor Regulation Quandary Emily Reaves, Donald Schoffstall Johnson & Wales University	
4:05 PM – 5:05 PM	Beer Tasting Event Sponsored & Hosted by Peak Drift Brewing Company	Beverage Lab
5:05 PM – 6:05 PM	Reception	HRSM Welcome Center
	Dinner on Your Own	



Platinum



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Garnet



Chaplin School of Hospitality & Tourism Management
FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Black



School of Hospitality, Sport and Tourism Management



SCHEDULE

SATURDAY MARCH 9, 2024

All Times are EST		
Time	Event	Location
8:00 AM - 10:00 AM	Registration	HRSM Welcome Center
8:00 AM – 8:45 AM	Signature Continental Breakfast Buffet	HRSM Welcome Center
8:45 AM – 9:15 AM	SECSA Members Meeting	Lumpkin Auditorium
9:15 AM – 10:15 AM	Pedagogy Panel The Impact of Artificial Intelligence/ChatGPT on Pedagogy - Dr. Abhijit Guha, Academic Director, MBA & MSBA Programs Associate Professor of Marketing and Moore Research Fellow - Dr. Charles Schumpert, Senior Instructor, Department of Biological Sciences Moderator: Dr. Scott Smith, University of South Carolina	Lumpkin Auditorium
10:15 AM – 10:30 AM	Coffee Break	Dean’s Suites
Concurrent Session 4A - PEDAGOGY Moderator: Dr. Ruth A. Smith, Bethune-Cookman University Executive II		
10:30 AM – 11:05 AM	Level Up Teaching: GameON Strategies for New Educators Damla Sonmez, Katheldra Alexander University of South Carolina	
11:05 AM – 11:40 AM	Best Practices: Scaffolding Direct Experiential Components in Undergraduate Hospitality Courses Emily M. Reaves, Donald G. Schoffstal, Johnson & Wales University	
Concurrent Session 4B – RESEARCH Tourism Management Moderator: Mr. Badr Badraoui, University of South Carolina Summit East		
10:30 AM – 10:50 AM	Paths to higher destination performance: Complexity theory and qualitative comparative analysis Drew Martin, Marketa Kubickova University of South Carolina	
10:55 AM – 11:15 AM	Volunteer Engagement and the Experience Economy Yuze Ji^a, Lisa Cain^b, Miranda Kitterlin^b ^aUniversity of Nevada, Las Vegas, ^bFlorida International University	
11:20 AM – 11:40 AM	Age-Friendly Travel: A Qualitative Investigation to Understand Travel Experiences of Older Adults Aged 50+	

	Faizan Ali, Kashif Ali Khan, Cihan Cobanoglu, Zvijezdana Petkovic University of South Florida	
Concurrent Session 4C – RESEARCH HR & Leadership Moderator: Dr. Trishna Mistry, University of South Florida		Summit West
10:30 AM – 10:50 AM	Aligning Leadership Styles to Generational Values: A Millennial Perspective Laur-Ann Daley, Trishna Mistry University of South Florida	
10:55 AM – 11:15 AM	Factors Affecting Hotel Employees' Cybersecurity Behavior Ahmet Bulent Ozturk University of Central Florida	
11:20 AM – 11:40 AM	Reclaiming Momentum: The Role of Mentorship and Sponsorship in Women's Leadership Development in the Hospitality and Tourism Industry Carole Sox ^a , Sheryl Kline ^b ^a Columbia College, ^b University of Delaware	
Concurrent Session 4D – RESEARCH Tourism Management Moderator: Dr. Fang Meng, University of South Carolina		Room 810A
10:30 AM – 10:50 AM	Ask Your Customers What Really Matters: Using the Tourist Engagement Continuum Scale to easily identify host/environment relationship levels for both Positive and Negative Memorable Tourists' Experiences (MTEs) Helena Williams ^a , Robert Williams ^b ^a Mohammed VI Polytechnic University, ^b Mar-Kadam Associates	
10:55 AM – 11:15 AM	The Effectiveness of Sustainability Pledges in Promoting Sustainable Behavior: An Initial Study Faizan Ali, Usman Khan, Kashif Ali Khan, Tugce Uner, Kamila Arkhash University of South Florida	
11:20 AM – 11:40 AM	Balancing the Odds: Perceived Benefits, Costs, and Power in New York Residents' Online Gambling Perceptions Lali Odosashvili, Swechchha Subedi, Drew Martin University of South Carolina	
Concurrent Session 4E – RESEARCH Foodservice Management Moderator: Dr. Mark Traynor, Auburn University		Room 828
10:30 AM – 10:50 AM	Relationship between Calorie Menu Labeling Sequencing on Decision-Making Patterns among Young Consumers Abdulgader Turkistani, Imran Ahmad, Xuanhui Wen Florida International University	
10:55 AM – 11:15 AM	The Future of University Foodservice: Thought Leader Insights Andrew Moreo ^a , Lisa Cain ^a , Imran Ahmad ^a , Imran Rahman ^b ^a Florida International University, ^b Auburn University	
11:20 AM – 11:40 AM	Want to slow down inflation? It might be a simple as visiting your favorite local restaurants again Thomas Pratt The University of North Alabama	
11:45 AM – 12:20 PM	Buffet Lunch	HRSM Welcome Center
Concurrent Session 5A - PEDAGOGY Moderator: Mrs. Katheldra Alexander, University of South Carolina		Executive II
12:20 PM – 12:55 PM	Student Engagement Assignments Aligned with Community/Tourism Partnerships	

	Kate Price-Howard Troy University	
Concurrent Session 5B – RESEARCH HR, Leadership & Strategies Moderator: Dr. Trishna Mistry, University of South Florida		Summit East
12:20 PM – 12:35 PM	Employee Experience in the Hospitality Industry: A Customer Service Perspective Akshay Kumar Reddy Thuppagudem, Anil Reddy Yendapalli, Trishna Mistry, Luana Nanu University of South Florida	
12:40 PM – 12:55 PM	Navigating the Talent Landscape: Recruitment and Retention of Gen Z in Hospitality Careers Melissa Korolchuk, Trishna Mistry University of South Florida	
1:00 PM – 2:15 PM	Research Workshop Basic Methodological Mistakes in Quantitative Research Dr. Faizan Ali, Associate Professor University of South Florida	Lumpkin Auditorium
2:20 PM – 3:20 PM	Campus Tour & Walk to McCutchen House	
3:30 PM – 4:30 PM	The Bourbon Experience Sponsored by HTMT	McCutchen House
4:30 PM – 5:30 PM	Awards Reception & Closing Remarks	McCutchen House
	Dinner on Your Own	

RESEARCH

PATHS TO HIGHER DESTINATION PERFORMANCE: COMPLEXITY THEORY AND QUALITATIVE COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Drew Martin, Ph.D.¹, Marketa Kubickova, Ph.D.²,
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University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC, USA², kubickova@hrsm.sc.edu²

Introduction

More than two decades after Crouch and Ritchie's (1999) seminal work and three decades after competitiveness' emergence as a research stream, understanding influences of destination performance (competitiveness) and the role of governance in this process continues to challenge researchers. Due to tourism's potential economic benefit to the destination economy and impact on residents' well-being, governments increasingly turn to tourism as a means of growth, development, and foreign exchange earnings (González-Rodríguez et al., 2023). However, a lack of understanding exists to explain how destinations need to do to move from one stage of competitiveness to the next. What makes destination performance successful?

Methods

Secondary data were utilized in this study. The outcome variable is average (2015-2019) international tourist overnight arrivals by country (UNWTO, 2023). For the countries only reporting international arrivals, those figures were used. Data were based on WEF, UNESCO, UNWTO, and the World Bank measurements, representing 130 countries between the years 2015 and 2019.

Results/Discussion/Implication

Results show that national destinations follow different paths to international tourist growth. These paths have some similarities to different levels of tourism development (c.f., Butler, 1980). All three models show high tourist services, many World Heritage sites, and high international openness relate to high levels of international visitors. On the other hand, prioritization of tourism by the government, political stability, safety, and price competitiveness varies. In some cases, relatively low values for these conditions are found in nations with international visitation.

Results demonstrate three different paths to high international tourist arrivals. Four countries closely align with group M1 (Mexico, Peru, Thailand, and Turkey). The model shows low political stability, high tourism priority, low tourist services, low safety, high international openness, and many World Heritage properties. Group M2 includes a small group of eastern European countries. Although tourism is not a priority, these countries are open, safe, and provide necessary services for visitors. Finally, group M3 includes a longer list of nations that attract the most international overnight visitors. Most countries on this list are long-time Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) members.

References are available upon request.

ADOPTING THE EXTENSIONS OF THE TAM MODEL TO DETERMINE EVENT PROFESSIONALS' RESILIENCY TOWARD AI INTEGRATION

Charlotte Miller¹, Dr. Jessica Wiitala², Dr. Brianna Clark³, Dr. Marisa Ritter⁴

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Introduction

Disruptive technology has permeated various fields, and the event industry is no exception. Within this dynamic landscape, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is emerging as a tool designed to augment the capabilities of event professionals, as highlighted by PCMA. In environments shaped by ongoing transformations, individuals lacking resilience in the face of disruptive innovations may find themselves at a disadvantage. This proposed study aims to delve into the interplay between the resilience of event professionals and their inclination to adopt AI. Leveraging extensions of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the research seeks to unravel the nuanced factors influencing professionals' overall intention to embrace AI in the context of the event planning.

Methods

TAM serves as a valuable framework for understanding technology acceptance in the hospitality industry as technology evolves across all industry sectors. There are limited investigations of TAM "to examine adoption behavior at the organization level" (Sangkaew et al., 2019, p. 773); however, there are even fewer studies on event professional's behavior to implement technology in the planning cycle of events (Kim et al., 2011). Extensions of TAM have outlined the importance of perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use concerning job relevance and technological self-efficacy.

This study will employ an exploratory quantitative survey research design approach. A purposive snowball sampling method targeting corporate event professionals will be utilized. The survey questions will adopt previously established scales incorporating resiliency (e.g., Xie et al., 2023) and TAM (e.g., Alam et al., 2022; Ozturk et al., 2022; Saxena et al., 2023). Descriptive statistics will be analyzed using SPSS, and the structural model will be analyzed using PLS-SEM.

Results/Discussion/Implication

Based on resilience theory and TAM, the more resilient an individual is, the more likely they are to reflect a higher intent to use AI. Theoretical implications include expanding TAM into event and resiliency research and adding to the under-investigated concept of technology self-efficacy (Sangkaew et al., 2019). Practical implications include understanding event professionals' acceptance of AI to aid in the training and implementing AI in planning events.

REPRESENTATION MATTERS: THE NEED FOR DIVERSITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

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Introduction

Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) are terms that have become part of regular discussion within hospitality industry operations in recent years. “DEI is important for the hospitality industry to meet customer expectations, attract and retain talent, enhance the customer experience, boost reputation and brand image, and contribute to social justice” (Manoharan, et al., 2023). While the hospitality industry is known to be a global employer with a culturally and ethnically diverse workforce (Hornsby & Scott-Halsell, 2015), in the United States 25.1% of the employees working in hotels, restaurants, event-related entities, and tourism organizations are of minority groups (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2023) despite ethnic minorities being the fastest growing segment of the workforce.

Previous research by Hornsby & Scott-Halsell (2015) concluded that between 2007 and 2011, only 31.8% of students enrolled in hospitality education programs in the United States were of minority groups. Specifically, the study focused attention towards African American (5.8%), Native American (0.9%), Asian American (13.1%), and Hispanic (12%) populations. In contrast, overwhelmingly, most of the hospitality education student population was Caucasian (68.2%). These percentages are concerning when compared to the national averages of the entire United States population with the major discrepancy being that African Americans make up 15% of the US population, but only 5.8% of the hospitality education student population are African American.

Methods

Historically, there is an imbalance of minority students enrolled in hospitality education programs (Hornsby & Scot-Halsell, 2015). It is of concern that hospitality education programs are inadequately recruiting and retaining minorities that ultimately mirror the ethnic diversity found in the hospitality industry (Lin & Noriega, 2005). As a result, in the increased discussion of DEI in both higher education and hospitality industries, this research effort will replicate the study conducted by Hornsby & Scott-Halsell (2015) to determine if the percentages of minority students enrolled in hospitality education programs over the past 12 years have improved.

To replicate the study, we will be reaching out to the same 24 schools utilized in the original study requesting that they provide information relative to their hospitality education program enrollment. Statistical processing of the data will occur to determine the changes in the student body population of hospitality education programs. Once this research effort is complete, future research is needed to explore factors that might influence minority students’ decision to enroll in hospitality management programs and be retained through the fruition of graduation.

Results/Discussion/Implication

Results from this study should provide hospitality management faculty and higher education programs information necessary to better recruit and retain minority students to their respective programs. Ultimately, this should lead to a more diverse, well-educated hospitality workforce in the future.

References are available upon request by emailing the authors

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CALORIE MENU LABELING SEQUENCING ON DECISION-MAKING PATTERNS AMONG YOUNG CONSUMERS

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Introduction

Owing to the rise in the number of fat Americans, the American government has worked to inform the next generation about the dangers of obesity. Many programs were established to serve this purpose (NCBI, 2019). Consumers' behavior has been shifting by choosing better eating habits. In response to this behavioral shift, restaurants started to label their menu items with calorie counts, which allows consumers to track their daily consumption of calories (FDA, 2019; Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2023). The influence of calorie count on menus has been well documented; however, the effect of sequencing information still needs to be addressed (Kiszko et al., 2014). This study aims to examine menu designs and information affecting consumers' decision-making and whether the sequence of calorie information on the menu significantly influences consumer decisions. The following hypotheses are proposed: **H1:** The calorie count of menu items significantly influences the decision-making of younger age groups. **H2:** The menu items' sequential order by number of calories significantly influences the decision-making of younger age groups.

