

MILLENNIALS' PERCEPTION OF DESTINATION ATTRACTIVENESS

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Past studies are focused on measuring competitiveness factors that are significant to a destination, while lesser focus is provided to capturing specific tourists' attractiveness factors. The purpose of this study was to explore Millennials' perception of destination attractiveness (DA) and their propensity to visit a destination. The objectives of this research include 1) To explore the perceptions of the millennial tourist when deciding on visiting a destination, 2) To determine which destination attractiveness factors are significant to the millennial tourist, 3) To identify Millennials propensity to visit a destination and 4) To explore other preferences that affect propensity to visit a destination. To accomplish the purpose and objectives, millennial college students and recent graduates from multiple universities in the USA were surveyed. A total of 103 Millennials participated in the study. Descriptive statistics and multivariate analysis were used to analyze the data. The results of this study will contribute to the existing knowledge in the areas of Millennials' propensity to visit a destination and their perception of destination attractiveness.

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List of Abbreviations

Destination Competitiveness (DC)

Destination Attractiveness (DA)

Destination Marketing Organization (DMO)

Destination Management Company (DMC)

Regional Tourist Attractiveness (RTA)

Multi-Attribute Utility Theory (MAUT)

Destination Competitiveness Indicator (DCI)

Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA)

Tourism Destination Competitiveness (TDC)

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA)

Strategic Evaluation (SE)

Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI)

Ricardo's Comparative Advantages (RCA)

Porter's Competitive Advantages (PCA)

Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP)

Integrated Model of Destination Competitiveness (IMDC)

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)

Chapter One

Introduction

Travel and tourism continues to be one of the fastest expanding industries. This signifies there is great demand to travel. For that reason, destinations and/or cities persistently have to compete to attract visitors to their areas. The travel and tourism industry has become so concentrated, that destinations have to discover new ways to stay on top of trends and establish differentiation. Research shows, there has been much focus on destinations measuring competitiveness factors that are significant to try to discover better ways to compete. However, data that captures a specific tourist market's attractiveness is lacking. With much need for destinations to gain a competitive advantage to attract more tourists, the opportunity of tourism ought to be explored, by pursuing the "future" tourist. According to Getz (2013), a competitive advantage "stems from what a destination consciously does to improve their position and will come from the efforts of developing a plans and policies" (p. 84). He says, "Pursuing one target market above all other can be an effective strategy" (p. 197). The future tourist, for the purposes of this paper shall be referred to as the Millennial. Millennials, also known as Next Generation, Generation Y and Generation X, are born in or after 1982 to 2000 (Howe; Strauss, 2009). There is much debate, on which years actually define the millennial generation. Some have defined the years to be 1979 to 2000 (Garikapati et al., 2016), 1982 to 2002 (Gotardi et al., 2015) and 1971 to 1994 (Hewlett et al., 2009). Within this study, I will use the term Millennial and use years 1982 to 2000, which includes ages 18-35, to define the parameters for the future tourist. The purpose of this study was to explore Millennials perception of destination attractiveness and their

propensity to visit a destination. In order to achieve the aim of the study, four (4) supporting objectives will be examined:

1. Explore the perceptions of the millennial tourist when deciding on visiting a destination
2. Determine which destination attractiveness factors are significant to the millennial tourist
3. Identify Millennials propensity to visit a destination
4. Explore other preferences that affect propensity to visit a destination.

Current models and studies of destination competitiveness and attractiveness factors are being explored to create a new form of application for the millennial generation. Since not all destinations are identical, this study has combined factors from various studies to create an instrument that is most suitable for its objective. As Gupta et al. (2015) says, “There is no fixed list of factors, just certain factors are more important than others” (p. 59). Being able to determine the “determinant attributes” for a specific target market, in this case the millennial tourist, can help uncover differentiation factors that can enhance destination attractiveness. To achieve the purpose and objectives, millennial college students and recent graduates, from multiple universities in the USA were examined. Thirty-five (35) attributes were adopted from the Dwyer’s et al. (2003) Framework using the Integrated Model for Destination Competitiveness, with an addition of 6 attributes pertaining to advertisement and promotion. The results of this study will contribute to the existing knowledge of DC and DA by being able to determine direct attributes that are attractive to the millennial generation, as well as their propensity to visit a destination.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Destination Competitiveness and Destination Attractiveness

Destination Competitiveness (DC) and Destination Attractiveness (DA) are subjects that have received much focus, due to the lack of a universal model or index of indicators involved and the great need to identify the importance of DC and DA factors and attributes. Based on the literature, competitiveness and attractiveness indicators vary depending on numerous characteristics tailored to a specific destination. Past studies were focused on measuring competitiveness factors that are significant to a destination. Lesser focus was provided to capturing specific tourists' attractiveness factors. The literature shows that the perspective of a tourist or visitor may help Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO) and Destination Management Companies (DMC) make better decisions concerning market strategy and market positioning of destinations opposed to its competitors (citation needed). The literature presents over 20 factors, and larger than 80 sub factors/attributes. These factors are applied in various models and techniques, to conduct individual studies that focus on DC & DA (Crouch & Ritchie, 199, 200, 2003; Dwyer & Kim, 2003; Porter, 1985, 1990). Some of the models have advanced by the addition or subtraction of factors, as well as the clustering of factors to create one shared category. Common factors used throughout the literature consist of comparative advantages, demand conditions, core resources, destination management, general infrastructure, cultural & heritage resources and natural resources (Crouch, 2011; Dwyer et al., 2004; Gupta et al., 2015; Hassan, 2009; Hong, 2009). Researchers adopt key models and use significant factors or indicators they deemed best value for the purposes

of their studies. Common models used include Dwyer et al. (2004) Integrated Model of Destination Competitiveness and Crouch & Ritchie (1999) Conceptual Model. An additional common techniques used in the literature, is the use of the Analytic Hierarchy Process Model (Crouch, 2011; Hong, 2009, Lee et al., 2010). This technique is used as a decision tree to aid destinations in making better decisions for destination marketing.

The following paragraphs examined studies that have utilized tourists as respondents and tourism stakeholders as respondents, which are the two most familiar subjects. Additional studies used DC and DA explorations to compare and contrast specific destinations. In this case, both the tourist and tourism stakeholders' perceptions were surveyed. In addition, studies that concentrated only on DC's, DA's and specifically sustainability were reviewed.

2.2 Tourists as Participants

A majority of the individual studies performed in the literature engage tourists as the participants. Partakers include tourists that have visited the specific destination being studied, or include both local and national tourists that may visit or have visited the area. Tourists are preferred to give responses on importance regarding indicators and/or factors chosen for the study, by ranking of attributes and looking at perceptions of the attractiveness of the destination (Cracolici et al., 2008; Crouch, 2011; Gupta et al., 2015; Law et al., 2016; and Islam et al., 2017).

2.2.1 Determinants of Tourism Competitiveness

In a case of Bundelkand, India, Gupta & Singh (2015) explored determinants of tourism competitiveness. They were interested in seeking answers to questions as, what determines competitiveness of a destination; and how do you determine the factors determining DC? Gupta & Singh developed a survey based on studies from Crouch & Ritchie 1999, 2000, 2003 and Dwyer & Kim 2003. The survey had two sections, one that captured the socio-demographics of the participants and two contained 41 statements related to the DC indicators. Using a 5-point Likert scale, 400 questionnaires were applicable from respondents in four tourist sites, national and international tourists visiting Bundelkand, India. Social-demographics that were measured include gender, age, marital status, income, education, and employment status. These participants evaluated each statement as being (5) highly competitive and (1) not at all competitive.

The 8 main factors that were determined in section two are as follows: 1. General Infrastructure: Road networks, airports, transportation systems, water supply, telecommunications, healthcare facilities, sanitation etc. 2. Cultural and Heritage Resources: History, institutions, customs, architectural features, cuisine, traditions, artwork, music etc. 3. Tourism Infrastructure: Accommodation facilities (hotels), food services (restaurants) and transportation facilities. 4. Natural Resources: Climate, natural wonders (lakes, mountains, beaches, rivers), scenery and other physical assets of a destination. 5. Range of Recreational Activities: Water and nature based activities, recreation facilities and sport facilities. 6. Shopping: Retail and entertainment. 7. Hospitality: Perceived friendliness, community attitudes, quality of service, and resident support for tourism industry and information providers. 8. Entertainment: Amusement parks, entertainment quality, nightlife (Gupta et al., 2015, p. 56-57).

Factors were ranked to determine the overall perception of tourism competitiveness of Bundelkand. Both the national and international tourists identified Cultural and Heritage Resources as most important factor. They also both ranked Natural resources secondly

important, Hospitality 3rd important and General Infrastructure in fourth place. The least important factors were shopping for national tourists and entertainment for international. Gupta et al. (2015) concludes that although there is not “fixed” list of factors, certain factors are more important than others, which are known to enhance DC.

2.2.2 Evaluation of Destination Attractiveness

In a study by Cracolici et al. (2008), the purpose was to deliver an evaluation of the relative competitiveness of Southern regions in Italy, based on tourist’s judgments and perceptions of attractiveness of the destinations. Here attractiveness of a destination is the “extent to which the availability, quantity and management of local tourist services satisfies the needs of the customer. This is in regards to total leisure experience, mental escape and relaxation, pleasure in unique experiences and physical well-being” (Cracolici et al. 2008, p. 337). The authors used a parametric non-linear statistical method along with a principal component analysis practice to generate a measurement for attractiveness. This measurement, Regional Tourist Attractiveness (RTA), was applied to discover positioning weaknesses and strengths of Southern Italy regions. RTA was developed based on the Multi-Attribute Utility Theory (MAUT), which is then converted into a Destination Competitiveness Indicator (DCI). This method was compared to a previous non-parametric technique called the Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA), where an evaluation of efficiency of destination competitiveness was conducted.