Methods

A 16-question survey with 62 participants (18–25 years old) compared three menus with the same items and pricing. Menu options include 1. no calories listed, random order; 2. random order; and 3. calories listed, ordered by calories. Likert scale applied. For non-parametric data, total calories selected from each menu were analyzed using Chi-Square; the influence of other survey variables on selections was evaluated using One-Way ANOVA.

Results/Discussion/Implication

Most participants preferred to change menu item selection when menus with extra information on calorie count (Menu, 2) or sequenced menu items by calories (Menu, 3) were offered. The findings indicate that calorie information may have encouraged lower-calorie selections (65% of participants). Moreover, the order of menu items by calorie content influences consumers' decisions by increasing or decreasing calorie count (78% of participants). Therefore, these findings support our hypothesis ($p \leq 0.05$). There was a significant relationship between labeling calories (Menu, 2) with choice of gender and eating out frequency ($p \leq 0.05$). Furthermore, a relationship between sequential calories (Menu, 3) and eating out frequency influenced the decision ($p \leq 0.05$). Gender was not related to the sequential calorie menu. No correlation was found between participants' pre-menu self-awareness and decisions with Menu 2 & 3. Ranking analysis reveals a focus on well-balanced (68.25%), low-sugar (61.9%), and low-fat (58.73%) for healthy eating. Information about calories and the order of menu items greatly influence decision-making. Sequence influences choices consistently, but gender and frequency of eating out were linked to choices with labeled calories. The results help restaurants restructure their menus to be more health-conscious.

References are available upon request

TO DRINK OR NOT TO DRINK: AN EVALUATION OF NON-ALCOHOL SPIRITS-BASED COCKTAILS

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Introduction

Non-alcohol spirit brands have been proliferating in recent years due to the rising interest in sober curiosity, a movement centered around reducing alcohol consumption and developing a more mindful drinking style (Guarnotta, 2023). These brands offer a zero-proof spirit, focusing not only on alcohol-free alternatives but also on no/low-calorie and diet-friendly options (ritualzeroproof.com). These spiritless brands are intended to be used in place of a spirit for a cocktail recipe, offering the consumer the taste and experience of the cocktail without alcohol. As such many bars and restaurants have expanded their mocktail offerings and dry bars are on the rise in major cities, offering only alcohol alternatives (Pollard, 2023). Overall, the non-alcohol spirits market is currently valued at \$281 million and is projected to reach \$642 million by 2031 (alliedmarketresearch.com). With this growing trend and dearth of research in this area, this research intends to identify the differences in sensory evaluation between regular distilled spirits and non-alcohol distilled spirit-based cocktails. Additionally, the research aims to identify when consumers may opt for non-alcohol spirits and how much they are willing to pay for non-alcohol cocktails in a bar or restaurant.

Design/Methodology

The study will employ an experimental design, where participants who regularly consume alcohol will be given two cocktails, one of which will use a non-alcohol spirit base. They will be asked to rate each based on sensory cues, sight, smell, mouthfeel, and taste. Afterward, participants will be told that one of them is non-alcohol.

Results

The results will provide information regarding the differences in sensory evaluation between the two cocktails, showing either that there is no significant difference or where potential consumers will notice the most obvious difference when non-alcohol spirits are used in cocktails. Furthermore, when potential consumers might opt for a non-alcohol spirit-based cocktail and how much they are willing to pay for a cocktail at a bar or restaurant.

Research implications

This will be the first study to research non-alcohol spirits' sensory evaluation and provide information related to consumption preferences in the changing landscape of the sober curious movement. This research will aid the industry in understanding how and when consumers who regularly consume alcohol would instead consume a cocktail with non-alcohol spirits. This information will help with purchasing decisions, cocktail development, menu design, and pricing.

References are available upon request

EXPLORING NOMADIC SEX WORKER TOURISTS: MOTIVATIONS, ECONOMICS, AND SELF-DETERMINATION

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Introduction

Sex tourism, prevalent in various forms globally, is often associated with specific regions like south-east Asia and the Caribbean. While much research focuses on male sex tourist clients and local female providers, little attention has been given to sex workers who are themselves tourists. This study investigates voluntary workers who travel to Hong Kong on tourist visas, aiming to maximize earnings during short stays. The objectives are to unveil the motivations of nomadic sex worker tourists and understand how they negotiate their experiences for socio-economic advantage and self-determination.

Previous research primarily explores male clients and local providers, but recent work considers diverse perspectives, including female tourists. Two opposing approaches in the literature view prostitution as either an expression of male domination or a form of labor in which individuals freely choose their profession. This study contributes by revealing the nuanced motivations, experiences, and perspectives of nomadic sex worker tourists.

Methods

In-depth interviews with 20 south-east Asian female sex workers in Hong Kong were conducted on tourist visas. The researchers, initially posing as potential clients, explained the study, and interviews were later conducted by a female Thai researcher. The discussion covered background, motivations, income, services, and experiences. Participants were compensated for their time.

Results/Discussion/Implication

Participants, averaging 29 years old with 11 holding a university degree, are often driven by economic motivations influenced by visa policies. Their clients are typically Western expatriates or tourists. Financially supporting families emerges as a common theme, driven by low salaries in their home countries and the responsibility to support relatives. Emotional and psychological aspects are explored, highlighting the importance of interpersonal skills in their work. Beyond immediate financial needs, participants express aspirations for material luxuries and, in some cases, envision a future beyond sex work.

Nomadic sex workers navigate macroeconomic disparities and family responsibilities, achieving agency and self-determination. The study suggests that, for some, sex work is perceived as empowering, providing a sense of freedom and choice. Visa policies play a crucial role in facilitating their mobility, and the study advocates for governments to focus on banning violators of stay terms rather than imposing fines or jail time. The findings encourage a nuanced understanding of the motivations and experiences of nomadic sex workers, challenging stereotypes associated with globalized sex tourism.

References are available upon request

TRAVELER VULNERABILITY AND TRUST IN GOVERNMENT: A CONFIGURAL ANALYSIS OF PROTECTIVE BEHAVIOR

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Introduction

Trust is a pivotal factor in the decision-making processes of tourists, influencing risk perceptions and shaping their travel behaviors (Li et al., 2019). While existing research predominantly focuses on organizational and interpersonal trust, the specific role of government in mitigating risks and fostering trust among tourists remains underexplored (Hsieh et al., 2021).

Using the overarching theoretical framework of Protection Motivation Theory (PMT), this study provides a theoretical lens to understand how tourists respond to threats, emphasizing the significance of threat and coping appraisals in shaping self-protective behaviors (Rogers, 1975). However, conventional empirical approaches often assume linear relationships, overlooking the inherent complexity of data patterns (Subedi & Kubickova, 2023). Thus, PMT is combined with Complexity Theory as an apt framework to holistically examine and explain how identical antecedents may yield diverse results based on different contextual factors (Woodside et al., 2018). By employing a case-based approach, this study seeks to unravel the intricate relationships between motivations, demographic factors, and protective behavior.

Methodology

A survey conducted on mTurk from March to August 2022 gathered 450 valid responses from U.S. residents aged 18 and above, who had traveled internationally in the last two years. Using Likert scales, the study measured constructs and fuzzy set qualitative comparative analysis (fsQCA) was used for data analysis.

Results/Discussion/Implication

The findings align with the principles of complexity theory, revealing evidence of dynamically interacting elements and supporting the recipe, equifinality, and asymmetry principles. Identified were five distinct paths leading to protective behavior, highlighting the insufficiency of individual conditions to explain outcomes, thus highlighting the relevance of complexity theory. While higher threat appraisal generally increases the likelihood of adopting self-protection measures, trust in government and socio-demographic variables (age and income) were identified as influencing the importance of threat appraisal.

This integration of complexity theory, a case-based approach, and fsQCA contributes to the self-protection literature by showcasing that identical antecedents can yield diverse outcomes based on different contextual recipes. The research acknowledges limitations related to its focused nature, potentially limiting generalizability, subjectivity in setting calibration thresholds, may introduce variability. Future research recommendations include cross-cultural exploration, combining qualitative and quantitative methods, and incorporating longitudinal studies to capture the dynamic nature of protective behavior over time.

References are available upon request

LINKING WORKPLACE FRIENDSHIP TO JOB PERFORMANCE: THE ROLE OF EMPATHY, ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTIFICATION, AND EMPLOYEE VOICE

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Introduction

Let's assume that you are a manager of a hospitality company, such as a hotel, restaurant, or theme park, and your goal is to diminish workplace conflicts and differences among your employees to create a harmonious working environment, where they can enjoy their jobs and perform efficiently. According to the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), when people receive assistance from others, they tend to reciprocate. The researchers (Kenny & Kashy, 1994) explained friendship as a mutual & intentional link among individuals who desire closeness, camaraderie, and responsiveness. The employees in general aspire to develop friendships by engaging in meaningful interactions and sharing common interests with their colleagues (Zhuang et al., 2020).

Similarly, empathy is defined as the ability to value, sense, and feel the open responses, or experiences of others from their views (Davis 1996). It can bring in favorable work-related results. Organizational identification is an antecedent of social identity that supports job performance (Liu et al., 2019). Also, OI signifies employee identification in an organizational setting (Singal, 2015; Wilkins et al., 2018). Where employee voice is termed as employees' opinions, thoughts, concerns, and ideas regarding their jobs to improve the organizational working environment and operations (Islam et al., 2019). Job performance signifies one's ability to carry out duties designated to them and considers it the combination of individual behaviors related to a specified job (Ali et al., 2020).

Prior studies highlighted that social exchange connections can predict employees' emotions and behaviors in the workplace (Hsu et al., 2019, Yang & Anthony, 2020). However, at present, a few researchers have explored the link of workplace friendships to job performance, regarding (empathy, OI, and employee voice) in hospitality employees. Therefore, this study concentrates on workplace friendships and their influence on employees' positive or negative job performance, through the role of empathy, organizational identification, and employee voice. It will contribute to the extant literature on workplace friendships and their link to job performance, in the context of these factors in the hospitality industry.

Methods

For data collection, we will conduct an online survey of hospitality employees, who have at least six months of working experience with their companies in the USA, through Amazon Mechanical Turk. The sampling method used will be a mix of purposive and self-selection sampling. The previously validated scales will be used, and data will be collected from hospitality employees in two phases. For analysis, we will use PLS-SEM, as it is a regression-based technique that will help us determine the influence of independent variables on dependent variables.

Results/Discussion/Implication

This is a "Work-In-Progress" quantity study. The expected results will be included after the data collection and analysis. The findings and conclusion will be drawn and discussed. The relevant managerial implications will also be discussed.

PERCEPTIONS AND IMPORTANCE OF AUTHORSHIP ORDER, CONTRIBUTIONS, AND MISBEHAVIOR IN ACADEMIC RESEARCH

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Introduction

Academics are often required to be productive researchers to achieve tenure, promotion, salary increases, and even credibility amongst their peers. In many cases, this can make for a unique conundrum as it is not unusual for authorship order to be taken into consideration when such decisions are being made. Few aspects of academia are more contentious than collaborative research and the authorship order when it is often considered to be a “highly prized academic award” (Henry, 2013, p. 84). Authorship, as defined by Smith et al. (2020), “is generally attributed to individuals who have contributed significantly to the research and remain accountable for their work” (p. 1968). Despite unethical authorship practices (e.g., honorary or ghost authorship) being highlighted as problematic (Teixeira da Silva & Dobranski, 2015; Wislar et al., 2011), such happenings have also been labeled as “normal misbehavior” by respondents who don’t consider authorship to be of great concern but attribute the misbehaviors to the pressure associated with professional productivity (De Vries et al., 2006).

While we have seen a decrease in single-author publications in contemporary science (Smith & Master, 2017), an increase in collaborative authorship has resulted in 80% of hospitality-related articles being co-authored (Ramos-Rodriguez, et al., 2021). It is not an unknown fact that university administrators have greater expectations of faculty to publish more than ever before, as a result, many faculty are developing publishing teams to collaborate and create more articles (Youn, et al., 2011).

Even though more papers are being collaboratively written, there has been minimal guidance provided to determine a measurement of contribution or how authorship order should be determined. With the “publish or perish” mentality at the forefront, Marušić et al. (2011) note that 29% of researchers reported authorship misuse through their own or others’ experiences. Smith et al. (2020) similarly outlines that, of their 6673 research respondents, nearly 47% reported disagreements related to authorship.

Methods

The proposed research of this study will specifically survey higher education faculty to explore their perceptions of research misbehaviors in leisure management disciplines to gather insight into what hospitality, tourism, and sport academicians consider when classifying or quantifying contributions, assessing misbehaviors, and determining authorship order. This will be a mixed-method study, with both quantitative and qualitative questions being asked of survey participants. Our survey will be sent out to faculty members at colleges and universities across the United States that have hospitality, tourism, or sport management degree programs.

Results/Discussion/Implication

Results from this study will provide academics and administrators with a better understanding of the pressures and potential misbehaviors that come from the research expectations within higher education. As such, policies and regulations may also be considered to reduce the amount of misbehavior that occurs within academic research.

References are available upon request by emailing the authors

BEYOND SPEED: EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF TYPING INDICATOR ON COMMUNICATION DYNAMICS AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT IN DIGITAL INETRACTIONS

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Introduction

Nowadays, chatbots are omnipresent in the hospitality and tourism industry, assisting customers with a variety of tasks. Among different cues, one underdeveloped aspect of chatbot's functional cues is chronemic cues which describes functions of time in online communication such as waiting time and response time (Feine et al., 2019). Generally, customers expect fast and efficient service from chatbots, and a delay in response time can result in frustration and dissatisfaction (Yu et al., 2020). However, there is inconsistency in chatbots real-time response whether quick response or delayed response is appropriate. While one stream of research argues the negativity of delayed responses which evoke negative reactions (Holtgraves et al., 2007), another stream recognizes the backfiring effect of quick response times which make the conversation seem unnatural (Appel et al., 2012). Despite a lengthy debate on this issue, research is still inconclusive of what standards best determine the optimal length of response time of chatbot. Therefore, there is a need to understand what the optional point of response time is and under what conditions, possible negative impact of response time could be buffered. Therefore, to address the gap, this study aims (1) to examine the effect of response latency of chatbots on customer satisfaction, (2) to find the boundary condition (i.e., typing indicator and emotional support) that moderates the effects of response latency of chatbots on customer satisfaction, and (3) to identify the underlying mechanism explaining the link between response latency and customer satisfaction by examining the mediating role of social presence and rapport.

Methods

This study employed two scenario-based experiments. Study 1 examined the effects of response latency on satisfaction moderated by typing indicator and the mediation effect of social presence. Study 2 investigated the effects of response latency on satisfaction moderated by emotional support and the mediation effect of rapport. Participants were recruited using Prolific survey panel and participants were randomly assigned to one of the scenarios and asked to fill out a questionnaire.

Results/Discussion/Implication

All manipulations worked as intended. A one-way ANOVA on perceived response latency suggested a significant difference between the three response latency conditions, $F(2,211)=39.88$, $p<.001$. There was a significant main effect of response latency on satisfaction, $F(2, 206)=7.73$, $p<.01$, in which participants were more satisfied with short response time. Furthermore, there was a significant interaction effect of response latency and typing indicator, $F(2, 206)=4.02$, $p<.05$. The results revealed significant interaction effect between response latency and emotional support, $F(2,307)=3.25$, $p<.05$. PROCESS macro (Model 8) showed a significant indirect effect of moderation mediation of response latency and typing indicator on satisfaction through social presence. Furthermore, it showed a significant indirect effects moderation mediation of response latency and emotional support on satisfaction through rapport. The results assist hospitality organizations in appropriately formulating chatbots' messages response delay integrating typing indicators and recognizing the role of emotional support.

TURNING SHADOWS INTO SPOTLIGHT: THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF MEMORY DISTORTION IN SHAPING POSITIVE FESTIVAL EXPERIENCES

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Introduction

Experience, being an intangible value, crucially influences subsequent reactions based on emotions and memories formed during the process (Singh et al., 2019). This phenomenon can be applied in the festival context, where experiences evoke emotions, shape memories, and influence behavioral intentions (Chen et al., 2019). Negative festival experiences are common, and understanding the factors (e.g., external information including reviews from others) that mitigate negative reactions over time (“memory distortion”), is essential. The Construal Level Theory (Trope & Liberman, 2012), focusing on psychological distance, suggests that how individuals construe objects is influenced by temporal, spatial, social, and hypothetical distance. In the context of festivals, this research examines the social distance, the familiarity with different groups or cultures. Short social distance refers to familiar local festivals, while long social distance pertains to unfamiliar exotic festivals. This study posits that memory is more susceptible to change when social distance is long and the construal level is abstract, influencing individuals’ perceptions and behavioral outcomes based on previous literature (e.g., Vermeulen & Seegers, 2009). The current research also incorporates the Dual Coding Theory (Paivio, 1991), which contends that different formats of information elicit different reactions in individuals cognitions and behaviors, with visual information having a more immediate and effective impact on evoking positive reactions than textual information (Paivio, 1991; Yagci et al., 2009). Taken together, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: For festivals with a short social distance, there will be no difference in attitude and word-of-mouth between a positive text-type review and a positive video-type review.

H2: For festivals with a long social distance, a positive video-type review will result in a more positive attitude and word-of-mouth than a positive text-type review.

Methods

A scenario-based experiment with a 2 (social distance: short vs. long) by 2 (external information: text-type review vs. video-type review) between-subjects design will be conducted. Participants from the U.S. general population will be recruited through Prolific. The joint effect of social distance and external information on attitude and word-of-mouth will be analyzed using the PROCESS software.

Results/Discussion/Implication

This research may contribute to the understanding of consumer behavior in the festival context, by revealing how memory distortion influences future behavior in festival experiences, with a focus on the potential positive impact of external information (i.e., a video-type review) in reshaping negative memories into positive perceptions. Festival organizers and marketers may utilize the findings of this research when tailoring their strategies that involve video-type information. Additionally, future researchers could delve deeper into the specific elements within video-type information that trigger positive emotional responses.

References are available upon request.

HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM STUDENTS' OPENNESS TO AI ASSISTANCE: INVESTIGATING GENERATIVE TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION AMONG ACADEMIA'S FUTURE INDUSTRY LEADERS

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Introduction & Literature Review

Recent advances in natural language processing and neural networks have enabled the creation of sophisticated AI systems like ChatGPT that can generate human-like text, referred to as generative AI. ChatGPT possesses powerful abilities to produce coherent writing on many topics in response to simple prompts, with significant implications for use in academic contexts given the potential to greatly aid or hinder learning, ethical development, and academic integrity. However, despite growing public awareness of ChatGPT's capabilities since its November 2022 release, empirical research examining students' attitudes towards and intentions to leverage these generative AI tools for their schoolwork is still lacking. The theory of planned behavior expands on an earlier framework by adding the construct of perceived behavioral control to account for behaviors not fully under volitional control; it provides insight into behavior performance beyond conscious intentions by assessing attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived difficulties (Ajzen, 1991). Tests have validated the theory of planned behavior by showing it predicts behaviors better than intentions alone (Hrubes, Ajzen, & Daigle, 2001; Davis, Ajzen, Saunders, & Williams 2002; Bamberg, Ajzen, & Schmidt, 2003; Gant, 2001; Fazekas, Senn, & Ledgerwood, 2001).

Purpose

This study aims to apply Fishbein & Ajzen's (1977) Theory of Planned Behavior to investigate young adult college student attitudes, risk/benefit perceptions, normative beliefs, control beliefs, and intentions to utilize the text generation capabilities of AI systems like ChatGPT for activities related to their academics, personal lives, and careers.

Methods

A questionnaire will be created using the protocol outlined by Ajzen and Fishbein regarding research being conducted using the TpB. The survey will then be administered to a convenience sample of undergraduate students enrolled in hospitality and tourism programs at two and four-year colleges and universities located within the United States. The survey instrument will be constructed using semantic differential and 7-point Likert-type scales. Between-group differences will be analyzed using independent sample t-tests and ANOVA procedures. Following Ajzen's guidelines, a hierarchical linear regression analysis will be performed with demographics and external variables entered first, attitudes and norms second, and perceived controls third to predict student intentions while assessing the theory's explanatory power.

Conclusions/Implications

This study may make timely and vital contributions as higher education institutions globally grapple with issues surrounding the responsible adoption of newly available generative AI technologies on their campuses. By illuminating factors influencing students' decisions to leverage or avoid advanced AI writing assistants, findings provide direction for university policies, educational supports, and outreach needed to promote ethical technology integration, academic integrity, and learning.

Harmony in the Skies: Exploring the Influence of Music on the Passenger Journey

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Introduction

"Travel is not just about the end destination; it's also about how you get there." (Emirates, 2022). Emirates, a leading airline, emphasizes the holistic travel experience. Customer-focused airlines prioritize understanding passenger behaviors and preferences for enhanced satisfaction (He et al., 2019). Despite this, the impact of music during boarding and in-flight experiences is often overlooked, though it significantly influences ambiance and passenger perceptions (North & Hargreaves, 1999).

This study addresses the gap in understanding music's role as a sensory cue shaping passengers' journey moments, contributing to an airline's identity and brand satisfaction (Baskerville, 2005; Pabla & Soch, 2023). Despite efforts to enhance the customer experience, dissatisfaction, especially during long-haul flights, remains an issue (Liu & Rauterberg, 2007). Rider, Floyd, & Kirkpatrick (1985) highlight the impact of music on circadian rhythms and sleep patterns in air travel, an underexplored area. Despite long-standing sleep issues and jet lag (Fowler et al., 2020), the effect of music on sleeping patterns is under-researched. Understanding flight music's influence extends beyond immediate mood (VanDerZwaag et al., 2012) to broader psychological and physiological aspects during boarding (O'Shaughnessy & O'Shaughnessy, 2002). Limited empirical research on airline boarding and in-cabin music necessitates deeper investigation (Ren & Xu, 2018).

This study explores how airline music shapes passengers' psychological states, emotions, preferences, and circadian rhythms during flights. Utilizing phenomenological qualitative inquiry, it aims to contribute to flight experience knowledge and passenger satisfaction, enhancing our understanding of the music, emotions, and flight relationship. Research questions focus on passengers' experiences with airline music and its impact on psychological well-being, circadian rhythms during long-haul flights, and factors influencing music preferences and emotional responses, aiming to discover subjective perspectives for a comprehensive understanding of passengers' experiences.

Methods

This study employs phenomenological inquiry, guided by Crouch and McKenzie (2006), strategically selecting airline routes through maximum variation sampling. The 16 participants, chosen with Patton's (2014) purposeful sampling, encompass various flyer frequencies, cultural orientations, and age groups, emphasizing research engagement. Utilizing interviews, observations, and surveys, the study explores music's effects.

Results/Discussion/Implication

The study found that music significantly influences passenger emotions during air travel. In theme one, participants noted specific genres or beats affecting. Theme two explored flight music's impact on sleep and circadian rhythms, revealing diverse preferences. The third theme focused on psychological well-being, with participants expressing varied emotions triggered by boarding music, supporting theories linking music with mood regulation. The fourth theme explored the impact of cultural diversity on emotional responses to boarding music, emphasizing how individual preferences and past experiences shape responses.

References are available upon request

BLOCKCHAIN IN TRAVEL AND TOURISM: INSIGHTS FROM LEADING COMPANIES

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Introduction

Innovation is the cornerstone of progress in the digital era, driving industries to adapt, evolve, and redefine their operational landscapes. Blockchain, a decentralized and immutable digital ledger technology that securely records and verifies transactions across a network of computers, ensuring transparency and trust without the need for intermediaries, has particularly gained prominence in the travel and tourism industry (Dogru et al., 2018; Kizildag et al., 2019; Onder et al., 2022). Blockchain technology's potential goes beyond using digital currencies (Treiblmaier, 2021). For instance, companies can use blockchain to manage customer loyalty programs, ensuring customers are rewarded for their loyalty. This study aims to identify key players in the travel and tourism sector that have adopted blockchain technology and to clarify its broader impact on the industry. By categorizing and examining leading corporations based on their engagement with blockchain technology, this study contributes valuable insights for industry professionals, investors, and academics. It fills a critical gap in the existing literature and sets a foundation for predicting future trends and benefits that blockchain can yield for the industry.

Methods

To examine the adoption trends of blockchain within the global travel and tourism sector, we first selected 50 reputable companies from Forbes (2022) as the primary data source based on specific criteria, including international presence, financial health, and alignment with blockchain initiatives. After screening, 20 companies were chosen and categorized by their primary operational domains. We then analyzed how these companies use blockchain technology and integrated it into their operations. The findings were cross-validated to ensure accuracy with industry reports and company disclosures. This rigorous approach ensured the study's findings were based on reliable, contemporary data.

Results/Discussion/Implication

Our analysis reveals that blockchain adoption in the travel and tourism industry is on the rise. Leading OTAs, such as Booking.com and Expedia, are leveraging blockchain to streamline booking processes and enhance payment infrastructures. Major airlines are exploring blockchain for ticketing and loyalty programs. Prominent hotel chains are using blockchain to revamp loyalty programs, while car rental companies aim to improve administrative processes. Financial entities are employing blockchain to enhance corporate travel expense reporting.

This adoption of blockchain technology presents significant implications. It offers enhanced transparency, reduces operational costs, improves efficiency, and enhances customer trust. For managers in the sector, recognizing blockchain as a strategic investment can lead to operational improvements and increased customer satisfaction. Future research opportunities lie in exploring the impact of blockchain on trust in digital environments and its potential to reshape revenue and supply chain management theories. As blockchain technology matures, its influence on the industry will persist, fostering secure, transparent, and efficient operations.

References are available upon request.

IMPACTS OF HARMFUL ALGAE BLOOMS ON COASTAL TOURISM

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Introduction

Harmful algae blooms (HABs) occur throughout the globe and have multi-faceted impacts on tourism, but due to their slow onset and non-dramatic nature, these events have received less attention from the research community than headline-grabbing events such as terrorism attacks, tsunamis, and tropical cyclones. HABs are associated with major impacts on tourism including shortened or cancelled visits; changes in risk perceptions of tourists; changes in tourist activities; loss of revenue in tourism and other economic sectors; and depressed real estate markets. HABs are also known to have wide ranging non-market impacts, including disruptions in recreation opportunities and aesthetic enjoyment, as well as losses to traditional ways of life, sense of place, and collective identity. However, little is known of the magnitude of economic losses to the tourism sector because of HABs. The objective of this paper is to fill this gap in knowledge by scaling up a methodology to estimate the market losses of HABs using publicly available baseline data. We estimate the total statewide market losses to coastal tourism because of the 2018 bloom, which was the largest and most severe red tide bloom in Florida’s recent history.

Methods

The empirical framework is based on a month and county-level panel database that combines sales by tourism-related businesses with observations from the official HAB surveillance system of the state of Florida. We use time and space fixed-effects regressions to estimate the loss in tourism revenue associated with one additional day of red tide. Our approach relies on counting the number of days per month at different HAB concentrations. This strategy allows empirical identification of economically important blooms and can provide evidence of changing economic impacts as concentrations of the harmful algae organism change. The dependent variable used in this study is Tourism Sales, defined as gross sales in tourism-related sectors. We exclude the amusements industry, which in Florida is quite extensive, but is mostly located more than one mile inland, beyond the reach of airborne red tide toxins. The panel database covers a period of 16 years, between 2002 and 2018. To conduct the analysis, the sample was segregated by regions to account for the historic range of red tide HABs and to group counties that had similar tourism economies, both in terms of size and seasonality.