Outcomes of the comparisons revealed that natural and cultural resources of a destination are not enough, but are crucial factors to be competitive. Only when the aid of the Destination Management factor is in place, meaning the DMO’s maintain or improve the position of the destination, then there is a sufficient competitive advantage. It was

also discovered that the use of both models simultaneously was more productive, because it took into account both micro and macro data to assess the performance. Cracolici et al. (2008) determined that the use of micro and macro data led to evaluate the regional competitiveness in terms of tourists attracted and the tourists' satisfaction together. The combination of both methods helped create a fair-minded measurement of competitiveness that could benefit the creation of strategic tourist policies.

2.2.3 Determinant Attributes of Destination Competitiveness

In an analysis by Crouch (2011), the determinant attributes of destination competitiveness was investigated. He argued that no destination could be narrowed down to one set of determinants because destinations have their own unique identity. Each determinant has a different value to each destination. "Determinant attributes" are the differentiated factors that employ the strongest weight in destination competitiveness for that destination or destinations being compared (Crouch 2011). Crouch used the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) Model, comparable to a decision tree, to uncover value of decision criteria and variations between alternatives with regard to each criterion. Criteria was implemented by using Crouch & Ritchie (1999), Conceptual Model of 5 main factors and 36 sub factors. Contributors in his study partook in a complex method to capture three levels of judgment. First to capture importance from the 5 main factors, then importance from the 36 sub factors and finally participants selected 3 destinations of their choice and captured importance from the 36 sub factors to each of them.

Results showed that main factor Core Resources and Attractors was of most importance. The study also showed that sub factors of highest local importance included physiography & climate, accessibility, positioning/branding, quality of service and safety

and security. Yet sub factors at highest global importance included others like mix of activities, culture and history, tourism superstructure, cost/value, special events, awareness/image and location. Overall when comparing 10 most important attributes to 10 most important determinant attributes, Physiography & Climate appeared at the top. Therefore, Crouch (2011) believes “a destination strive to improve its competitive advantage should center interest and resources on attributes that are expected to have greatest value” (p. 40).

2.2.4 Park as a Tourist Destination

Destination Competitiveness studies has also been used for rural areas, like that of the Kubah National Park in Sarawak by Law et al. (2016). The study investigated a DC Model, using specific indicators to establish characteristics that shape the Park as a tourist destination. Law et al. (2016) adopted the Dwyer & Kim 2003 Model, and decided to use the following factors, “Natural Resources, Range of Activities, Accessibility of Destination and Local Communities” (Law et al., 2016, p. 130). The goal was to find significant relationships between DC and the factors chosen. In order to do this, an empirical analysis was conducted using respondents that consisted of local and foreign tourists who had visited the park. The study showed that there was a significant relationship between DC and Natural Resources, Range of Activities and Accessibility of Destination. Unfortunately, Local Communities was not a significant predictor for the Park. Reasoning as to why this factor was not a clear indicator might have been due to the visitors main motives for visiting the Park. Range of Activities was the most significant indicator of DC for the Kubah National Park.

2.2.5 Nature-based Tourism

In a journal by Islam et al. (2017), engaging tourist as respondents was used to pinpoint key components for increasing DC of Bangladesh's nature-based tourism. In this case, "significant factors will be used to support tourism stakeholder development of long-term destination policy, primarily focusing on natural attractors and service providers to modify their amenities according to tourist expectancies" (Islam et al., 2017, p. 10). The Tourism Destination Competitiveness (TDC) Model was used as a foundation for collection of attributes, relating specifically to nature-based tourism. From a previous study, Hanafiah, Hemdi and Ahmad (2006), determinants were adopted. Twenty-four attributes were selected and measured according to mean value of significance. A convenience sampling was performed, by looking at possible tourist as participants. Respondents were preferred based on those who have visited or planned to visit Bangladesh's two nature based tourism locations, Cox's Bazar and Sylhet. They were requested to sort by importance of the 24 selected attributes in relation to nature-based tourism. Some of these attributes included the following: safety and security, cleanliness, climate, quality of services and food, variety of natural, historical and cultural attractions, and more. From those results, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was applied to classify triggering relationships between attributes, creating factors. The ranking of factors was utilized to reveal overall attractiveness of nature-based tourism in Bangladesh. Results of the study determined that out of the 24 attributes, 7 were ranked as more important by measuring 4-5 in the mean average.

Results of attributes show the following: 1) Most important issue is personal safety and security of place with a 4.54 mean 2) Easy access to transportation services with a 4.17 mean 3) Variety of natural attractions

with a 4.16 mean 4) Well-developed tourism markets and roads with a 4.14 mean 5) Natural scenic beauty and calmness of the place with a 4.14 mean 6) Well decorated and comfortable accommodations with a 4.09 mean and 7) Availability of healthcare and emergency medical treatments with a 4.05 mean. Those of least importance with a mean under 3 are 1) Opportunity for visiting friends and relatives with a 2.71 mean and 2) Similarity with the local lifestyle with a 2.8 mean (Islam et al., 2017, p. 16).

Using EFA, results showed four major factors were obtained. Factor one named Tourism Infrastructure, had the highest percentage of variance, followed by Historical and Cultural Attractors, Natural Attractors and finally Communication Facilities and Lifestyle Similarities. This shows that tourist are most concerned with the tourism infrastructure factor, which consists of transportation services, tourism markets and roads, accommodations, health and medical facilities, shopping and entertainment, price of products, quality of food and safety and security. In conclusion, the authors were able to “provide a basis for a strategic management, marketing and branding of Bangladesh nature-based tourism to both domestic and international tourists” (Islam et al., 2017, pp 18).

2.3 Stakeholders as Participants

Another common theme in the literature involves participation from panel of experts, tourism stakeholders and Destination Management Organizations (Dwyer et al., 2004; Gomezelj et al., 2007; Lee et al., 2010; Armenski et al., 2017). In these particular studies, the perception of the consumer is absent. Participants that are directly associated to the tourism industry, are applied to determine what a destination lacked and needs improvement on. The perspective of the tourism stakeholder helps identify strengths and weaknesses for tourism development.

2.3.1 Destination Competitiveness Key Success Factors

The purpose of the following publication, “Attributes of Destination Competitiveness”, was to create a model using set indicators to measure competitiveness of any destination. The objectives of this journal were to “1. Display a model of DC that identifies key success factors in determining DC, 2. Display findings arising from an application of factor analysis to survey data collected in a study and 3. Explore issues for further research arising from the study” (Dwyer et al. 2004, p. 2). In this study authors believed competitive advantage for a destination is reached through overall attractiveness and tourist experience, greater than substitute destinations. In collaboration with researchers in Korea and Australia of the Department of Industry and Science and Resources, the Integrated Model of Destination Competitiveness was developed. Influences to the model came from various publications by Moon & Perry 1995, Narashima 2000, Porter 1990, Waheeduzzan & Ryans 1996, Buhalis 2000, Hassan 2000, Mihalic 2000, Crouch & Ritchie 1993, 1994, 1995, 1999 and 2000.

The model consists of 8 main headings: 1. Core Resources: Endowed: are those a destination inherits; natural resources as climates, parks, beaches, mountains and cultural/heritage resources the same as languages, customs and beliefs Created: created by the destination itself; destination’s ever growing infrastructure, events, activities and entertainment brought to the destination Supporting: are those which add to the created resource, as hospitality, quality of service and accessibility. 2. Destination Management: planning and development. 3. Destination Policy, Planning & Development, HR Development, Environmental Management 4. Destination Management Organizations and Destination Marketing Management 5. Demand Conditions: Awareness, Perception and Preferences 6. Situational Conditions: Economic, social, cultural, demographic, environmental, political, legal, governmental, regulatory, technological, competitive trends 7. Destination Competitiveness 8. Socioeconomic prosperity 9. Quality of Life 10. Destination Competitiveness Indicators (Dwyer et al., 2004, p. 2-4).

In main heading two, Destination Management, represents “value-added” to the overall tourism product, the “destination”. They are directly related to the created resources and supporting resources because they influence how well the destination is being developed and influence how services that are being provided to the tourists and residents. Within main heading 3, Demand Conditions, this is where market intelligence plays a big part in creating activities to bring awareness about the destination, create or investigate the image or brand, and discover market preferences compared to what the tourism product is offering. In main heading 4, Situational Conditions, are related to factors in the external environment, which bestow threats and opportunities to a destination.

In this study a survey consisting of 83 competitive indicators in reference to 9 major Asia Pacific destinations, was used to conduct a factor analysis technique. The 83 indicators were grouped by 12 Major Factors, Destination Management, Nature-Based Resources, Heritage Resources, Quality Services, Efficient Public Service, Tourism Shopping, Government Commitment, Location and Access, E-Business, Night Life, Visa Requirements and Amusement Parks. It was found that the factor analysis did indeed confirm the Integrated Model by determining, endowed and created resources, supporting factors and resources, destination management and demand conditions as the key elements needed to create a decision making strategy. Although this was determined, the survey did not survey the views of the actual consumers and how they would rank the competitive indicators. This places much need to apply the model to include consumer feedback and opinions about a destination or various destinations within the same segment. The bonus is that if this model is flexible, then adjustments can be made to the

factors, because no market segment is alike. It would not be wise to use this model to compare a destination to the “whole” population of destinations.