Results

Southwest Florida is the historical hotspot for red tide HABs, and blooms were persistent throughout 2018. Tourism sales in this region decreased by \$1.27 billion USD due to the HABs. The total loss from HABs for Southeast Florida in 2018 was estimated at \$1.36 billion. Aggregate losses from the 2018 red tide HABs in these two regions amounted to \$2.62 billion. Statewide, the bloom of 2018 cost Florida’s coastal destinations an estimated \$2.7 billion in tourism revenues, which implies that HABs and their impact on tourism can be considered as a potential ‘billion-dollar’ disaster.

THE IMPACT OF OBSERVED CRIME STATISTICS ON INTENTIONS TO VISIT A DESTINATION

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Introduction

Destination image profoundly influences travel-related behaviors, impacting destination selection and future intentions of consumers (Huete Alcocer & Ruiz, 2020; Khan et al., 2017). This study explores the ramifications of negative factors, such as high crime rates, on travel intentions and bookings before consumer purchases. While destination marketers strive to enhance destination images, the rise in crime rates poses challenges. Understanding how external data, like crime statistics, affects consumer choices is crucial.

High crime statistics detrimentally affect destination image, leading to a decline in tourism demand (Matakovic & Matakovic, 2019; Ferreira & Harmse, 2000). Perceptions of risk, particularly those related to crime, significantly influence travelers' decision-making processes and revisit intentions (Chew & Jahari, 2013; Sharifpour et al., 2014). However, little research has examined the relationship between perceived crime and destination travel. This study investigates the impact of crime statistics on perceived risks and travel intentions through the lens of the theory of planned behavior. The study provides insights into the link between observed information and consumer perceptions, essential for destination marketers facing challenges in altering destination images. This research contributes to understanding consumer behavior in destination decision-making, particularly when exposed to negative pre-booking information (Tsai & Bui, 2021).

Methods

An experimental design will be used to test the impact of crime statistics (high, low, control) on perceived risks (physical, financial, performance, social, psychological) and intentions to visit. Participants will be presented with varying levels of crime statistics to assess how their intentions to visit might be influenced by perceptions of risk. Following exposure to the advertisement and crime statistics, participants will be prompted to contemplate a potential trip to the destination and respond to inquiries regarding their perceived risks across five dimensions (physical, financial, performance, social, psychological), as well as their intentions to visit the destination in the future.

Results/Discussion/Implication

A series of pretests ensured the reliability of experimental conditions and selected Long Beach, CA, as the representative city for analysis (Richter, 2019). Crime statistics were categorized into high and low crime stats and pretested to ensure participants accurately interpreted them (Stebbins, 2020). For the main study, participants will be recruited through Amazon Mechanical Turk, and those meeting eligibility criteria were randomly assigned to experimental conditions. Once data is collected, the results will be analyzed using EFA and CFA to confirm scales followed by ANOVA and regression to test hypotheses.

References are available upon request

BALANCING THE ODDS: NEW YORK RESIDENTS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS ONLINE GAMBLING, EXTENSION OF SOCIAL EXCHANGE THEORY

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Introduction

The landscape of online gambling and sports betting in the United States has experienced a radical transformation, particularly following the 2018 Supreme Court's decision to overturn the Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act (PASPA) (Dorson, 2020; Whelan, 2023). New York has been at the forefront of this shift, actively pursuing the legalization of online sports betting and thus cultivating a dynamic and ever-growing market (Shirley, 2023). This paper delves into the perceptions of New York residents regarding online gambling. It aims to broaden the scope of Social Exchange Theory (SET) by integrating specific elements of cognitive awareness, notably residents' experience with gambling and their awareness of its tax benefits. This approach is designed to dissect the intricate relationship between residents' perceptions and the rapidly expanding domain of online gambling.

At its core, SET assesses relationships through cost-benefit analysis and power dynamics (Ap, 1992; Nunkoo, 2016). This study expands SET by considering cognitive awareness, hypothesizing its influence on residents' perceptions towards online gambling. The paper presents hypotheses exploring the relationship between perceived benefits, costs, power, awareness, experience, and support for legalization.

Methods

The study surveyed 283 New York residents aged 18 and older using Prolific, with the sample size determined as adequate for an effect size of 0.25 via G*Power analysis. Following Anderson & Gerbing's (1988) two-step approach, the model was identified and confirmed to be over-identified, meeting the 3-indicator rule and adhering to the t-rule and null-B rule (Bollen, 1989). Analysis, including groupwise comparisons to examine variations across different demographic segments, was performed using the lavaan package in RStudio.

Results/Discussion/Implication

The study uncovered significant relationships, particularly between residents' gambling experiences and their perceived benefits and costs of online gambling. These findings align with the core principles of traditional Social Exchange Theory (SET), while also emphasizing the crucial role of cognitive awareness in shaping public perceptions. This nuanced insight into residents' attitudes toward the legalization of online gambling demonstrates the value of extending SET to include cognitive elements such as experience and awareness.

From a practical standpoint, these insights are invaluable for policymakers and industry stakeholders. The extended application of SET offers a framework for developing public policies and marketing strategies that are more closely aligned with residents' experiences and their awareness of online gambling. This approach not only caters to the residents' perspectives but also enriches the strategic decision-making process in the online gambling sector.

References are available upon request

IS THERE A GENDER DIFFERENCE WHEN A ROBOT SERVICE FAILURE HAPPENS?

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Introduction

Service robots have been used in a wide range of hospitality and tourism sectors (Tuomi et al., 2020). Robots can be designed to have a humanlike appearance and gender-specific traits, which significantly influence customers' perceptions of service quality (Pitardi et al., 2022). AI companies prefer to program and design service robots as a feminine type, which reflects a gender preference in the service contexts (Seo, 2022). Existing studies have indicated that customer gender influences on the robot adoption and perceptions of robot service (Lee & Yen, 2023). However, it is not clear whether such influence exists when the customer's gender and robot gender both come into play. The role of gender congruity, where the gender of the service robot aligns or diverges from that of the customer remains unexplored. Moreover, even the most advanced robot has difficulties achieving intended outcomes when delivering the services (Tian et al. 2021); therefore, how customers react when served by robots in different gender when encountering service failure needs careful examination. The exploration would help service providers design and implement robots that are more aligned with customers' expectations and preferences accordingly (Choi et al., 2021).

Therefore, this study aims to examine the impact of robot gender, and the gender congruity between robot gender and customer gender on customers' responses to service failure, including customers' emotional, attitudinal, and behavioral responses. This study is of significance to the literature on human-robot interaction and provides useful insights for service providers to design and develop effective robot service.

Methods

All participants are recruited from MTurk. Study 1 is to examine the effect of robot gender (female vs. male) on customers' post-failure responses and the mediating role of customer affection (H1) in a hotel context. Study 2 aims to examine the interaction effect of robot gender (female vs. male) and gender congruity (same vs. different) on customers' post-failure responses (H2 and H3) in a restaurant outcome service failure context. To increase the robustness of the research results, Study 3 uses a restaurant process service failure context to examine the interaction effect. Due to the word limit, the scenarios and measures are not included.

Results/Discussion/Implication

Based on congruity theory, this study will underscore the influence of both robot gender and customer-robot gender congruity on customers' responses to service failures. This research will address customers' perception of service failures when interacting with service robots and extend the examination of gender stereotyping into the field of technology application, which contributes to the literature on service management and robotics. This study will also provide insights into customizing the appearance and gender presentation of robots to align with specific service contexts, thereby enhancing customer satisfaction and service recovery efforts.

PLAY, PAUSE, ENGAGE: UNVEILING THE SOCIAL DYNAMICS AND VALUE PATTERNS OF GAMEFUL EVENTS

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Introduction

The event tourism market, which was valued at \$1.5 trillion in 2022 and is projected to reach \$2.33 trillion by 2033, represents a static and contracting global sector driven by factors such as the localization of events and decreased consumer awareness. Despite past oversights, event tourism has gained prominence in the 1990s and has since evolved into an integrated approach to marketing and development (Future Marketing Insights, 2023). In today's era of pervasive technological integration and a globally interconnected cultural landscape, the significance of gameful experiences in event tourism is underscored by the ability to captivate and engage participants in transformative ways. Recognizing the impact of gameful elements becomes crucial as the demand for immersive experiences continues to grow, shaping future strategies of event tourism. Of particular note in this landscape are gameful events, which are innovative gatherings that skillfully combine gaming principles, social dynamics, and experiential modalities (Raftopoulos & Walz, 2013). The systematic study of gameful events has emerged as an intellectually compelling pursuit, offering an avenue for understanding the intricate relationship between ludic engagement, dynamics, and the creation of value (Thiel et al., 2019). To delve into the origins of gameful events, it is necessary to explore the literature on gameful studies, event management, and tourism. At the heart of this exploration lies the captivating concept of gamification, a term that has repelled the disinterest of scholars from various academic disciplines. As suggested by Deterding et al. (2011), gamification can be seen as adding a touch of magic to everyday situations by incorporating game-like elements, thereby transforming mundane experiences into engaging and interactive ones. Social impact, customer value, and engagement collectively offer a holistic view of the impact of gameful events. Examining these dimensions allows for a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted effects of gameful experiences on event tourists. To further scholarly conversation, this study seeks to combine ideas from existing literature. Building on the work of previous scholars, our objective is to further understand the phenomenon of gameful events through a quantitative lens. Based on the literature review, the study will test the relationship within the framework of the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) theory.

Methods

This study utilized a survey methodology to examine the influence of gameful experiences on tourists who participate in events. This study specifically focused on social impact, customer value, and event engagement and employs scales based on an online survey using the Qualtrics platform to gather information through Amazon MTurk and concludes with demographic inquiries. Upon completion of the meticulous verification process, the study examines the hypotheses by applying structural equation modeling (SEM). This methodologically strong approach guarantees the execution of a scientific and comprehensive exploration of the interplay between gameful experiences and event tourism dynamics.

Results/Discussion/Implication

This work represents an ongoing study, with comprehensive findings to be incorporated post data collection and analysis, conclusions will be drawn accordingly.

RESEARCH AGENDA: HOUSELESSNESS IN COLORADO'S TOURISM DESTINATIONS

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Introduction

With the rising cost of living and the lack of access to affordable housing, houselessness has risen to unprecedented numbers in Colorado's tourist destinations. Housing and living costs in destination cities and towns have increased dramatically, increasing the number of individuals suffering from houselessness. There is a major gap in research regarding houselessness and its impacts on visitor intention that needs scholarly attention. Colorado's High Country is suffering from tourist-related issues resulting from houselessness, as houseless individuals are sleeping along riverfront trails and public lands. Towns that have implemented no camping and no loitering signage are reducing the places houseless individuals have to go.

Methods

The methods proposed in this research agenda begin with a literature review, which is what this paper is focused on. The literature review will include policy reports, newspaper articles, data and statistics, and published research journals. The purpose of the literature review is to produce a conceptual framework and establish key research questions tied to houselessness and tourism based on a preliminary analysis of the stated data sources. The literature review will aim to answer which local governments are addressing homelessness, the impacts of houselessness on tourist intention, and the implications of houselessness (i.e. transportation, access to green spaces, and public lands). Additionally, a review of news articles will provide insight into current situations these destination cities are facing that have not had any scholarly attention.

Results/Discussion/Implications

At the conclusion of the literature review, one critical piece of the research agenda will be completed and there will be a foundation for the rest of the research process (i.e. interviews, surveys, participant observation). The results of the literature review will propose a framework to link the relationship between the houselessness epidemic and tourism. A framework will aid practitioners in further research to help mitigate the houselessness crisis in places where tourism is prominent in the High Country of Colorado.

When you search 'tourism and houselessness' into research databases, there are scarce results for studies that have been performed. It is critical that academia take a lens to the ways in which tourism impacts the houseless population and vice versa. Major gaps in the research include the idea of tourist intention and how it is affected by houselessness, consequences of the influx of home-buying in tourist destinations which raises the cost of living, the ideology that tourist destinations create opportunity for struggling individuals, and finally, the overall relationship between houseless populations and the tourism industry.

The research aims to fulfill the knowledge and research gap on the relationship between tourism and houselessness in Colorado's High Country. The implications of this research will be a guide for practitioners and stakeholders to provide best practice policies and procedures when houselessness is involved where tourism occurs.

References Are Available Upon Request

NUISANCES AND AESTHETICS IN RECREATIONAL WATER, THE PERCEPTION OF SOUTH CAROLINA RESIDENTS

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Introduction

Water is the protagonist of life's story. South Carolina's tourism heavily depends on the quality of its water bodies to provide positive experiences to visitors. However, the presence of nuisances and poor aesthetics in recreational water could be affecting South Carolina residents' perception of the state's water quality. The focus of this study is twofold. Firstly, it aims to understand the views of South Carolina residents on water quality change. Secondly, it examines the evolution of water contamination reported in media coverage using a situational crisis communication framework. While Situational Crisis Communication Theory has explored communication response strategies in newspaper articles (Sisco et al., 2010), the focus has primarily been on online platforms, leaving out various sectors like tourism and low-impact crises, the dynamics of all response strategies and testing a broader range of crisis scenarios are needed (Leung et al., 2023). The study aims to uncover the dynamic interplay between public perception, media portrayal, and the effectiveness of organizational communication in addressing challenges to lakes and oceans. This analysis is crucial for grasping the wider influence of media on public understanding and assessing the effectiveness of government crisis management in the face of water quality degradation.

Methods

This study follows a sequential mixed design.

Public Opinion Survey (Completed). - This quantitative study targeted South Carolina individuals aged 18 or older, utilizing an online survey adapted from the RBC Canadian Water Attitudes Study. The survey, overseen by experts in various fields, addressed water quality and quantity perceptions. Respondents (N=583) rated changes in water quality for seven sources on Likert-type scales. SPSS 29.0.1.0(171) facilitated descriptive analyses; the two worst source rates were selected for further analysis. Public opinion data were collected through Polfish.

Newspaper Analysis (Work in progress). - Using a qualitative research design, this study analyzed newspaper articles from the Newsbank database focused on the contamination of lakes and oceans in South Carolina from the years 2013 to 2023. Content and thematic analysis were conducted using NVIVO 14 software, with a focus on crisis response strategies.

Results/Discussion/Implication

The participants were asked to indicate if they noticed any improvements, deterioration, no change, or were unsure about the water quality. The results showed a general belief that water quality remained stable, except for lakes and oceans. It was noticed that 36.19% (n = 211) of the participants perceived a decline in the water quality of lakes, which was the most common response. Similar concerns were also expressed for Oceans (34.48%, n = 201) and Rivers (33.45%, n = 195), indicating shared sentiments about declining water quality in these sources.

Building upon the initial findings, we will conduct content and thematic analysis on newspaper articles addressing the deterioration of lakes and oceans. This analysis aims to gain a deeper understanding, considering the indicated concerns of South Carolina residents.

MANAGING HOSPITALITY OPERATIONS IN CONFLICT OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES: A MODERN-DAY LABOR REGULATION QUANDARY

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Introduction

Hospitality organizations have faced many challenges in the world post-2020 (AHLA, 2023). One consistent, ever-changing, and unique type of conflict hospitality managers are navigating in many markets is the guidelines and regulations on operating with a unionized workforce. With the recent COVID-19 pandemic adding hardships to hospitality workers, especially those line-level works (Baum, et al., 2020; Vo-Thanh, et al. 2021) and now as workers slowly re-engaging in the hospitality industry post-Covid-19 pandemic, a colossal staffing shortage was experienced that rocked the entire hospitality industry (AHLA, 2023; Platas, 2023). In 2023, many hospitality labor unions have conducted strikes and re-negotiated contracts, the most notable throughout Los Angeles this fall (City News, 2023). This has proved to provide unique challenges for hospitality managers, including but not limited to issues within the navigation between policy, union contracts, and government regulations while focusing on employees and customer service. The largest union, UNITE HERE! represents over 300,000 hospitality industry workers throughout the United States (UH, n. d.). Jung et al (2020) reported unions often provide employees with short-term gains but may struggle in long-term job satisfaction. In an older study, Korshak (2000) explained the need for hotel partners and labor unions to work together for the collective benefit of all stakeholders.

Many studies have been done on labor unions in the hospitality industry, but this study would focus on the post-2020 guidelines and regulations of labor unions in a blended environment for managers. The purpose of this study is to examine company policy, labor union contracts, and local laws governing manager decisions in a select area. Additionally, the study will take an exploratory examine at specific challenges hospitality managers face in these stacked regulatory environments.

Methods

The study will select at least one large geographic region in the US and examine known hotel corporate policies, local government regulations, and union contracts representing workers within the area. General review of overlapping aspects will occur and if possible key word coding will be conducted to identify critical concepts. Further, some interviews will be conducted to gain an understanding into the challenges and potential solutions within labor union markets. Findings from this study could provide useful tools for managers to navigate the often-conflicting guidelines and improve operational decision-making. Additionally, educational stakeholders can develop curriculum to allow for students to develop experience in navigating these aspects as entry-level managers.

References are available upon request

A LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF SOUTHEASTERN SEAFOOD FESTIVAL ATTENDEES PRE AND POST COVID

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Introduction

Festivals provide an opportunity to introduce attendees to an area and highlight local attractions and products. With the onset of early Covid and the resulting pandemic many festivals having to dramatically alter their events or cancel them entirely. This initial research examines a major seafood festival in the Southeastern United States pre-and post-Covid and compares the initial characteristics of the attendees. Survey Results from 2019 (N=276) will be compared to 2023 to examine what, if any changes have occurred with attendees. .Certain demographic factors will be the focus of the initial analysis (Age, Sex, Income, etc.) Geographic location, intent to visit the festival, and number of room nights will be compared.

Festivals can provide visitors an opportunity to explore new cultures and provide an environment for social interaction. Festivals focus on a variety of different subjects. Research into festivals and their impact on tourism has provided some of the most prolific areas of study (Quinn, 2009). Reasons that individuals may choose to attend festivals vary, with a sense of togetherness and escapism just being a few (Crompton & McKay, 1997). Festivals help generate revenue for the local economy as well. Communities view festivals as a way to increase visibility as well as a source of income for local businesses (Terry, Macy, & Owens, 2009). Depending on the size and scope of the festival, the impacts extend beyond the parameters of the actual event. Visitors to local festivals can spend significantly more in addition to the festival pricing for food and lodging (Grames & Vitcenda, 2018). Post Covid-19, festivals faced many challenges. One example of the global impact was the postponement of the 2020 Summer Olympics. This had not occurred since World War II (Rich, Futterman, & Panja, 2021). Events had to learn to adapt in order to survive, and it changed the landscape of how many of these events will take place moving forward.

Methods

For this initial study, we will analyze data collected during the festival. Information obtained from the Low Country Resort Islands Tourism Institute (LRITI) and the USCB Center for Event Management and Hospitality Training Research Project database (USCB Center for Event Management and Hospitality Training, 2022) will be used. Volunteers and researchers conducted the interviews with the respondents using touchscreen tablets. Students had a stationary booth for people to fill out surveys and walked around to find participants for the data collection process. Beginning with the festival this season, a revised questionnaire with additional questions measuring changes in attendee's responses pre- and post-Covid will be administered. The SERVQUAL method will be used to determine attendees behaviors since the pandemic (Zygiaris, Hameed, Alsubaie, & Rehman, 2022).

Results/Discussion/Implication

Information obtained from the reports over the two periods of this event creates an opportunity moving forward to see if any correlations exist between the variables included on the survey. Adding additional survey questions to examine attendee behavior can assist in efforts to better understanding attendee intention in a post-pandemic event climate. The potential to enhance the questionnaire for this event and review previous marketing and promotional efforts can help to ensure increased participation.

VOLNTEER ENGAGEMENT AND THE EXPERIENCE ECONOMY

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Introduction

The practice of engaging in volunteer work at festivals has grown increasingly common, with numerous individuals choosing to contribute their time, energy, and skills to ensure the successful execution of these expansive gatherings (Park et al., 2008). The involvement of festival volunteers is of crucial significance in shaping the overall festival experience. This idea, first put forth by Pine and Gilmore (1999), explains a crucial shift from the straightforward exchange of goods and services to a keen focus on creating memorable and impactful experiences. Volunteerism is a fundamental aspect of society's advancement when individuals actively donate their time and expertise to various activities (Wilson, 2000).

Methods

Qualitative research enables a comprehensive examination of experience economy concepts by delving into the perceptions of volunteers, thereby capturing the intricate and multifaceted aspects of their engagement. The primary data analysis tool utilized in this study is NVivo, a qualitative data analysis software that is extensively adopted in qualitative research (Hilal & Alabri, 2013). This study provides an examination of volunteer feedback collected over a duration of three years (2020-2022) from events organized by SOBE.

Results/Discussion/Implication

The research examined a cohort of 1,305 students who were spread across various academic disciplines and included data collected over a three-year duration. Consisting of 543 individuals, who comprised 41.61% of the entire cohort, these students were enrolled in hospitality programs. A total of eight dimensions constitutes the optimal experience effect. 41.61% of volunteers majored hospitality, while 14.56% majored business. This aligns with the most popular motive among student volunteers, which is a strong desire to engage in future career-related non-profit activities. Education presented as the most frequently mentioned experience sought by the volunteers.

The investigation of the function that festival volunteers perform within the experience economy makes a contribution to the development of theoretical frameworks in areas such as the co-creation of value, community participation, and cultural exchange. The original concept of the experience economy, which was introduced by Pine and Gilmore (1999), was enriched by the establishment of eight dimensions in this study. Researchers are able to extend the findings of this study to different volunteer-based settings and undertake more research as a result of the insights provided by this study. In the context of the experience economy, the research conducted on festival volunteers can provide festival organizers and volunteer managers with useful information that can inform practical tactics and solutions. It is possible for event and festival organizers to create effective recruitment methods, training programs, and support systems by first gaining an understanding of the elements that drive volunteer engagement and satisfaction. This will allow them to maximize the experience of volunteering and improve the overall performance of festivals.

A Holistic Examination of Solo Female Travel Experiences Using the COM-B Model

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Introduction

According to the Travel Industry Association (2022), approximately 32 million solo female Americans annually embark on solo trips. Notably, three-quarters of women in the age range of 20 to 70 are opting for solo nature, adventure, or cultural trips. The term "solo female travelers" refers to women who independently visit a place, excluding group or tour participation (McNamara & Prideaux, 2010). Female solo travelers encounter a spectrum of risks, including unwanted attention, sexual harassment, and societal disapproval, particularly in gendered tourism spaces that favor men's mobility (Karagoz et al., 2021). Recent research indicates that an increasing number of women find empowerment and freedom in solo travel (Yang et al., 2018). Existing literature delves into the motivations of solo female travelers, shedding light on both the challenges they encounter and the benefits they accrue (Osman et al., 2020). While preliminary research has explored the conceptualization of risks linked to solo female travel, examining the behavior and risk perceptions of female travelers in both Western and Asian cultures (Wilson & Little, 2008; Jordan & Aitchison, 2008; Yang et al., 2018), a noticeable research gap exists, particularly in understanding the experiences of solo female travelers in the context of air travel (Su & Wu, 2021). Acknowledging the significance of this market segment, it is imperative to discern the specific needs of solo female travelers and comprehend the potential consequences they may face. Consequently, this study aims to employ the COM-B (Capability, Opportunity, Motivation, and Behavior) model to characterize both barriers and facilitators to the journey of solo female travelers. Specifically, the research aims to investigate the influence of behaviors, both facilitating and hindering, on the mapping of the customer journey and its repercussions, encompassing the aptitude, opportunities, and motivation of individual female travelers.

Methods

The research is designed as a qualitative and quantitative approach to explore the current situation and incremental study. Based on the COM-B model, combined with a literature review and qualitative research, a focus group will initially be formulated. The COM-B analysis will be created, identifying both the barriers and facilitators of solo travel that may help orient future interventions. Two focus groups will be planned, which will comprise 20 participants with solo female travelers in Tampa and Daytona Beach. It will be made up of women who are traveling alone and represent a variety of professions, ages, and nationalities. A qualitative analysis will be performed based on perception about the evaluation of solo travel based on pre-flight, in-flight, and post-flight. Focus groups with Solo Female Travelers will be conducted with a specific focus on barriers and facilitators to travel alone of females. In the second phase of the research, a research wall and journey map will be created where women traveling alone will share their experiences, suggestions, demands, and requests, etc. during the journey stages (pre-flight, in-flight, and post-flight). In the final stage, the survey will be developed because of incremental research.

Finding and Conclusion

This study is an in-progress study. Findings and conclusion will be included after the data collection and analysis.

PUTTING UNIVERSITY TEACHING ENHANCEMENT CENTERS AND RATE MY PROFESSOR STUDENT REVIEWS TO WORK: A FOCUS ON NEW HOSPITALITY EDUCATORS

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Introduction

Delivering effective instruction and receiving positive teaching evaluations are crucial for evaluating new faculty members (Laguador, et al. 2015). Teaching in the hospitality discipline can be particularly challenging due to its industry-focused nature and the wide range of areas covered, such as marketing, F&B, Operations and legal courses (Plews & Zizka, 2020). Although teaching is perceived as a skill that can be developed through learning (Griffin, 2020), some new teachers continue to find it difficult to understand how to design and deliver courses that satisfy students' learning goals.

University centers that aim to enhance teaching enhancement become crucial in educating teachers in teaching skills, course design, and teaching-related technologies (Lieberman, 2005). Yet, some doctoral students find pedagogical content acquired from teaching centers too theoretical, creating a gap between their teaching training and classroom performance for a better learning experience (Rao et al., 2021).

Informal feedback from hospitality students becomes increasingly important despite concerns about potential biases in student feedback (Carrell & Kurlaender, 2023). Therefore, online platforms featuring student comments, such as Rate My Professor, become a vital source for understanding student expectations, difficulties encountered, and acceptable teaching approaches in various courses (Gregory, 2011).

Doctoral students who are trained to be faculty members typically receive support in developing teaching skills and preparing for teaching responsibilities from mentors, professors, peer graduate students, workshops, and guidelines offered by teaching centers (Lieberman, 2005). Although previous study investigated teaching evaluations from students and center of teaching, each source still has limitations in its views. The goal is to explore both sources to have a broader view of education and help new faculty members deliver effective teaching and receive better teaching evaluations, which will be helpful for them in securing job positions and passing tenure evaluations.

Methods

This research employs a qualitative method. It involves collecting and manually coding (using Nvivo) the guidelines from the Center of Teaching and Learning from 20 universities in the United States that provide leading hospitality programs to understand how this center guides educators in delivering quality teaching. Additionally, it will gather reviews left by undergraduate hospitality students on Rate My Professors over the past five years from the same 20 Universities. These reviews will undergo text analysis using the R Studio to extract insights into what students perceive as quality teaching that encourages class attendance and leads to higher teaching evaluations.

Results/Discussion/Implication

The research findings will identify and compare perspectives on effective teaching from both the Center for Teaching and students. It will list the commonalities and differences in their considerations, providing new faculty members with valuable information to create and foster effective learning environments.