2.3.2 Competitive Indicators

In a case of Slovenia, trying to develop its competitiveness position in international tourism markets, Gomezelj et al. (2007) applied De Keyser-Vanhove Tourism Competitiveness Model and Dwyer's et al. Integrated Tourism Competitiveness Model. The purpose of this study was to “compare the competitiveness between the two studies conducted of Slovenia, compare the use of the two models, and discuss indicators for evaluating the competitiveness of tourism in general” (Gomezelj et al 2007, p. 295). Writers accomplished this by using 2004 data, which was collected using a questionnaire that duplicated 85 competitive indicators, based on Dwyer's Integrated Tourism Competitiveness Model that also followed Crouch & Ritchie 2003. It was important that this survey included tourism stakeholders who could better respond to questions regarding tourism management efficiencies and attractors, as opposed to asking regular tourists. The application of both models determines unawareness and lack of image characteristics in Slovenian tourism, which is part of Demand Conditions factor. This factor was the weakest competitive indicator followed by Destination Management, which was consistent with findings used in the DeKeyser-Vanhove model. This analysis helped Slovenia tourism determine where they needed improvement and what areas needed to developed in order to gain destination competitiveness.

2.3.3 Attractiveness of Forest Recreation Tourism

In a study by Lee et al. (2010), their objective was to discover factors that affect the attractiveness of forest recreation tourism in Taiwan. Due to Taiwan's fast growing

recreational tourism sector, activities of visiting forests for recreational experience needed to be explored. In this study, a panel of experts was used to help determine which Destination Attractiveness factors were to be used to analyze the Forest Recreation Tourism. Lee used the Analytical Hierarchy Process Method to analyze determinants, 23 factors were selected. The goal of this analysis was to develop a structure to support industry and government sectors to increase attractiveness and attain lasting strength. Lee felt the panel of experts to be most useful in this study because, “it involves those who are most knowledgeable about the entire portfolio of destination resources” (Lee et al., 2010, p. 815). After reaching out to experts, it was determined that Tourist Attractions were the most important factor to Forest Recreation Tourism attractiveness. Some of the most important attractiveness attributes found were Landscapes & Scenery and Climate.

2.3.4 Private and Public Tourism Stakeholders

In a study by Armenski et al. (2017), the perceptions of stakeholders were used to compare between private and public tourism stakeholders, for the purposes of “focusing contrasts in ways of weighted performance of priority activities, used for advancing and conserving DC indicators of Serbia” (Armenski et al., 2017, p. 7). This was achieved by recommending and studying a theoretical model of DC adopted from Dwyer et al. (2009), Dwyer et al. (2012) and Cvelbar et al. (2014). Using a panel of experts, the model was evaluated dependent on its implementation in boosting Serbia’s destination competitiveness. From the evaluation of public and private tourism stakeholders, 48 DC attributes were selected. For the purposes of this study an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted. The goal of EFA in this study is to classify primary relationships between determined variables, by measuring the

respondents' rate destination performance using the 48 DC attributes. The CFA uses the same collection of responses to enable management over the measurement of statistics for each underlying dimension (Armenski et al., 2017).

Five dimensions or priority action groups were formed: 1. Risk Management and adaptive environmental strategies 2. Innovation and product development 3. Planning for sustainable development 4. Networking and community concern and 5. Education for sustainability (Armenski et al., 2017, p. 2).

Results of the overall study showed that the perception of the Private Sector managers, are more critical of the performance of the DC indicators than the Public Sector stakeholders. This shows poor cooperation between public and private sectors, which can be part of the problem in the Serbia tourism industry. In terms of dimension 1: Risk Management and adaptive environmental strategies, public sector stakeholders ranked this of importance higher than the private sector. In terms of dimension 3: Planning for sustainable development, private stakeholders perceived a lower level of performance for almost every attribute in this dimension. In terms of dimension 4, "respondents from both sectors saw networking and community concern, as a distinctive factorial dimension of DC" (Armenski et al., 2017, p. 12). Finally, in terms of dimension 5, both sectors agree that education for sustainability maintains the tourism industry in Serbia for the common good of the whole community.

2.4 Factors used for Comparing Destinations

In additional portions of the literature, destination competitiveness factors, attributes and determinants are applied to compare and contrast to other destinations (Wilde et al., 2017; Jayasuriya et al., 2017; Fortes et al., 2017 and Kozak et al., 1999). In

these specific studies, the comparison of perceptions of private and public tourism stakeholders, destination clusters, destination competitive sets and comparisons in developing and developed destinations is utilized. Participants that are directly associated to the tourism industry are explored between these academic journals, as well as the views of the consumer. Comparisons benefit marketing purposes, to enhance knowledge of DMO's and DMC's about their destinations' competitiveness when evaluated to the competition.

2.4.1 Destinations Benchmarking

In a study of Turkey, Kozak et al. (1999), the authors focused on destination benchmarking rather than establishing strategies or procedures for competitive advantage. Research involved tourist surveys, "which identified competitive destination sets and established destination performance against key criteria" (Kozak et al 1999, p. 274). The survey helped pinpoint top and least liked places, in contrast to Turkey's performance in key areas of DC. In the survey, British tourists were asked questions about a current holiday/vacation made, what destinations they visited from a certain year, what motivated their decision, asked about destination performance based on pre-identified attributes, and finally asked participants to specify a name of a destination they found least satisfactory. From the data collected, it was identified that Turkey's best season for tourism is during the summer. Other countries that Turkey would have to compete directly with during this season were Spain, Greece, Portugal, Malta, Cyprus and France. Turkey ranked 2nd out of the 6 in its competitive set. "Areas where Turkey compared favorably were hospitality, value for money, weather, safety, local transport and natural environment" (Kozak et al. 1999, p. 282). Areas that were rated poorly are inclusive of their facilities including

accommodation, sport and activities. This research helped determine what “factors” for Turkey are most important, and helped determine who is in their competitive set. It also helped establish areas that need work, which could contribute to possible strategies for destination marketing. However, further research is needed, only using factors compared to the established competitive set rather than multiple countries in the study.

2.4.2 Developed and Developing Destinations’ Attributes

In a study by Wilde et al. (2017), the authors intended to identify which Tourism Destination Competitiveness (TDC) attributes were of most importance when comparing a developed and developing destination, using the perspective of the consumer. The purpose of this study was to show experiential results of importance using the Australian based domestic tourist. Wilde et al. (2017) did this by adopting TDC attributes from Kim & Dwyer, 2003 and Ritchie et al., 2001. Through the assistance of a focus group, involving local tourism stakeholders, 38 TDC attributes were elected. To help reach the goals of this paper, Wilde et al. (2017) aimed to address the following: “1. What are the key factors contributing to the competitiveness of tourism destination from the perspective of the travel consumer? 2. What types of capabilities, competencies and resources can assist developing and mature destinations respectively, in their pursuit of competitiveness?” (Wilde et al., 2017, p. 114). Wilde et al. chose two directly competing regional destinations in Australia, Coffs Coast the mature destination, and Great Lakes the developing destination. Sample population for this study was Australian residents that have visited both destinations. Wilde et al. used Exploratory Factor Analysis and Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) adopted from Martilla and James 1977. Wilde designated five factors in which respondents were to “indicate how well each of the two

destinations were perceived to perform against the attributes” (Wilde et al., 2017, p. 127). The five factors are as follows: 1. Destination Management 2. Facilities and Activities 3. Nature 4. Augmented Benefits 5. History. Factor 1 comprised of attributes involving experiences, attitudes, safety and security, value for money, image, variety and quality of products and services. Factor 2 consisted of attributes related to activities, facilities, theme parks, transportation, nightlife and special events and festivals. Factor 3 covered attributes relating to national parks, natural areas and scenery. Factor 4 had mixed attributes that involved cuisine, climate and uniqueness. Lastly, Factor 5 comprised attributes pertaining to culture and heritage. Using IPA, Wilde used “weighted average importance and performance scores for each attribute within the five factors, which were calculated and plotted on the IPA grid” (Wilde et al., 2017, p. 121). Results showed that for the Coffs Coast, the mature destination, Factors 1 and 4 were both of high importance and high performance. Factors 2 and 5 were both of low importance and low performance. For Great Lakes, the developing region, results showed Factors 1, 4 and 3 of high importance and performance. There was no difference from Coffs Coast when it came to factors of low importance and performance. IPA weighted averages appeared to show no significant differences in terms of positioning of competitiveness factors. A Bonferroni test was required to uncover statistically significant increases in performance scores of Factors 1, 2 and 4 when comparing destinations.

2.4.3 Perception of Stakeholders on Destinations Comparison

In a similar study by Jayasuriya et al. (2017), DC factors were used to compare between two countries, one being Singapore which is a developed country and Sri Lanka a developing country. In contrary, this study used the perception of tourism stakeholders

to be able to detect strengths, weaknesses and competitive opportunities for each country. Jayasuriya et al. (2017) explored to add to the literature by expanding academic knowledge about dissimilar economies in destinations. The goal in this study is to help tourism agencies pinpoint DC factors, which demand, “special focus and attention to make their destination more competitive and better guide their tourism strategies” (Jayasuriya et al., 2017, p. 57). For the purposes of this study, the author adopted the Model of Strategic Evaluation (SE) by Rodriguez-Diaz and Espino-Rodrigues, 2008. Next a few experts were chosen from the Asian Tourism Industry, to review the factors from the adopted instrument. In the end of deliberation, 15 DC factors were selected, which concentrated on strategic level type factors. Some of these factors mentioned include Policy, Public Administration, Infrastructure, and Customer performance, Airlines, Hotels and Direct Sales. The form of sampling applied for this study was Purposive Sampling, created on the significance and representation of the tourism industry in both countries (Jayasuriya et al., 2017). These high-level respondents were elected from Hotels, Airlines, Travel Agencies and Boards of Tourism. Using the SE Model, means of Internal Strategic Value and Relational Strategic Value translated onto a grid with nine quadrants, to illustrate which factors fell under areas that were strengths, weaknesses, competitive opportunities and those that were off the slope. This was shown for both countries separately. Factor results was determined by asking respondents a series of six questions in terms of “Importance, Non-Sustainability, Benefits, Contribution for Improved Competitiveness, Integration and Sustainability” for each factor for each country (Jayasuriya et al., 2017, p. 60). The results showed that Singapore, the developed country, had seven factors that fell under strength, six under

competitive opportunities and two off and below the slope. Singapore's factors of strength include environmental, public administration, public infrastructure, airline companies, travel agents and tour operators, complementary offers and tourism supply chain innovations. On the other hand, Sri Lanka, the developing country, showed zero factors under strength, three under competitive opportunities, eight under weaknesses and four that fell off and above the slope. Sri Lanka's weaknesses included, policy, public administration, public infrastructure, customer segments, airline companies, complementary offers, direct sales and tourism supply chain innovations. One factor that was both a competitive opportunity for both countries was hotels and non-hotel accommodations. The model helped to validate the fact Singapore is ranked 11th as a tourism destination and Sri Lanka as ranked 63rd. Results of the DC factors for each country may guide tourism stakeholders towards specific steps needed to improve their competitive position.

2.4.4 Categories of Destinations Competitiveness Main Factors

In another study used for comparison of destinations, Fortes (2017) formed clusters of four islands in the region of Cape Verde. The following clusters were formed: 1. Alpha cluster, which consisted of Santo Antao and Sao Vicente islands 2. Beta cluster, which consisted of Sal and Boavista islands. The purpose of this study was to categorize main determining factors, to boost competitiveness, by the implementation of the Porter, 1990 Competitiveness Diamond Model. The population of the study consisted of 361 companies, tourism industry stakeholders, "comprised from various hotels, accommodations, restaurants, nightclubs, sports and leisure facilities, travel agencies and rent-a-cars, dispersed evenly among clusters" (Fortes et al., 2017, p. 9). The companies

were examined in regards to the Competitiveness Diamond determinants, which had been formerly justified within the Porter, 2001 study. Fortes (2017) adopted 38 variables that were indicated by the following groupings: 1. Competitive attributes of factor conditions 2. Competitive attributes of demand conditions 3. Competitive attributes of related and supporting industries and 4. Competitive attributes of firm strategy, structure and rivalry. Group one attributes consisted of 19 variables, involving wide offer of experienced managers, cost of living in the region, available specialized research facilities, overall quality of transport, overall quality of restaurants, and conditions of sanitary services to name a few. Group two attributes consisted of 3 variables that involve products and services being sophisticated and demanding, product and services having special needs and customer feedback. Group three attributes consisted of 4 variables pertaining to information sharing, contribution to initiatives and programs, quality of local suppliers and specialized suppliers. Finally group four attributes consisted of 12 variables pertaining to competitive landscape, state and local government support and economic strategy.

Results in Fortes (2017) study show comparisons of means between clusters for each variable. For instance, in observation to group one variables, the Alpha Cluster appeared to have a lack in availability of experienced managers. However, the Alpha cluster boasted high availability of research facilities and overall high quality of maritime infrastructures, such as ports and ships. On the contrary, the Beta Cluster, revealed to have high availability of hotels and high quality of air infrastructure, significant to further tourism needs. Unfortunately, both clusters lacked in regards to the sanitary conditions of the islands. The results for group two attributes did not show any significance

statistically. Observations showed that the Beta cluster customers, “exert a lesser influence in relation to tourism offer and Alpha cluster’s customer feedback is more constant and shows the need for new features and improvements. Both clusters agree that customers in their region are demanding and sophisticated” (Fortes et al., 2017, p. 12). The results for group three attributes show that there were differences among the clusters for three out of the four variables. For instance, the Beta cluster exceeded by ways of often contributing to the initiatives and programs and having a somewhat greater supplier quality. Yet, both clusters lacked sufficient coordination between specialized suppliers that provide product and services in their region. Finally, results from group four attributes show significance in four out of the twelve variables. The Beta Cluster shows to “have greater competition in the local market, a more well-articulated economic strategy and greater active participants within the local economic strategy” (Fortes et al., 2017, p. 14). Alike, both clusters have a high standing when it comes to business innovation being critical to its success.

2.5 Factors used for Sustainability

2.5.1 Sustainability Competitiveness

In a journal, Hassan (2000) talks about sustainability as an indicator for Destination Competitiveness (DC). He considers this determinant as an act many destinations should be striving towards, due to the rise of its “niche” market. Some of these markets in tourism include “ecotourism, “green” tourism, heritage tourism, adventure tourism, soft adventure tourism and resort tourism” (Hassan, 2000, p. 240). It is expressed that a strategic plan in DC should be focused on reaching this “niche” market consumer. Hassan defined competitiveness as, “a destination's ability to create

and integrate value-added products that sustain its resources while maintaining market position relative to competitors” (Hassan, 2000, p. 240). Resource-based attributes like climate, location, natural resources, tourism understanding among residents, and authentic local culture, may present a unique comparative advantage for a destination. For a destination to be able to sustain tourism growth and strength, Hassan says, “understanding a global perspective is a key determinant of competitiveness” (Hassan, 2000, p. 239). Trends show that travelers are making decisions motivated by expectations of experiencing value tourism, in which a destination will seek the responsibility to maintain their environmental resources. Hassan has developed a tourism destination strategic framework, which assists destinations to create a differentiation strategy based on four major determinants to gain market competitiveness. The four determinants are as follows:

1. “Comparative Advantage
 - a. This determinant includes combining factors from both macro and microenvironments.
2. Demand Orientation
 - a. This determinant focuses on the destinations capability to adapt to changes in market demand.
3. Industry structure
 - a. This determinant is associated with the destination’s ability to be competitive, based on the existence or absence of a tourism-related industry structure.
4. Environmental commitment
 - a. This determinant centers on the responsibility of the destination to its environment, in order to sustain market differentiation” (Hassan, 2000, p. 242).

Along with this framework, Hassan (2000) expresses the need to also develop a relationship-based approach to be able to promote this new sustainable differentiation

strategy. His Relationship-Based model illustrates that key relationships should be built with:

1. The Private Sector
 - a. Includes Destination Managers, Hotels, Businesses, Cruise lines, leisure attractions, and travel agencies.
2. The Public Sector
 - a. Includes local government, environmental agencies, regulatory agencies and tourism development agencies
3. Nongovernmental Sector and Informal Citizen group (Hassan, 2000, p. 243).

2.5.2 Sustainable Tourism

In a study by Nasr, DC, factors were explored for Egypt's purpose of Tourism Sustainable Development. The DC factors were looked at to be able to successfully conserve and sustain their tourism resources. The review strives to focus on the sustainable tourism competitiveness of Egypt as a tourism destination. The study looks to add, by emphasizing areas in which policy makers and stakeholders need to make enhancements to increase tourist arrivals to Egypt. Here, the perspective of the International Tourist was surveyed to analyze issues that affect the competitiveness of Egypt. Nasr used 31 DC factors based on 2015 The Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI). Using random sampling, 600 international tourists were surveyed to investigate what attractions motivated them to visit Egypt, what were their concerns about travelling and rating their quality of experience (Nasr, 2015). The sample population was also asked two open-ended questions. At this time, it was requested, in their opinion to identify what characteristics make Egypt attractive and unattractive. As a result of the study, the fields in which were recognized as Egypt's most needed improvement subjects, included factors Personal Safety, Infrastructure and Value of

Money. Personal Safety of the tourists was the highest critical DC factor that demands serious attention. Looking at the DC factor of Infrastructure, Egypt's public transportation, railroads and roads were of most importance. Lastly, DC factor Value of Money was an important indicator to travelers that are seeking budget friendly prices. Maintaining price competitiveness will be important for Egypt to remain attractive to travelers.

2.6 Destination Competitiveness Studies

2.6.1 Tourism Competitiveness Composition

In a study by Hong, (2009), an evaluation of tourism competitiveness, was performed using Ricardo's Comparative Advantages (RCA) and Porter's Competitive Advantages (PCA). Then an Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) was applied to establish the comparative importance of 66 DC indicators. Hong's inspiration was seized by Destination Competitiveness studies: Crouch & Ritchie (1999, 2000), Gearing et al. (1974), Hassan (2000), Ritchie (1975), Hou et al. (2005), Hu & Ritchie (1993), McCain & Ray (2003), Stevens (1992), Chon & Mayer (1995), Arrow (1962), Yang (1994), Romer (1990), Schumpeter (1912), Lucas (1988), Gallarza et al. (2002), Russo and van der Borg (2002), Poon (1993), Porter (1985, 1990), Dwyer et al. (2000, 2002), Enright and Newton (2004, 2005), Buhalis (2000), Bramwell & Rawding (1996), Dann (1996) and Krugman (1979), to create the development of the Tourism Competitiveness Composition. A Tourism Competitiveness Composition was formed to show the flow of comparative advantages to competitive advantages, with global and domestic environments falling in between. These factors then flow into Tourism Management, which then produces Tourism Competitiveness. Under Comparative Advantages,

exogenous advantages and endogenous advantages are kept. Exogenous advantages consist of Natural, Cultural/Heritage and Capital Resources (Hong 2009). Endogenous advantages consist of Human, Knowledge and Technological Resources (Hong 2009). On the other hand, Competitive advantages include Infrastructure Investments, Strategic Planning to Market Ties, Maintaining Resources, Monitoring Resource Allocations, Growth and Development, Operational Performance Effectiveness and Facilitating Resources Created.

In Hong's (2009) analysis, it found the exogenous comparative advantage, as the most significant factor needed for boosting Tourism Competitiveness of a Destination. Within the exogenous comparative advantage, Cultural/Heritage Resources was the most important element, with History and Special Events being the most important indicators. Competitive advantages followed, with Infrastructure Investments being the most important indicator, followed by Growth and Development. Tourism Management followed in 3rd place with Marketing being the top indicator, along with Business/Firm Integration. Endogenous Comparative Advantages followed in 4th place with Human Resources being the top indicator. The least important factor was the Domestic Environment, with Superstructure changes being of most importance. Superstructure changes consist of external indicators like political climate changes, laws or regulations, cultural diversification and ethnic tensions harmonization (Hong 2009).