References are available upon request

AN EXPLORATION OF TOURIST WORKER EXPERIENCES IN ST. LUCIA

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Introduction

Job creation and employment have long been a primary rationale for supporting tourism development in rural areas and the Global South (Mosedale, 2016). While aggregate statistics of employment can be touted as markers of success, they tend to mask issues of quality factors that underly overall well-being of tourism workers (Marcouiller & Xia, 2008). In this context, scholars have called for increased attention to the well-being of tourism workers (Baum, 2018; Baum et al., 2016; Dudley et al., 2022; Dudley et al., 2021; Robinson et al., 2019). In this research, well-being is approached holistically as a subjective psychological perspective that is influenced by economic and social conditions that connect to quality of life. This study formalized as the Covid-19 pandemic's travel restrictions and policies were tapering. Fewer industries were disrupted by the pandemic to the degree of the tourism industry; there was a 63% loss of employment worldwide, with rebounds varying by region. The pandemic had a disproportionate affect that on different types of workers, particularly those who we consider to be part of the informal tourism sector (Webb et al., 2020). The informal sector can be described as the lesser-regulated parts of the tourism economy, offering lower-resourced individuals opportunities for income generation through tourism (Çakmak & Çenesiz, 2020); often this sector employs individuals who may not have the means for navigating formal systems (i.e., education, workforce training, permitting). However, workers within the informal sector are often the most precarious because of the lack of laws and policies to protect or support them (Hampton et al., 2018), particularly during a crisis like the Covid-19 pandemic (Sun et al., 2022). While policy has been observed during Covid-19, particularly in its contribution to economic recovery (Bastián, 2021), it has not been considered in its role in worker well-being. As such, this research takes a political economy approach to consider the well-being of some of the most precarious workers in the St. Lucia tourism industry (Lee et al., 2015). In 2022, St. Lucia's tourism industry reflected 69% of all jobs on the island (-10.4% from pre-Covid, 2019 levels; WTTC, 2023). Specifically, this study was guided by the following questions: *What are the experiences of workers in the informal tourism sector St. Lucia? In what ways does the political economy that structures the tourism industry in St. Lucia, affect worker's well-being?*

Methods

Researchers conducted 22 semi-structured interviews with workers in the informal tourism sector that included public beach vendors (selling beach chair/umbrella rentals, souvenirs, or tourism services) and public craft market vendors. The interviews were part of a longer ethnographic study of tourism within St. Lucia, where one of the researchers worked and lived on the island for six months as part of a fellowship. St. Lucia is 616 sq km, with a population around 180,000; the researcher used both snowball sampling and convenience sampling to identify interviewees, but this also stemmed from the researcher interacting with many of the interviewees on a regular basis as part of life and research while studying tourism on the island. Thus, ethnographic notes also inform an umbrella context for considering worker well-being in St. Lucia. Data is currently being qualitatively analyzed and preliminary findings will be presented at the conference.

Results/Discussion/Implication

Findings support a discussion regarding policy considerations in small island developing states.

ECO-FIT FLAVORS: CRAFTING MEAL KIT SATISFACTION WITH MEANS-END THEORY

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Introduction

The advantages of online food delivery have become more prominent, making meal preparation easier for consumers and enabling food suppliers to maintain their businesses (Dsouza & Sharma, 2020). Meal kits, falling under the ready-to-cook category, offer consumers a convenient and straightforward way to prepare a range of restaurant-quality meals at home (Levy, 2018). Existing literature on meal kit services has predominantly focused on hedonic and functional values, as well as social and mental values (Fraser et al., 2022). Notably, meal kits have emerged as a valuable tool for reducing food waste, supporting sustainable sourcing, and potentially lowering the carbon footprint compared to equivalent meals purchased from grocery stores (Heard et al., 2019).

Consumers' perceptions of product attributes play a crucial role, reflecting their values, preferences, and purchasing frequency (Kim et al., 2018). Additionally, consumers' decision-making in consuming products or services is closely associated with their desired value since the product or service plays a role in achieving their goals (Huber et al., 2001). Therefore, a consumer might choose meal kit services to live a healthy and environment-friendly life. Thus, this study develops a conceptual framework by adopting means-end theory and aims to: (a) identify the health and sustainability consciousness of meal kit services; (b) investigate how these values influence consumers' satisfaction; and (c) examine the effects of consumers' satisfaction on their intention to repurchase meal kits and recommend them to others.

Methods

This study will utilize an online survey via Prolific. A pilot test will be conducted with a convenience sample to check clarity and content validity of the items. This will be followed by a nationwide survey. All constructs, perceived values (health and sustainability consciousness), satisfaction, and behavior intentions (repurchase and word of mouth) will be measured with multiple items on a 7-point Likert scale. The Partial Least Squares technique will be utilized to test the research model using SmartPLS 4.

Results/Discussion/Implication

The findings of the study would provide both theoretical and practical contributions to the field of online food delivery services. Theoretically, the findings of this study would provide the dimensions of consumers' perceived values associated with their satisfaction and behavioral intention to use meal kit services. This study would also determine whether consumers' dietary restrictions and environmental concerns would play moderators. Practically, the study's findings can provide valuable insights for food delivery companies regarding consumers' expectations and experiences with meal kits. Thus, meal kit companies could strategically reshape their business models to align more closely with the needs and desires of consumers' to positively influence their cooking experience.

FACTORS AFFECTING HOTEL EMPLOYEES' CYBERSECURITY BEHAVIOR

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Introduction

Since the early 2000s, there have been numerous reported instances of major hotel groups falling victim to cyber-attacks (Kubacki, 2021). Several of the hotel breaches may be partially attributed to employee error. For example, the cyber-attack on Marriott in 2020 was traced back to the logins of two employees at a franchised property (Durbin, 2020). Two factors may have contributed to this form of humanistic oversight: the underestimation of risks associated with violating cybersecurity policies and insufficient attention given to adherence to these policies (Li et al., 2019). In this context, it is imperative to comprehend the factors that influence employees' cybersecurity behaviors.

Therefore, based on the Protection Motivation Theory (Rogers, 1983), the current study examined the impacts of perceived vulnerability, perceived severity, maladaptive rewards, response efficacy, self-efficacy, and response cost on hotel employees' intention to comply with information system (IS) security policies. PMT originated from cognitive processing theories and expectancy-value theories, initially crafted to elucidate the impact of fear appeals on health behavior and predict individuals' intentions to engage in protective behaviors (Ifinedo, 2012). Several behavioral IS security studies have employed the PMT to ascertain the information security behaviors of individuals within both home and workplace environments (e.g., Burns et al., 2017).

Methods

Previously validated instruments were employed to gauge the constructs under investigation. Each item on the scales was assessed using a seven-point Likert scale. The data collection took place through a self-administered online survey conducted by the marketing research company, Qualtrics. The survey targeted hotel employees with an awareness of their organizations' IS security policies. A total of 309 responses were gathered, and 298 valid responses were utilized for subsequent analyses. Confirmatory factor analysis was applied to evaluate the validity of the study scales, while structural equation modeling was employed to test the study hypotheses.

Results/Discussion/Implication

Although PMT has been utilized in several other contexts, to the author's best knowledge, this study is one of the first to apply it in the context of hotel employees. The study findings contribute to the body of literature on IS security by exploring the factors that influence hotel employees' behavior in evading cybersecurity threats aimed at their organization. The findings of this study provide several practical implications to stakeholders within the hotel industry, such as hoteliers, and hospitality technology vendors. Hotel operators are encouraged to enhance the cybersecurity awareness of their employees by clearly communicating the susceptibility of the hotel industry to cyber-attacks and explaining the severity of the harmful consequences resulting from such attacks. Furthermore, it is recommended that hotel technology vendors formulate IS security policies, taking into consideration the overall self-efficacy levels of hotel employees. Moreover, these policies should be devised in a manner that minimizes perceived time consumption and inconvenience.

References are available upon request

Shut-Up and Brew: Consumer Perceptions of Advocacy in the Beer Industry

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Introduction

Beer in America has historically been a drink that brings people together and is often enjoyed in group settings. However, in April of 2023 the top selling beer in America – Bud Light – became the most divisive brand in the country and quickly turned into public enemy number one. Leading to boycotts by both sides of the political spectrum. Shortly after the start of the boycott, Bud Light lost its spot as the number one selling beer in America (Karlovitch, 2023). However, this is far from the first time a beer brand has taken a stance that some would claim to be political (Myles et al., 2023), nor is it the first time a beer brand has suffered a major boycott that had lasting impacts on sales (Brantley, 2021).

Considering the current state of American politics and the strong division in the country, the purpose of this study is to assess beer consumers' perceptions of advocacy campaigns by brewers and their influence on consumption behavior. Utilizing the three axes of advocacy set forth by Myles et al. (2023) – environmental, social/justice, and economic – this study will assess how consumers moral foundations influence perceptions and future purchase. Moral Foundations Theory (MFT) serves as the guiding theoretical framework for the current study.

Methods

The current study will employ a two-step data collection procedure, with a pilot test of beer advertisements to ensure images are representative of the three axes and left-leaning vs. right-leaning advertisements. The main study will be carried out via a targeted panel on Qualtrics to ensure respondents are regular beer drinkers, and a between-subjects quasi-experimental approach will be implemented for analyses. Participants will be asked to complete a political affiliation scale and the MFT scale. Then, using an experimental design, participants will be divided into 7-groups (environmental-right, social-right, economic-right, environmental-left, social-left, economic-left, neutral-advocacy) and shown a beer advertisement based on their condition. Following the advertisement, participants will answer questions about their perceptions of the beer, their willingness to purchase based on the cause, and if their perceptions of the brand changed because of the advertisement.

Results/Discussion/Implication

Results of the current study will provide insight into the perceptions and consumption behaviors of U.S. beer consumers, as they relate to a brand's advocacy initiatives. America has experienced increased political separation in recent years, and brands now more than ever must be mindful of how their marketing plans and engagement in advocacy causes might alienate certain consumer groups. This study seeks to provide a better understanding of what causes are more likely to influence consumer purchase intention based on their political affiliations.

References are available upon request

“I’LL HAVE VODKA WITH A SPLASH OF CELEBRITY”.
POP CULTURE INFLUENCE ON RESTAURANT CONSUMER MOTIVATIONS AND
PURCHASE BEHAVIOR

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Introduction

Since singer Pat Boone purchased a chain of self-service cafeterias, there has been an alluring celebrity-hospitality industry connection (Whitaker, 2013). The latest trend in celebrity owned products are their own branded alcohol offerings. Iofrida et al. (2022) shared intrinsic and extrinsic factors the average restaurant customer uses in restaurant selection, including type of atmosphere, quality food and a reasonable price. However, does the priority of these factors change when the opportunity to try a celebrity owned product enters the decision field.

Ryan and Deci (2000) define intrinsic motivation as internal zeal to do something because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable, and extrinsic motivation, as doing something based on external factors. As people make menu decisions, the study will evaluate if persons are more intrinsically or extrinsically motivated. The purpose of this study is to understand restaurant consumer likelihood to modify purchasing decisions with the introduction of celebrity owned spirit beverages.

In examination of the literature, regarding menu engineering, there is a positive relationship with customer satisfaction and the promotion of wine on the menu (Kim et al., 2019). Norris et al. (2021) describe consumer decision-making factors with intrinsic attributes of the product itself and extrinsic attributes including bottle, brand name/advertising, and price. There is evidence of celebrity influence in consumer decisions. Wachyuni and Priyambodo (2020) conclude that the celebrity endorsement variable contributed 25.9% to the purchase decision, more than any other factor.

H1. Extrinsic and intrinsic motivations influence consumers’ intentions toward celebrity owned products. H1-parts a-e, show three extrinsic and two intrinsic components.

H2. Demographic characteristics influence the relationship between motivations and consumer’s purchase intention for celebrity owned products. H2- parts a-b, show moderation of age and gender respectively.

Methodology

Using self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan, 1985) the study will examine extrinsic and intrinsic motivational factors of the respondents and the relationship to purchase intention. In development of the survey instrument, post consumption behavioral intentions like revisit and word-of-mouth will also be tested.

Expected Outcomes/Implications

The current study contributes to the body of literature investigating the influence of celebrities in the hospitality arena. This area has not been heavily researched with specific focus on restaurants and menu selection. This study is also among the first in the hospitality and foodservice field to assess the consumer behavior variable perfectionism especially in the context of beverage management. Practical implications include menu management insights. These findings would provide an edge to restaurants willing to include related products on their beverage menu.

STRATEGIES TO COMBAT HOSPITALITY LABOR SHORTAGES: FOCUS ON BUILDING EMPLOYER ATTRACTIVENESS

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Introduction

Attracting and retaining workforce have been a critical issue in the restaurant industry due to poor work setting. This issue has worsened due to the unprecedented and detrimental impacts of COVID-19 (Chen & Qi, 2022). Even though restaurant businesses have been taking proactive actions, such as raising pay, they are still challenged with hiring and retaining an adequate number of employees to meet the demands of business operations. Thus, this study seeks sustainable solutions to combat ways of effectively retaining the workforce and attracting prospective employees. The specific objectives are to (1) identify the relationships between different perceived values and intention to stay; and (2) investigate the gap between how current employees perceive the importance of these values and how well their restaurants are doing at providing those values from the employees' perspective. A study of Berthon et al., (2005) proposed that employers could manifest five values in management to boost their attractiveness towards their workforce. First, social value is related to the work environment, relationships among colleagues, and a team atmosphere. Second, economic value is determined by evaluating monetary and nonmonetary benefits, such as job security and promotion opportunities. Third, interest value relates to the psychological benefits of a job's characteristics, such as using employees' creativity, and innovation of products and services. Last, application value refers to the opportunities for employees to apply what they have learned and teach others at work. Development value is determined by confidence and self-worth, recognition from the organization, and a stepping stone for a future career.