2.6.2 Destination Competitiveness for Tourism Development

In a study by Andrades & Dimanche (2017), Destination Competitiveness was examined to support tourism development for the country of Russia. Russia was suffering from issues with tourism, which directed the reason of this research. The objective of this

study was to apply DC determinants, to provide private and public policy stakeholders, those who organize the prospect of Russia's tourism, with an evaluation of current tourism challenges. Discovering Russia's tourism challenges will be used to improve the country's competitiveness. In order to accomplish this task, Andrades & Dimanche (2017), adopted Ritchie & Crouch (2003) Tourism Destination Competitiveness Model, which had been verified in a Crouch (2011) study. From the model, "factors were selected based on importance, and those that concerned competitiveness and future development for Russia" (Andrades et al., 2017, p. 364). Also in this study, the World Economic Forum's Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index, was used to help group factors chosen. Some of the variables used in this study include safety and security, environmental sustainability, natural resources, business environment, price competitiveness and more. The factors were grouped into four main categories: 1. Enabling Environment 2. Travel and Tourism Policy & Enabling Conditions 3. Infrastructure 4. Natural and Cultural Resources (Andrades et al., 2017). After careful examination, issues concerning "destination image, infrastructure development, workforce training and education, quality management and sustainable management" (Andrades et al., 2017, p. 364), hold back tourism development for the country of Russia. Other areas of interest include political instability and geopolitical conflicts, visa policies, tourism regulation, core resources and tourism product development and tourism human resources. This study will be able to provide tourism stakeholders, with direct areas of weakness, which need to be addressed, in order to improve tourism development.

2.7 Destination Attractiveness Studies

2.7.1 Destination Attractiveness Attributes

In a journal by Cho (1998), the aim of the research was to increase knowledge about the Korean youth tourism market for the purposes of Australian Holiday Destination Tourism. Author used various attractiveness attributes to explore perceptions of the “youth market”, as well as determine importance of attractiveness attributes, as an element of Holiday travel decision-making. Cho used Destination Attractiveness Factors and attributes to segment the Korean youth market. Particularly, the objectives were to establish whether Korean (youth market) “students” could be clustered, built on relationships and distinctions of perceptions in destination attractiveness attributes of Australia. In a 3-part survey, respondents used a 7-point Likert-scale to relay importance using 36 tourist activities, which were later grouped into three main factors. In addition, respondents were encouraged to participate using a 5-point Likert-scale to relay importance using 22 attractiveness attributes of Australia as a Holiday Destination. Lastly, references were made from respondent questions pertaining to socio-demographic variables.

2.7.2 Importance of Destination Attractiveness Attributes

In a study by Lee et al. (2009), DA was used to explore the tourist perspective of Taiwan’s Hot Spring tourism destination. By using a demand side perspective, Lee (2009), was able to summarize importance of attractiveness attributes and establish impact of frequency visits to the Hot Spring. In this study, a factor analysis and regression analysis was performed. Through adopting from Lee & King (2006), 29 attractiveness attributes were chosen. The help of a panel of experts established

confirmation of determinants. A pilot study was also performed before data collection to polish the inquiry form. The population for this study was gathered by ways of on-site intercept method. Data collectors approached respondents to participate by locating themselves directly outside various hot spring properties in Taiwan. The respondents, which were direct visitors of the Hot Springs, were required to indicate relative importance, using the 29 attributes to determine Taiwan's Hot Spring attractiveness. "They were also asked to provide information pertaining to prior experience and frequency of visits" (Lee et al., 2006, p. 25). Mean scoring was used to categorize perceptions of importance. This was accomplished by conducting a Factor Analysis, which grouped the 29 attributes into seven groups (factors).

"The factors with its attributes are as follows:

Factor #1 Safety & Security- factor was used as attributes, safety of bathing environment, hygiene standards for spa equipment, emergency medical care and its availability, personal safety and hygiene & safety of overall destination.

Factor #2 Transportation Infrastructure- factor was used as attributes, convenience of access to destination, reliable public transportation services, local transportation network, & ample parking spaces.

Factor #3 Leisure and Recreation- factor was used as attributes, special events and festivals, seasonal recreation, outdoor adventure & souvenir shopping.

Factor #4 Food- factor was used as attributes, seasonal menu offerings, authentic recipes & ingredients & health oriented gourmet.

Factor #5 Accommodation- factor was used as attributes, capacity of accommodation & high quality of accommodation.

Factor #6 Cultural Assets- factor was used as attributes, guided tours & historical landmarks.

Factor #7 Natural Resources- factor was used as attributes, high grade of natural hot springs, plentiful natural hot springs & abundant natural scenery" (Lee et al., 2006, p. 27-31).

From the Factors, results were captured to show importance by. Results showed that the highest factor of importance with a 4.56 mean was Safety and Security. Natural Resources trailed in second with a 4.53 mean of importance. Those factors that were of least importance included Leisure and Recreation with a 3.74 mean and Cultural Assests with a 3.87 mean. The influence of these factors was then applied to forecast the frequency of visitors. With the use of Regression Analysis, it was revealed that gender, age and importance of accommodation were the significant predictors of frequency of visits.

2.8. Significant/High Ranking Outcomes

After reviewing the results of the vast literature, a massive amount of the outcomes show Core Resources such as Natural Resources and Cultural/Heritage Resources (Cracolici et al. 2008; Crouch 2011; Dwyer 2004; Gupta et al. 2015; Hong 2009; Law et al., 2016). The Core Resources includes attributes like climate, physiography, language, customs and beliefs. This indicator was important for both domestic and international tourists. Other incredibly prevalent indicators that need to be in place in order for the Core Resources to be successful include Demand Conditions and Destination Management factors. Demand Conditions attributes include awareness, perception, preferences and positioning/branding. Destination Management attributes include “planning & development, destination management organizations and destination marketing management” (Dwyer, et al., 2004, p. 3).

2.9 Least Significant/Low Ranking Outcomes

Some of the factors that were of least importance included Shopping, Entertainment and the Domestic Environment (Gupta et al., 2015; Hong, 2009). The

Domestic Environment includes attributes pertaining to “political climate changes, laws, regulations, cultural diversification and ethnic tensions harmonization” (Hong, 2009, p. 118). In one case, “Local Communities, referring to Cultural Activities, was not favorable indicator, mainly due to visitor motivations at that particular destination” (Law et al., 2016, p. 138). Some of the research outcomes showed areas that destinations needed improvement. From these journals, factors that fell short consisted of Demand Conditions and Destination Management, along with attributes concerning facilities like accommodation, sport and activities (Gomezelj et al., 2007; Kozak et al., 1999).

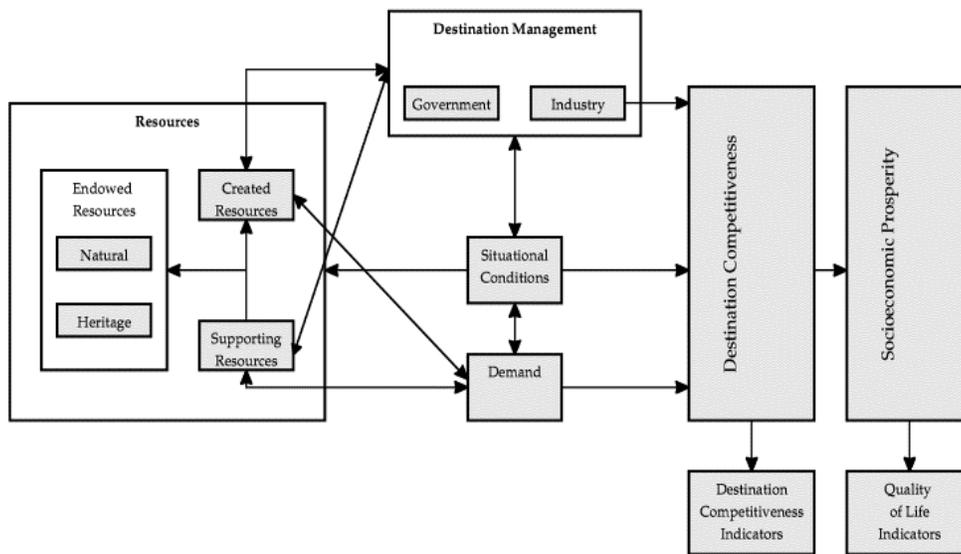
2.10 Integrated Model of Destination Competitiveness

In studies of DC, various frameworks (Poon, 1993, Hassan, 2000, Richie & Crouch, 2003, Dwyer & Kim, 2003) have been developed to display attributes that determine competitiveness of a destination. The perspective of stakeholders is often used to determine competitiveness strategies to gain visitation and determine strengths and weaknesses of a destination to improve themselves. The perspective of the tourists has been used in various studies to help rank importance of attributes and factors. For the purposes of this study, DC factors and attributes were used to view the perspective of a specific target market, the millennial tourist. Using (Dwyer et al., 2003) DC attributes, and looking at the perspective of the tourist, will help determine attractiveness of a destination to this particular target market. Literature shows the perspective of the tourist has been applied to determine Destination Competitiveness, yet the data gathered in this analysis will support Destination Attractiveness by contributing towards destinations’ development of marketing strategies to better serve the future of tourism. In this study, being able to measure attributes according to attractiveness, will allow destinations to

become more competitive by differentiating themselves, using the millennial target market as a guide to maintain their future of tourism. As Dwyer & Kim (2003) noted, destination visitation depends on tourist preferences and perceptions. “So the destination product must develop in a way that ‘matches’ the evolving consumer preferences in order for the destination to enhance or maintain competitiveness” (Dwyer et al., 2003, p. 379).

The conceptual framework that was adopted for the purposes of this study is The Integrated Model of Destination Competitiveness by Dwyer & Kim (2003), illustrated below in Figure 1.

Figure 1. The Integrated Model of Destination Competitiveness



This model has been used greatly throughout the literature (Dwyer et al., 2004, Gomezelj et al., 2008, Gupta et al., 2015, Law et al., 2016, Wilde et al., 2017, Andrades et al., 2017 & Islam et al., 2017) and serves as a great foundation for competitive determinants and indicators.

Dwyer & Kim said “The development of a set of competitiveness indicators would serve as a valuable tool in identifying what factors influence tourists in their decision to visit a destination. The development of indicators will allow identification of relative strengths and weaknesses of destinations, as well as being used by industry and government to increase tourism numbers, expenditure, economic impacts and quality of life of residents” (Dwyer et al., 2003, p. 369).

The key objectives of the development of this model include identifying key factors in determining DC and developing an appropriate set of indicators. Dwyer was influenced by previous findings of Crouch & Ritchie, 1999, 2000, Buckley, 1994, Dunn & Iso-Ahola, 1991, Ritchie & Zins, 1978, Ritchie et al., 2000, Porter, 1990, Dwyer et al., 2000, 2003, Ritchie et al., 2000, 2003 and more. When developing the IMDC, he took into consideration all previous influences and findings.

For the purposes of this paper, the framework of the IMDC will be used. Attributes adopted for accomplishing objectives, were taken from sections of the IMDC, to help determine the complete millennials perception of destination attractiveness. To start off, attributes that contributed towards accomplishing objectives two (2) and three (3) will be described, those objectives are Determine which destination attractiveness factors are significant to the millennial tourist and Identify Millennials propensity to visit a destination.

Choosing attributes from the Core Resources heading was important because of “the attributes’ characteristics that make it attractive to visit a destination” (Dwyer et al., 2003, p. 380). Beginning with the Endowed Resources, attributes from Natural and Culture/Heritage factors were used. From the Natural Factor, attributes pertaining to climate, cleanliness and natural wonders were applied. From the Culture/Heritage Factor,

attributes relating to historic/heritage sites, artistic/architectural features and local cuisines were applied. Moving on to Created Resources, “in which studies reveal show importance in determine firm or national competitiveness” (Dwyer et al., 2003, p. 381). Under the Created Resources category, factors pertaining to Infrastructure, Range of Activities, Shopping, Entertainment and Special Event/Festivals was utilized. From the Tourism Infrastructure factor, attributes including airport efficiency/quality, tourist guidance/information and local transport efficiency/quality was applied. From the Range of Activities Factor, attributes pertaining to water based and nature based activities and recreation and sports facilities was applied. From the Shopping factor the attribute diversity of shopping experiences was used. Lastly from the Entertainment factor, attributes including amusement/theme parks and nightlife were applied. Shifting to the Supporting Factors and Resources Group, which play an important role of sustaining a competitive advantage for a destination, include various factors, but for the purposes of this study, only General Infrastructure and Accessibility of Destination were utilized. From the General Infrastructure Factor, attributes pertaining to health/medical facilities, telecommunications and security/safety were used. From the Accessibility of Destination Factor, attributes pertaining to ease/cost of obtaining entry visa and frequency/capacity of access transport to destination were applied. Progressing to the Situational Conditions category includes forces from both the micro and macro environment, which can both improve or decrease destination competitiveness. This category contains factors that are important for industry stakeholders and other destination competitors to try to make improvements. For the purpose of this study, only factors Price Competitiveness and Safety/Security were chosen. From the Price Competitiveness Factor, attributes including

value for money, exchange rate and destination package prices was used. For the Safety/Security Factor, attribute level of visitor safety in destination was used. Lastly, the Demand Conditions Category, which was especially important when trying to capture propensity of travel, was chosen for the “reason that what may be competitive for one group of visitors may not be for another” (Dwyer et al., 2003, p. 398). This factor taps into what the millennial traveler’s motivations for travel are dependent on. As Dwyer notes, “for demand to be effective, tourists must be aware of a destination and its specific offerings” (Dwyer et al., 2003, p. 398). From the Demand Factor, the attributes used for capturing propensity include destination awareness, perception and preferences. Because in this study, capturing the tourism stakeholder perception was not important, the following categories from the IMDC were not used; Destination Management, Market Performance Indicators, Socio-economic Prosperity and Quality of Life Indicators.

While the IMDC framework is valuable in weighing various determinants of industry or national competitiveness, it does not focus on ‘special factors’ relevant to determining destination competitiveness. It has mostly been applied to facilitate comparisons between countries and between tourism sector industries. Dwyer expresses it can also serve as a valuable tool to identify factors that influence tourists’ decisions to visit destinations, which is the sole focus of this study. Using this tool to identify what influences a specific type of tourist, the millennial tourist, to travel to a destination will be added to the body of knowledge. Special factors pertaining to advertisement and promotion, have been modified by addition to the model. Here are the following attributes; tourist’s personal income, advertisement through TV, Social Media and Word of Mouth, and access to online/mobile travel booking. These attributes are important for

the specific target population being studied because of the influence in technology and advertisement and possible influence in cost, due to the millennials currently being in college or recently graduated.

Chapter Three

Methodology

The key objective of this study is to utilize attributes that determine attractiveness factors of the millennial tourist, by means of quantitative data, using a survey. To accomplish the purpose and objectives, a study will be controlled among millennial college students and recent graduates across the USA.

3.1 Population and Sample Selection

The target population for this study will be millennial college students and recent graduates from multiple universities in the USA. The sample selection for this study is a convenience sample. Due to time constraints, the convenience sampling will be used so data can be gathered in a short period from individuals that are available, rather than selecting from the entire population.

3.2 Instrumentation Design

The instrument for this study is a questionnaire consisting of three parts. Part I and II will be using competitiveness attributes adapted from literature (Dwyer et al., 2003; Gomezelj et al., 2008; Gupta et al., 2015) to help determine attractiveness and propensity. Part I and II will include items to solicit information about the perceptions of college students and recent graduates, regarding their attractiveness of a destination, and propensity to visit a destination. Forty (40) DC determinants were identified by the adoption of (Dwyer et al., 2003, Gomezelj et al., 2008; and Gupta et al., 2015), as well as utilizing academic advice from a panel of experts to modify the instrumentation design. Part I of the survey included 24 attributes to help determine important attractiveness factors of a destination to the millennial traveler. Part II of the survey included 17

attributes to allow discovery of propensity to travel. The purpose of capturing propensity was to explore natural instincts of the millennial traveler, when choosing between destinations to visit. Part I and Part II questions will be answered using a 5-point Likert scale, indicated in the instrument as (1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree). The purpose of the questionnaire is to measure how much each participant's agrees or disagrees that each statement about each attribute, represents his/her own perception of destination attractiveness and propensity to visit a destination. Part III of the instrument will include seven (7) questions about the selected demographic characteristics of the participants. Part III will also include two (2) questions pertaining to how often they travel and how often they wish to travel to a destination. The demographic characteristics include gender, age, race/ethnic background, education level, college major, household income and employment status. The locality of the questionnaire was established by ways of direct emailing. While those that were not attained by direct email, an anonymous link was provided; therefore, location could not be verified for the respondents.

3.3 Validity and Reliability

Validity refers to the ability of a survey instrument (questionnaire) to measure what it claims to measure (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 2002). Reliability indicates the extent to which data are free from errors but yield consistent results (Ary et al., 2002; Ogbeide, 2006, Ogbeide, Groves, & Cho, 2008). The instrument for this study will be a comprehensive construct that will be based on two different types of validity, face validity and content validity. The face validity indicates that the questionnaire is nice and applicable for its intended use (Ary et al. 2002). Content validity indicates that the items in questionnaire represent the purpose and objective of the instrument (Gall, Gall, & Borg

2003). An expert panel of college professors, from a current undergraduate and graduate Physical Education and Tourism School, was used to establish face and content validity of the adapted instrument. Preceding the official survey, a pilot study was conducted to establish reliability of the instrument, polish the survey and certify simple management. The pilot study was pre-tested using a convenience sample of 30 undergraduate students in a hospitality/tourism program, taking the course titled “Global Tourism Seminar”. Convenience sampling was preferred for the pilot study due to quick and easy access to participants. The group chosen, embodied the target market used for the purposes of this study. After the pilot study was performed, the instrument design was then modified and edited, using the panel of experts, to improve reliability, validity and clarity. The common measure of reliability is the Cronbach’s alpha and the usual criterion is a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of 0.7 (Ary et al., 2002; Ogbeide, 2006, Ogbeide, Groves, & Cho, 2008). A Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of 0.7 and above will indicate a high degree of internal consistency among the data collected.

3.4 Data Collection and Administration

The thesis research questionnaires were administered online, as well as by direct access of faculty members of Hotel and Restaurant Management programs at universities in the USA. A Study Information Sheet and survey questionnaire were e-mailed, or provided to the participants at their various institutions via an online survey link or directly. The Study Information Sheet briefly informed the subjects about the research and their right to participate or not to participate. The data was collected within a four-week period, solely based on voluntary allocation of faculty members’ time to survey the students.

3.5 Data Analysis

Collected data was processed by means of quantitative research methods. Prior to data analysis, a pre-analysis data screening was performed to ensure the accuracy of the data and deal with missing and/or incomplete data. Data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24 for Windows, a product of SPSS, Inc. Frequency was used to screen the data for any irregularities. Multivariate analysis and descriptive statistics (Mean, Percentage, and Frequencies) are used to examine the objectives of this study. Simple frequencies were implemented on the respondent's demographic and travel profile data. Mean rating was used to position the respondents' perceptions by way of importance, to the attractiveness and propensity attributes.