Methods

Using an online survey, data will be collected from employees currently working in the restaurant industry in the United States. Participants will be recruited through *Centiment* panels. The survey questionnaire will be developed with the items borrowed from the literature (Berthon et al., 2005; Kim et al., 2020). Participants will be asked to respond to identical values on questions measuring both importance of each value and perceived performance of their restaurants. Additionally, the questionnaire will include four items for measuring their intention to stay at the current restaurants. The collected data will be analyzed using SPSS software. Structural equation modeling will be used to uncover the relationships between each value and intention to stay. Importance-performance analysis (IPA) will be performed to identify the gaps between participants' perceptions of the importance of a specific value and their perceptions of the actual performance of their restaurants on managing that value.

Results/Discussion/Implication

Considering the lack of studies on employer branding from the perspective of hospitality employees, this study could contribute to literature and provide insights for the hospitality industry. Additionally, by comparing how the employees perceive the significance of each value and how well their companies are doing at providing those values, the areas for focusing on or improving to increase the companies' attractiveness could be highlighted.

CULTIVATING SUSTAINABILITY SAVVY: THE ROLE OF SOFT SKILLS IN SHAPING SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

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Introduction

Embracing sustainable practices leads to reduced operating costs through enhanced energy efficiency and waste reduction and results in increased brand reputation and heightened customer loyalty, driven by growing awareness and preference for environmentally responsible businesses. Despite this, the training landscape for sustainability remains largely unexplored. Numerous organizations aspire to enhance environmental and social responsibility, but the plethora of suggested practices (Weber et al., 2020) leads to confusion. With businesses investing significantly in training (Statista, 2022; Statista, 2023), it is evident that organizations recognize the importance of developing skills that align with sustainable practices and contribute to long-term success. To bridge this gap, this research explores employee sustainability knowledge and soft skills to gain a more nuanced understanding to provide evidence-based recommendations to enhance organizational sustainability initiatives.

Methodology/Results

This study used a form of chain-referral sampling with two populations: 1) managers in hospitality organizations and 2) employees in service-related organizations. The respondents were asked to complete a 33-item survey instrument on soft skills (plus demographics) (Crawford & Weber, 2016). The knowledge of sustainable practices (sp) and soft skills (ss) were evaluated using cluster analysis based on the length of management experience. Both knowledge of sustainable practices ($F_{2, 118} = 9.462, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.140$) and knowledge of soft skills ($F_{2, 118} = 10.155, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.149$) were significantly different based on the length of management experience. Cluster analysis was used and extracted four groups: *Sustainable Catalysts* (high sp/high ss), *Emerging Learners* (low sp/low ss), *Skillful Initiators* (low sp/medium ss), and *Sustainable Champions* (high sp/low ss).

Discussion

The findings underscore a crucial aspect in developing successful sustainability practices—cultivating employees' knowledge and skills. However, the findings reveal that the training and workforce education approach cannot adopt a "one size fits all" mentality. Instead, employees exhibit distinct categories of sustainability knowledge and the requisite soft skills needed to foster such practices. Building on prior research by Weber et al. (2020), we propose a training program framework based on quadrants addressing the specific needs and characteristics of the corresponding knowledge communities. We recommend incorporating active training methods like Lego Serious Play (Kristiansen & Rasmussen, 2014). In Lego Serious Play, employees are provided with a prompt, Lego to build metaphorical representations, and then facilitate a group discussion. In the context of sustainability training, the adaptability of discussion prompts can be tailored to the varying levels of employee knowledge on the subject. Moreover, given the inherent interactive and sharing aspects of the method, Lego Serious Play inherently functions as an integrated soft skills training tool. Our study findings and recommendations aim to equip organizations with tailored methods that recognize the distinct needs of each employee category, fostering an inclusive and practical approach to sustainability training.

COULD VIRTUAL REALITY BE A VIABLE OPTION TO REPLACE PHYSICAL TRAVEL IF INFLATION AND COST OF LIVING CONTINUE TO RISE?

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Introduction

The continuous growth of technology, particularly virtual reality (VR), has ushered in a new era for the tourism industry, transforming the way people approach travel. VR immerses users in virtual worlds, utilizing sounds, sensations, and imagery to create compelling experiences. The Technology Acceptance Model, predicting the increasing use of VR in tourism, underscores the perceived usefulness of VR in enhancing travel experiences (Schiopu et al., 2022).

VR's ability to elicit both mental and physical reactions, such as an increased heart rate or sweating, further enhances its effectiveness (Skard et al., 2021). To continue, the tourism industry faces a significant challenge in the form of financial burdens imposed by a tumultuous economy. Record-high gas prices, soaring airfare, and increased living expenses have resulted in reduced discretionary income for leisure activities, including travel. In the United States, inflation rose by 6.5% from December 2021 to December 2022, accompanied by a 1.7% decrease in workers' salaries during the same period (USA Facts, 2023). To remain relevant, the tourism industry must adapt by providing cost-effective travel alternatives. This study aims to understand individuals' decisions to use virtual reality instead of physical travel due to limited discretionary income for leisure activities.

Methods

A qualitative semi-structured interview approach was adopted to capture participants' experiences and thoughts regarding VR travel. Audio recordings of the interviews were digitally stored and transcribed for content analysis. A total of 20 participants were interviewed. The data saturation was reached at the 16th participants. Researchers conducted an additional four interviews to confirm that no new themes emerged. Interview questions covered topics such as factors prohibiting travel, the impact of VR on travel experiences, and benefits and concerns associated with VR travel. Among the 20 participants, 11 were female while 9 were male. The ages ranged from 18 to 52.

Results

The study's results reveal that financial constraints significantly limit travel aspirations among participants, with 15 out of 20 interviewees identifying a lack of finances as the primary barrier to travel. This reflects a broader trend where economic considerations impede the pursuit of travel for many individuals. On the other hand, VR emerges as a powerful marketing tool and dynamic medium, with 70% of interviewees considering it effective for determining their desire to visit specific destinations. VR is seen as a means to explore cultures and landscapes virtually before committing to the financial and logistical aspects of physical travel. Additionally, VR serves as an alternative for individuals constrained by safety concerns or health conditions, offering a transformative travel experience, although its universal substitution for physical travel remains uncertain, as some value the sensory engagement of traditional travel experiences.

References are available upon request.

RECLAIMING MOMENTUM: THE ROLE OF MENTORSHIP AND SPONSORSHIP IN WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN THE HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM INDUSTRY

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Introduction

Women in business disproportionately suffered career setbacks in 2020 and 2021. Before the pandemic, 28% of management positions were held by females (Masterson, 2020). According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, women held 8,979,000 positions within the hospitality industry in 2020, which decreased to 6,939,000 by January 2021 (Puckett, 2021). Covid-19 increased the disadvantages for women working in hospitality (Baum *et al.*, 2020). Providing mentorship and sponsorship opportunities to women in the hospitality industry can serve to reverse the decline and help change this imbalance (Dashper, 2020; Hewlett, 2013).

A mentor is a “wise and trusted counselor or teacher; mentoring is the guidance process that takes place between a mentor and a protégé, and a mentorship is a mentoring relationship between a mentor and a protégé” (Friday, Friday, and Green, 2004, p. 637). A sponsor is “a person who nominates or supports another person’s (protégé) promotion; sponsoring is the process of a senior colleague in a position of power nominating or supporting a protégé’s promotion; and a sponsorship is a sponsoring relationship between a sponsor and a protégé.” (Friday, Friday, & Green, 2004, p. 638). Mentorship is well-established in academic business and hospitality literature, but sponsorship relationships have not been explored in-depth. This research includes mentor relationships and introduces sponsor relationships within the hospitality literature and explores how some have already benefited from these relationships.

Methods

This qualitative study employed a modified version of the Delphi technique. The Delphi method is a strategy for achieving a collective agreement of a small group of experts involving multiple rounds on the chosen subject (Yousuf, 2007). The research involved fifteen senior female professionals from the hospitality and tourism sector, all holding positions at or above the Vice President level. Over eight weeks, these participants completed a series of four surveys, each one building upon the results of its predecessor. In the final survey stage, the participants were asked to rate the consensus-based responses using a 5-point Likert scale to assess the significance and priority of each response (Okoli & Pawlowski, 2004).

Results/Discussion/Implication

From this research, final lists were extracted indicating why women participate in these relationships as a mentor, mentee, sponsor and sponsoree. This study found that women as mentors or sponsors are driven by a desire to develop future leaders and help employees advance in their careers. Conversely, mentees and sponsorees seek to learn, gain advice, and enhance professional development. The study underscores a nuanced difference in what motivates highly successful women to become mentors, focusing more on altruistic reasons, unlike their male counterparts who are more inclined towards reciprocity and the development of friendships, as indicated by Malota (2017) and Linz & Semykina (2013). The research suggests that companies should facilitate these relationships by providing platforms and encouraging women to engage in mentoring and sponsoring, by emphasizing altruistic impact.

References are available upon request.

THE FUTURE OF UNIVERSITY FOODSERVICE: THOUGHT LEADER INSIGHTS

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Introduction

The campus dining landscape and services must continue to evolve due to the challenges presented by a perennially evolving customer (Holligan, 2017; Leischner et al., 2018). From how the facility is designed (Bowman et al., 2019; Choi et al., 2011) to considerations surrounding labor cost and availability, food cost and shortages, and advocating for the future (Morrow et al., 2012), the myriad factors that influence campus dining must be addressed independently as well as aggregately (Joung et al., 2014). The Health Promotion Model (HPM) supports this holistic approach to campus dining by examining people's attitudes about health and individual experiences by exploring how their lifestyles, psychological health, and social and cultural environments influence their health-related decisions (Araújo et al., 2017). The ever-changing landscape of student and campus dining expectations begs the question: 'What should college dining look like in 2030 and beyond?'

Methods

The National Association for College and University Food Services membership, was leveraged to identify thought leaders at institutions and organizations that represented both self-operated and contract food service and ranged across the entire nation geographically. In addition, academics, technologists, and facility designers were included. Each focus group session was conducted via video conference technology and was recorded for verbatim transcription. The focus groups were then analyzed using a qualitative thematic analysis approach (Nowell et al., 2017).

Results/Discussion/Implications

The two rounds of focus groups yielded a wealth of information on myriad topics, all of which serve to inform the future of food service by 2030 and beyond. Labor issues, including how technology can be leveraged to assist with this issue were a focal emphasis. There is also a need to examine compensation in addition to the culture in the workplace to be able to attract more talent. In addition, the design of the facilities should be thoughtfully reexamined for the future workforce. It is no surprise that technology would be paramount for a future facility. The use of mobile applications to collect meaningful data and provide pertinent information to guests is vital. For the customers, it is important to stay abreast of shifting generational and population trends. It is also important to provide efficient service, as time is very important to students. The need to tell the CSR and sustainability stories will be an integral component of the organization in the future. Balancing cost with sustainability and making these initiatives a part of the campus culture is key to their success. Similarly, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) practices should be implemented. Consistently working with local minority-owned businesses is essential for stakeholders across the institution. This story must also be ingrained in the fabric of campus culture and the overall narrative of the organization.

References are available upon request

THE EFFECT OF CULTURAL CAPITAL ON THEME PARK VISIT INTENTION

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Introduction

Theme parks are tourist attractions that use rides, settings, landscapes, characters, and shows to tell stories. These narrative mediums adapt mythology, legends, fairy tales, or intellectual properties (Baker, 2018) from books, films, and video games to attract guests. The success of this strategy can be observed in the constant increase in attendance, revenue, and prices charged in the most visited theme parks worldwide (TEA/AECOM, 2022). Immersive lands are the new trend in the industry and cost millions to develop. The question that this research aims to answer is related to how much these elaborate narratives are relevant to motivating guest visitation.

Supported by Dann's push and pull factors theory (1977, 1981) this research empirically tests the effect of cultural capital on guests in the intention to visit theme parks. According to Bourdieu (1973), cultural capital is related to knowledge and cultural codes used in a particular community. More objectively, this concept is connected to the activities, preferences, and knowledge related to the high status of knowledge in a group (Balboni et al., 2019). Here, cultural capital could be related to the narratives represented in the theme park. It is possible to believe that people with high cultural capital would be more inclined to visit attractions related to the stories they are interested in.

Methods

For this quantitative study, data was collected using MTurk in April 2023. US residents over 18 years old who had visited a theme park before were selected to participate. A total of 313 questionnaires were analyzed. 40 push factors items from Park et al. (2019). 24 items on theme park pull factors from Milman (2009) and 15 items on cultural capital from Balboni et al. (2019). Visit intention used three questions (Chaulagain et al., 2019).

Results/Discussion/Implication

EFA was conducted to test the validity of measurement followed by CFA which fitted the data well, with CFI (.85), SRMR (.07), and RMSEA (.06) failing the fit criteria recommended. 20 variables were removed until the model was refitted to the data.

Structural Equation Modeling results revealed a negative and significant moderation effect of cultural capital on the push factors that capture tourists' motivations to visit theme parks. Contrarily, when assessing theme parks' pull factors that can attract tourists, a positive and significant moderating effect was observed. The negative effect of cultural capital on push factors can be related to the tourism interest in a diversity of cultural activities or lack of time due to the intense consumption of cultural products. As tourists' motivations are negatively related to active engagement in cultural consumption, marketers should not focus their advertising efforts on targeting them. Conversely, the positive effect on the pull factor indicates that higher cultural capital can be more attracted by theme park.

Results may be different if visitors are from different countries. Variables related to culture, economic constraints, and previous experience with theme parks could present different results. Last, it is possible to measure different levels and types of cultural capital (i.e., classic, popular).

References are available upon request.