Chapter Four

Results and Discussion

In this study, a convenient sample was used to be able to gather data in a short period, due to time constraints. Millennial college students and recent graduates were inquired by direct email, anonymous link and direct in person handout by administration of faculty in university undergraduate and graduate level programs in the USA. After having directed the survey, over a one-month period, 111 responses by participants were gathered. From the 111 respondents, eight (8) surveys were removed from data analysis due to the age of the participant. The purpose of this study was to evaluate millennial travelers, and those eight anonymous participants fell over the ages of 36-40 (5) & 41-64 (3). The balance of 103 respondents remained to examine, which fell directly within the millennial generation age bracket, established and required for the purposes of this paper, being 18-35 years old.

4.1 Demographics

Illustrated in Table 1 below, are the descriptive statistics of demographic and travel variables of respondents. The majority of the respondent's gender was female at 72%. In terms of Race/Ethnicity of these respondents, the majority were White non-Hispanic (49.5%) with the Hispanic minority group trailing just behind (30.1%). The majority of the respondents were those that have at least obtained a Bachelor's Degree, with 68% having graduated. Only 34% of degrees came from a Hospitality, Tourism or Sport program, with the majority came from various majors (57.3%). Household Income was distributed with a majority of respondents (22.3%) making between \$50,001-\$70k, then 19.4% making between \$0-\$21k and 18.4% making over \$100k. The cumulative of

55.3% making \$50k and over, is translated over into the majority of respondents being students or employees working full time (51.5%) or part time (34%). With regard to the traveling variables of the survey, 49.5% of respondents currently travel at least once every 6 months or more and 35% traveling at least once a year or more. Yet, majority of respondents wish to travel at least once a month or more (46.6%) and once every 6 months or more (40.8%).

Table 1. Demographic Factors

Gender	Frequency	%		Household Income	Frequency	%
Male	28	27.2		\$0-\$21k	20	19.4
Female	75	72.8		\$21,001-\$35k	15	14.6
				\$35,001-\$50k	11	10.7
				\$50,001-\$70k	23	22.3
Race/Ethnicity	Frequency	%		\$70,001-\$100k	15	14.6
Hispanic	31	30.1		\$100k+	19	18.4
Black	9	8.7				
White non hispanic	51	49.5				
Asian/Pacific Islander	4	3.9		Employment Status	Frequency	%
Mixed	6	5.8		Student/Unemployed	11	10.7
Not wish to answer	2	1.9		Student/Part time	35	34
				Student/Full time	53	51.5
				Unknown	4	3.9
College Level	Frequency	%				
Freshman	1	1		How Often do you Travel?	Frequency	%
Sophomore	6	5.8		once a month or more	4	3.9
Junior	14	13.6		once every 6 months or more	51	49.5
Senior	11	10.7		once a year or more	36	35
Graduate	70	68		less than once a year	12	11.7
Unknown	1	1				
				How Often do you wish to Travel?	Frequency	%
Major	Frequency	%		once a week or more	3	2.9
Hospitality/Tourism/Sports	35	34		once a month or more	48	46.6
All Other Majors	59	57.3		once every 6 months or more	42	40.8
Unknown	9	8.7		once a year or more	9	8.7
				less than once a year	1	1

4.2 First Objective

The first objective of this study was to explore the perceptions of the millennial tourist when deciding on visiting a destination. To accomplish Objective one (1) an evaluation of 24 attributes was performed by capturing mean, standard deviation and variance values. Shown in Table 2 are the measurements of attributes pertaining to the questions in the survey about destination attractiveness. From the collected data, in terms of mean value, the following attributes ranked highest and lowest. The top five (5) highest rankings are concluded to have an average between 4.27-3.92 Those attributes with the highest rankings include, Safety and Security (4.27) being the highest, followed by Sanitation and Cleanliness (4.25), Local Food and Authentic Cuisines (4.22), Infrastructure (3.96) and Health Facilities (3.92). On the other spectrum, the lowest five (5) rankings are concluded to have a 3.17 or less average. Those attributes with the lowest rankings include Amusement/Theme Parks (2.60) being the lowest, followed by Climate for Winter (2.77), Water Activities (3.09), Local Support (3.11) and Artistic/Architectural (3.17). The remaining 14 attributes fell between the mean of 3.90-3.25.

Table 2. Rankings of Destination Attractiveness Attributes Variance (N=103)

Ranking	Attribute	Mean	Std.	
			Deviation	Variance
1	Safety & Security	4.27	0.941	0.886
2	Sanitation & Cleanliness	4.25	0.849	0.720
3	Local Foods & Authentic Cuisines	4.22	0.851	0.724

4	Infrastructure	3.96	0.959	0.920
5	Health Facilities	3.92	1.026	1.053
6	Natural Attractions	3.9	1.089	1.187
7	Lodging	3.86	0.971	0.942
8	Telecommunications	3.85	1.192	1.420
9	Transportation	3.79	1.160	1.346
10	Airport Access	3.62	1.095	1.198
11	Sustainability Plan	3.54	1.046	1.094
12	Tourist Information	3.51	1.110	1.233
13	Shopping	3.5	1.145	1.311
14	Special Events & Festivals	3.44	1.045	1.092
15	Nature Activities	3.41	1.052	1.107
16	Climate Summer	3.4	1.070	1.144
17	Nightlife	3.39	1.105	1.220
18	Historic/Heritage	3.36	1.008	1.017
19	Recreation/Sports Facilities	3.25	1.055	1.112
20	Artistic/Architectural	3.17	1.089	1.185
21	Local Support	3.11	1.038	1.077
22	Water Activities	3.09	1.104	1.218
23	Climate Winter	2.77	0.972	0.945
24	Amusement/Theme Parks	2.6	1.106	1.222

4.3 Second Objective

The second objective in the study was to determine which destination factors are significant to the millennial tourist. To accomplish Objective two (2), SPSS was used to conduct a Multivariate analysis of Tests of Between-Subjects Effects. The demographic variable that used in the analysis is Race/Ethnicity Group and traveling profile How Often, they Wish to Travel Group. The Race/Ethnicity variable consisted of two independent groups, White non-Hispanic (51) and all Minorities (50), which includes Hispanics, Black, Asian/Pacific Islander and those that are mixed. The Wish to Travel variable consisted of 2 independent groups, once a month or more (51) and once every 6 months to less (52). Illustrated in Table 3, are the results of attributes that have a significant p-value when comparing to the Race/Ethnicity and Wish to Travel groups.

Table 3. Destination Attractiveness Attributes' Group Differences

Attribute	Race/Ethnicity Groups	N	Mean	SD	P > 0.05
Telecommunication	White non-Hispanic	49	3.59	1.273	0.036
	All Minorities	50	4.1	1.093	
Transportation	White non-Hispanic	49	3.61	1.077	0.041
	All Minorities	50	4.06	1.077	
Sustainability	White non-Hispanic	49	3.41	1.117	0.033
	All Minorities	50	3.82	0.748	
Tourist Information	White non-Hispanic	49	3.16	1.028	P < 0.001
	All Minorities	50	3.94	1.018	

Clean & Sanitary	White non-Hispanic	49	4.04	0.841	0.013
	All Minorities	50	4.46	0.813	
Shopping	White non-Hispanic	49	3.06	1.180	P < 0.001
	All Minorities	50	3.98	0.937	
Amusement/Theme Park	White non-Hispanic	49	2.24	0.925	0.001
	All Minorities	50	2.98	1.169	
Attribute	Wish to Travel Groups	N	Mean	SD	P > 0.05
Infrastructure	Once a month or more	50	3.74	1.121	0.029
	Once every 6 months or less	51	4.16	0.731	
Nightlife	Once a month or more	50	3.16	1.004	0.053
	Once every 6 months or less	51	3.59	1.112	

Using Table 3 above, the attributes with significant values pertaining to attractiveness, based on Race/Ethnicity groups are, Telecommunication systems available (0.036), Transportation services in place (0.041), Destination must have a Sustainability Plan (0.033), Access to user-friendly Tourist information ($P > 0.001$), Clean and Sanitary (0.013), Access to Shopping facilities ($P > 0.001$) and finally Access to Amusement/Theme Parks (0.001). When looking at significant attributes based on Wish to Travel group, results show Infrastructure in place (0.0029) and Nightlife (0.053). Using mean values, results show the following, group two (2) all other Minorities (50), hold higher importance to Telecommunications, Transportation, Sustainability, Tourist Information, Clean and Sanitary, Shopping and Amusement/Theme park attributes. From

those attributes, Access to user-friendly Tourist information, Access to Shopping facilities and Access to Amusement/Theme Parks, showed the most significance to the minority group. Again, using mean values, results show the following, group two (2) wish to travel once every 6 months to less (52), hold higher importance to Infrastructure and Nightlife being attractive to a destination.

4.4 Third Objective

The third objective in the study was to determine millennials propensity to visit a destination. To accomplish objective three (3), descriptive statistics and multivariate analysis data will be used. To address questions pertaining to propensity to travel, when choosing between destinations, will be illustrated in Table 4 below. Here the evaluation of 17 attributes was performed by capturing mean, standard deviation and variance values.