GENERATIVE AI IN HOSPITALITY EDUCATION: EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF GENERATIVE AI LITERACY FOR ENHANCING LEARNING EXPERIENCES

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Introduction

"Artificial intelligence is the new electricity," as stated by Andrew Ng (2017), signifying the profound impact of AI across industries. Within AI, generative AI stands out for its ability to autonomously create content across various formats by learning from data (Goodfellow et al., 2014; LeCun et al., 2015). In hospitality and education, generative AI holds promise for enhancing customer experiences, operational efficiency, and skill development (Gilbert, 2023; Walker, 2023). However, it also presents challenges such as ethical, legal, and technical concerns, including privacy and authenticity issues (Global Asset Solutions, 2023; Les Roches, 2023). The evolving landscape of work, as projected by the World Economic Forum (2020), underscores the importance of skills like creativity and critical thinking, closely tied to generative AI literacy. Hence, exploring the development and assessment of generative AI literacy in hospitality education becomes crucial to prepare professionals for industry demands.

This paper aims to investigate the impact of generative AI on hospitality and education, addressing its challenges and potential benefits. The research question guiding this inquiry is: How can generative AI literacy be cultivated and evaluated in hospitality education, and what are its advantages and constraints? By delving into this question, the study seeks to contribute insights into leveraging generative AI effectively while navigating its complexities in hospitality education and practice.

Methods

We will adopt a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. These methods include online surveys, interviews, focus groups, and generative AI activities and assessments. Through these avenues, we aim to gather comprehensive insights into the impact of generative AI on the hospitality industry and education, as well as the development and assessment of generative AI literacy within hospitality education.

Results/Discussion/Implication

The findings will be included after data collection and analysis. Conclusions will be drawn accordingly.

References are available upon request

WANT TO SLOW DOWN INFLATION? IT MIGHT BE AS SIMPLE AS VISITING YOUR FAVORITE LOCAL RESTAURANTS AGAIN.

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Introduction

As the world has begun to emerge from the shadow of the pandemic, a new challenge surfaced in the form of rising inflation. In the US, inflation peaked at nearly 9% in June of 2021. This rapid rise in prices has limited consumer buying power and confidence. Understanding the factors that have led to this increase can potentially allow policymakers to make better decisions, potentially limiting future challenges regarding inflation. This paper will attempt to evaluate one potential factor, changing consumer behavior, will discuss the impact of that change, and will make recommendations regarding future policy responses.

Methods

This study examines data collected by the Federal Reserve Bank of Saint Louis as well as data collected by the National Restaurant Association. The data was compared to quantify the change in consumer purchasing behavior and conclusions drawn regarding the influence of this change on inflation. The author acknowledges that other potential influences or confounding variables have also likely contributed to the 2022 rise of inflation.

Results/Discussion/Implication

Inferences provided by this study are grounded by the laws of supply and demand and the theory of demand-pull inflation. From 2020 to 2021 there was an increase of nearly \$73 Billion and from 2021 to 2022 there was an increase of more than \$70 Billion in the total value of manufactured goods purchased. The previous highest value increases from year to year were \$49.5 Billion from 2010 to 2011 and \$40.5 Billion from 2009 to 2010. Furthermore, it is important to note that this previous increase was preceded by a loss of value of more than \$87 Billion during the 2008/09 recession. While COVID-19 negatively impacted the value of manufactured goods sold in 2019-2020, the total impact was just over \$57 Billion. The resulting rebound of \$143 Billion far exceeded the previous 2 years' loss. Correspondingly, from 2019 the restaurant industry sales fell from \$864.3 Billion to \$659 Billion in 2020, a loss of more than \$205 Billion and \$240 Billion when considering previous forecasts for sales. While in 2021 industry sales rebounded to \$731.5 Billion, this still represented a loss when compared to 2019 sales of \$864.3 Billion. In 2022, the industry continued to rebound, and exceeded 2019's total dollar value reaching \$898 Billion, however, this was still significantly below forecasted expectations before the COVID epidemic. These numbers seem to indicate a shift in consumer spending behavior and the author posits that this shift has added to the supply chain issues that have influenced the recent bout of inflation. While typically, manufacturers would simply increase capacity, some may hesitate to invest in case consumer behavior reverts to previous norms, thus, adding increased stress to an already overburdened supply chain. To combat this in the future, the author suggests utilizing marketing to increase consumer spending on services. By redirecting consumer spending, policymakers could both ease the supply chain issues faced by manufacturing and improve economic conditions for service providers.

References are available upon request

Cultivating Community: Strategic Interventions to Enhance Non-Monetary Contributions through Patrons' Social Belonging

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Introduction

This research delves deeper into the unique dynamics of the film festival patron lifecycle, focusing on enhancing non-monetary support through fostering a sense of social belonging. Recognizing the significant challenge posed by the rising popularity of streaming services and video-on-demand platforms, this study aims to uncover strategic interventions that can more effectively engage and retain festival patrons, ensuring their continued interest and involvement in the face of digital alternatives. This research also attempts to identify film festival “super patrons” who incorporate film festivals as part of their identity.

Methods

Employing a mixed-methods approach, this study gathers quantitative data from a broad range of film festival patrons. This data is focused on understanding varying levels of patron involvement, their feelings of community within the festival setting, and the direct and indirect influences these factors have on their willingness to support film festivals non-monetarily. Complementing this, qualitative insights are sourced from in-depth interviews with festival organizers, aiming to grasp their perspectives on diverse patron profiles and their strategies to nurture ongoing patron engagement.

Results/Discussion/Implication

Initial findings from this study reveal a significant correlation between patrons' perception of their connection to the festival community and their journey through the patron lifecycle. This connection notably correlates with an increase in their non-monetary contributions to the festivals. These observations underscore the critical role of cultivating a strong sense of community among patrons, not just as a means of enhancing their experience but as a vital component in the sustainable growth and development of film festivals in an increasingly digital-centric entertainment landscape.

WHAT DO GENERATION Y CONSUMERS PREFER IN WELLNESS TOURISM? A COMPARATIVE QUALITATIVE STUDY BETWEEN US AND TÜRKİYE

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Introduction

Global Wellness Institute (GWI) more specifically defines wellness as “the active pursuit of activities, choices and lifestyles that lead to a state of holistic health” (Okumus & Kelly, 2023). GWI outlines six primary motivations driving wellness tourism: social, physical, mental, spiritual, emotional, and environmental, highlighting that each destination caters to at least one of these aspects. Those traveling for physical well-being can discover health, fitness, and beauty amenities such as healthy eating options, wellness centers, health resorts, sanatoria, spas, and more (Yeung & Johnston, 2018; Okumus & Kelly, 2023). In the physical dimension of wellness tourism, the values of "fitness, healthy eating, health and spa&beauty" are addressed. The fitness value consists of gym visits, fitness classes, stretching, pilates activities, while the healthy eating value consists of nutrition, weight management, detoxing and culinary experiences. Health, the third value of physical wellness tourism, consists of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM), integrative medicine, diagnostics, health check-ups and chronic condition management. Spa & Beauty value consists of massage, bathing, body treatment, facials, hair and nails activities (Okumus & Kelly, 2023). Looking at the literature, conducted a study in Hungary and found that there are differences in the healthy living habits of different generations. In particular, it was revealed that Generation Y showed the least interest in wellness facilities (Horvath & Printz-Marko, 2017).

Methods

The study will be analyzed based on the interpretive phenomenology design (Creswell, 2020), one of the qualitative research methods. The main mass of the study is Generation Y consumers who actively use physical wellness touristic products. In the study, it is planned to conduct in-depth interviews with 30 people from this group in the US and Türkiye face-to-face or online (zoom, whatsapp, etc.) using semi-structured questionnaires. Interview durations are between 20-40 minutes. Due to time and budget constraints, snowball sampling method, one of the purposive sampling methods, will be used to obtain the data. Data analysis will be done by the researchers themselves through coding method. For internal and external validity, expert opinions will be taken in the coding obtained from the question form and statements. In addition, purposeful sampling and descriptive and content analysis will ensure the consistency of the findings within themselves. In the coding and themes to be created, some code and theme names will be changed in line with the opinions of experts and the information obtained from scientific studies.

Results/Discussion/Implication

Conclusionly, it must be emphasized that this study remains a research in progress. Upon completion of thorough data collection and analysis, additional findings will be integrated into this study, thereby enriching our insights of the topic under examination

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SUSTAINABILITY PLEDGES IN PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE BEHAVIOR: AN INITIAL STUDY

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Introduction

Sustainability pledges, varying from statements to certification schemes, are crucial for promoting sustainable behavior among tourists (Albrecht & Raymond, 2022; Gao et al., 2017). While research suggests their effectiveness in promoting simple tasks like recycling, their impact on less common sustainable behaviors remains understudied (Albrecht & Raymond, 2022; Chen, 2020). Thus, this study aims to explore the influence of sustainability pledges on tourists' unsustainable behaviors and their role in promoting responsible travel practices. Specifically, it examines how such pledges affect tourist behavior through inspiration, environmental knowledge, and connection with nature (Scott, 2021; Gao et al., 2017).

Methods

We recruited 475 participants from Amazon MTurk. Participants were divided into two groups: one exposed to a sustainable travel pledge and the other not, with random assignment facilitated through the Amazon MTurk interface. Demographic characteristics were collected post-questionnaire completion. Our measurement instrument, a scenario-based questionnaire comprising 24 items, assessed four constructs: customer inspiration (10 items, Wei et al., 2023), environmental knowledge (7 items, Chan et al., 2014), connectedness with nature (4 items, Apaolaza et al., 2020), and intentions to travel sustainably (3 items, Shin & Kang, 2021). Analysis involved structural equation modeling (SEM) and multi-group analysis, enabling examination of complex variable relationships and comparison of participant group responses, respectively.

Results/Discussion/Implication

The research findings indicate significant factor loadings for all measurement items, with constructs such as environmental knowledge and connectedness with nature showing notable reliability and discriminant validity (Chan et al., 2014; Apaolaza et al., 2020). Structural model results reveal significant path coefficients supporting the hypothesis that sustainability pledges enhance visitor inspiration, environmental knowledge, and connection with nature, ultimately fostering intentions to travel sustainably. This study concludes that signing a sustainable travel pledge elevates tourists' environmental awareness, connectedness with nature, and inspired-by state, aligning with literature on pro-environmental behavior predictors (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002; Schultz, 2002; Keltner & Haidt, 2003; Thrash & Elliot, 2003). Implications suggest pledges as effective tools for promoting sustainable tourism, though limitations in study design and generalizability warrant further research exploration, including randomized experimental designs and broader sample demographics and contexts.

References are available upon request

PEDAGOGY

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Cultivating Positive Learning Environments: A Workshop on Student-Centered Approaches in Hospitality Education

Abstract

This workshop caters to forward-thinking hospitality educators, emphasizing creating holistic learning environments that address academic, social, and emotional needs. Grounded in the belief that positive atmospheres foster lifelong learning, the interactive session offers insights and practical techniques. Attendees will explore student-centered strategies and best practices, enhancing their pedagogical skills to create supportive and motivational atmospheres. The workshop guides educators in fostering active and responsible learning while meeting the diverse needs of learners in hospitality education and recognizing the correlation between positive learning environments and increased academic achievement.

**The presenter will provide digital copies of handouts, supporting resources, and worksheets.*

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Leveraging Honors Classes for Community Engagement in Destination Stewardship

Abstract:

In the fall of 2023, an Honors class was created at the University of South Florida to promote Destination Stewardship in Pinellas County, a major tourist destination. The goal of the class was to work with Keep Pinellas Beautiful (KPB), a Keep America Beautiful affiliate, to re-organize and grow their Hospitality Eco-Partnership Program. The other main external collaborator for the course was Florida for Good, the non-profit arm of B Corps in the state. The first step was data collection to inventory tourism businesses for outreach efforts to educate about sustainability practices related to green building, reducing single use plastics, striving for a zero-carbon footprint, and adopting sustainable business practices. Students worked directly with KPB staff members and other stakeholders for the project, which was funded by a USF community partnership grant.

Class was held at the KPB headquarters, Chamber of Commerce meetings, and sustainable tourism sites. A main deliverable of the course was planning and executing a workshop for industry partners to learn more about sustainability platforms and certifications from businesses that have already gone down this pathway. Invited speakers included representatives from the Florida Green Lodging Program, Green Business Bureau, B Corps, U.S. Green Building Council, Visit St. Pete Clearwater, and local businesses such as Legacy Vacation Resorts. Students planned the workshop, got it certified as a sustainable event, did outreach to hotels, restaurants and tour operators, and ran the logistics. They developed an evaluation survey and prepared reports about the impact of the workshop, which was significant, for our main partner, Keep Pinellas Beautiful.

The goal of this SECSA workshop will be to present the pedagogical model that this Honors course followed, discuss how it can improve our relations and impact with tourism and hospitality industry partners, and provide best practices that resulted. The concept of destination stewardship will also be discussed as an increasingly important topic. SECSA workshop participants will be asked to share how they best do outreach to industry partners as well, which might include hotels and tour operators as well as non-profit organizations working on destination stewardship.

Takeaways:

- Collaboration with Honors provides beneficial partnerships that elevate both hospitality & tourism programs and the university.
- Best practices will be showcased from a case study example with innovative assignments and deliverables for non-profit and industry partners.
- Destination stewardship is a complex undertaking requiring holistic perspectives and interdisciplinary collaborations where academic partners can play a key role.

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Level Up Teaching: GameON Strategies for New Educators

Level Up Teaching: GameON Strategies for New Educators" is a dynamic and interactive pedagogy workshop designed to equip participants with innovative and practical gamification techniques for immediate application in their classrooms. This session goes beyond theoretical discussions, diving into the vibrant world of gamification, where participants will explore how games, storytelling, rewards, and personal style can transform the learning experience. Throughout the workshop, presenters share real-world examples from their classrooms, facilitating a best practices discussion to enhance practical understanding. The highlight of the session is the Mini Gamification Challenge, an immersive hands-on activity enabling participants to gamify specific aspects of their teaching practices. This interactive experience empowers educators with actionable insights and creative strategies to boost student engagement and motivation.

Participants will leave with tangible takeaways, including a toolkit of gamification elements, strategies, and ideas.