Table 4. Rankings of Millennials' Propensity to Travel Attributes

Ranking	Attribute	Mean	Std.	
			Deviation	Variance
1	Local Foods & Authentic Cuisines	4.42	0.707	0.500
2	Reputation/Perception of Destination	4.22	0.851	0.724
3	Telecommunications	4.13	0.946	0.896
4	Online/Mobile Booking	4.00	0.929	0.863
5	Personal Income	3.98	0.918	0.843
6	Word of Mouth	3.88	1.060	1.124

7	Climate	3.79	1.035	1.072
8	Special Events & Festivals	3.71	1.044	1.091
9	Ease of Visa and Passport	3.64	1.018	1.036
10	Shopping	3.50	1.074	1.154
11	Artistic/Architectural	3.45	1.194	1.426
12	Travel Packages	3.33	1.149	1.321
13	Nightlife	3.30	1.136	1.291
14	Cost of Living	2.90	1.015	1.030
15	Currency Exchange	2.85	1.033	1.067
16	Social Media Advertisement	2.74	1.093	1.195
17	TV Advertisement	2.31	0.960	0.922

From the collected data, in terms of mean value, the following attributes ranked highest and lowest. The top five (5) highest rankings are concluded to have an average between 4.42-3.98 Those attributes with the highest rankings include, Local Foods and Authentic Cuisines (4.42) being the highest, followed by Reputation and Perception of the Destination (4.22), Telecommunications (4.13), Online/Mobile Booking (4.0) and Personal Income (3.98). On the other scale, the lowest five (5) rankings are concluded to have a 3.30 or less average. Those attributes with the lowest rankings include TV Advertisement (2.31) as the lowest attribute, followed choosing a destination based on Social Media Advertisement (2.74), Currency Exchange Rates (2.85) of a destination, Cost of Living (2.90) and Nightlife (3.30). The remaining seven (7) attributes fell between the mean of 3.88-3.33.

Again, a Multivariate analysis of Tests of Between-Subjects Effects, using the same groups as before was used. However, this test only consisted of the following 10 attributes from the 17 shown in Table 3, Telecommunications, Artistic/Architectural, Local Foods & Authentic Cuisines, Special Events & Festivals, Climate, Nightlife, Shopping, Currency Exchange Rate, Cost of Living and Reputation/Perception. Illustrated in Table 5, are the results from the 10 attributes, which have a significant p-value when comparing to the Race/Ethnicity and Wish to Travel groups.

Table 5. Travel Propensity Attributes' Group Differences

Attribute	Race/Ethnicity Groups	N	Mean	SD	P > 0.05
Artistic/Architectural	White non-Hispanic	50	3.22	1.234	0.042
	All Minorities	50	3.70	1.093	
Shopping	White non-Hispanic	50	3.16	1.113	0.001
	All Minorities	50	3.88	0.918	
Attribute	Wish to Travel Groups	N	Mean	SD	P > 0.05
Artistic/Architectural	Once a month or more	50	3.18	1.094	0.030
	Once every 6 months or less	52	3.69	1.199	
Reputation/Perception	Once a month or more	50	4.04	0.947	0.040
	Once every 6 months or less	52	4.38	0.718	

Using Table 5 above, the attributes with significant values pertaining to propensity, based on Race/Ethnicity groups are Artistic/Architectural features to visit (0.042) and Access to Shopping facilities (0.001). When looking at significant attributes based on Wish to Travel group, results show Prefer Artistic/Architectural features to visit (0.030) and Prefer a destination based on Reputation/Perception (0.040). Again, the Minority group (2) holds higher importance to attributes. They most significantly have a higher influence when it comes to wanting access to shopping facilities when naturally choosing between destinations to travel to. Yet again, when it comes to Wish to Travel group, group two (2), wish to travel once every 6 months to less holds higher importance to attributes.

4.5 Fourth Objective

The fourth objective of the study is to explore other preferences that affect propensity to visit a destination. Once more, a Multivariate analysis of Tests of Between-Subjects Effects is used with the same groups, but evaluating the remaining seven (7) attributes. The attributes included in this analysis include preferring a destination based on Personal Income, Ease of Obtaining a Visa or Passport, TV Advertisement, Social Media Advertisement, Word of Mouth, Travel Packages and Online/Mobile booking.

Table 6. Other Factors' (Advertisement & Promotion) Group Differences

Attribute	Race/Ethnicity Groups	N	Mean	SD	P > 0.05
TV Advertisement	White non-Hispanic	50	2.04	0.832	0.003
	All Minorities	50	2.60	1.010	

Travel Packages	White non-Hispanic	50	3.00	1.125	0.002
	All Minorities	50	3.70	1.055	
Attribute	Wish to Travel Groups	N	Mean	SD	P > 0.05
Word of Mouth	Once a month or more	50	3.64	1.083	0.004
	Once every 6 months or less	52	4.19	0.817	
Travel Packages	Once a month or more	50	3.10	1.111	0.045
	Once every 6 months or less	52	3.56	1.162	

Using Table 6 above, results show that attributes with significant values pertaining to other preferences that affect propensity, based on Race/Ethnicity groups are selecting a destination based on advertisement through TV/Online services (0.003) and preference to a destination that offers Travel Packages (0.002). When looking at significant attributes based on Wish to Travel group, results show selecting a destination based on Word of Mouth from family and friends (0.004) and preference to a destination that offers Travel Packages (0.045). Again, the Minority group (2) holds higher importance to attributes. They most significantly have a higher influence when it comes to wanting destinations to offer travel packages. For a third time, when it comes to Wish to Travel group, group two (2), wish to travel once every 6 months to less holds higher importance to attributes. They most significantly have a higher influence when it comes to selecting destinations based on Word of Mouth from family and friends.

Chapter Five

Conclusion, Implication and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

The Millennial generation is branded to become America's next great generation. Research indicates they are likely to be more prosperous, better educated and more culturally diverse (Howe & Strauss, 2009). Millennials are anticipated to be the first 100-million-person generation, which means destinations and/or cities will need to uncover the desires and needs to better attract them. Millennials will be reinventing the travel industry with their influential preferences. A study conducted by PhoCusWright shows more than 70% of Millennials took at least one leisure trip in 2013 and 66% consider travel a very important part of their lives (Goldberg, 2014). Within the respondents used in this study, it showed that 84.5% of millennials currently travel from once year – once every 6 months. Yet 87.4% of millennials desire to travel between once a month – to every 6 months or more. Meaning whether they chose once a year or once every 6 months, they would like to double their amount of time travelling.

5.1.1 Conclusion of Attractiveness

The purpose of the study was to explore a millennials wants and needs, by discovering attractiveness attributes, and propensity to travel. In conclusion, the “future tourist”, millennial traveler, ranks safety and security first, followed by Clean & Sanitary, Local Foods & Authentic Cuisines, Infrastructure and Healthy Facilities as important attractiveness attributes to visit a destination. With Clean and Sanitary ranking number two (#2) and having a significance to Race/Ethnicity groups, makes this attribute of high importance. The minority group (2) considers this attribute more significant than white

non-Hispanic group (1), but both means are high at 4.04 & 4.46. This means no matter the Race/Ethnicity, millennials overall consider the Clean and Sanitary attribute to be of high importance, but minorities are more attracted to it. Another high-ranking attribute, Infrastructure (#4), had significance in the Wish to Travel group. Here the once every 6 months or less group (2) considers this attribute more significant than the once a month or more group (1), but both means are high at 3.74 & 4.16. Overall, millennial travelers consider this of high attractiveness to influence amount of time traveling, but not enough to influence those that Wish to Travel once a month or more, group one (1). When looking attributes on the lower end of the ranking, Amusement/Theme Parks (#24) was of least importance. The minority group (2) had a significantly higher mean than the white non-Hispanic group (1), but both had considerably low means at 2.24 & 2.98. Which signifies, overall millennials find this to be of least importance, but minorities would be more prone to finding an Amusement/Theme Parks attractive in a destination. In conclusion, those attributes of highest attractiveness significance, Tourist Information (#12) and Access to Shopping Facilities (#13), show that the Minority group (2) find them most attractive.

5.1.2 Conclusion of Propensity to Travel

When it came to ranking attractiveness attributes for the purpose of propensity to travel, the millennial traveler ranked Local Food & Authentic Cuisines first, followed by Reputation & Perception of destination, Telecommunications, Online/Mobile Booking availability and Personal Income. These five (5) attributes are what the future tourist tends to prefer, when choosing between destinations to visit. Local Foods & Authentic Cuisines (#1) was of highest importance when it came to propensity to travel. Although

there was, no significance between Race/Ethnicity groups and Wish to Travel groups, both groups within each group had high means. For instance, from the Wish to Travel Group, once a month or more (1) had a mean of 4.38 and once every 6 months or less (2) had mean of 4.44. Those in the Race/Ethnicity group, White non-Hispanics (1) had a mean of 4.40, while Minorities (2) had a mean of 4.44. This tell us that overall Local Foods & Authentic Cuisines affect propensity to travel when choosing between destinations by any group. Another high-ranking attribute Reputation/Perception (#2) has high influence on propensity to travel. Yet this attribute did have significance between Wish to Travel groups. The group with the most influence was the group who Wish to Travel less, once every 6 months or less (2). This may not affect marketing decisions when it comes to choosing between groups, because it would be ideal for the group that wants to travel more, once a month or more (1) to be of larger influence. Overall the attribute has a high propensity mean. Other important attributes to note are Telecommunications (#3) and Online/Mobile Booking (#4). Although there was no significance between groups, overall millennials are influenced by ways of technology to make their decisions to travel. Although Access to Shopping Facilities (#10) was not a high-ranking attribute, it was the attribute of highest significance when it came to propensity to travel. It was influenced by the Race/Ethnicity group, with the minority group (2) having a significantly higher mean than white non-Hispanic group (1). This means that although it is not highly ranked, minorities are more prone to picking a destination based on Access to Shopping Facilities.

5.1.3 Conclusion other Preferences

When it came to significance of other attributes of preferences, it is important to note that the influence of Word of Mouth (#6) fell not too far from the pack of top five (5) high attributes. Overall, it is an attribute that affects propensity, and has high significance in Race/Ethnicity groups. The minority group (2) is more affected to travel, based on Word of Mouth from family and friends. This shows that that most millennials are highly dependent on the opinions of those close to them, and more so for those in the minority group (2). The TV Advertisement (#17) attribute was of lowest ranking when it came to propensity and had great significance between Race/Ethnicity groups. Here the minority group (2) had a 2.60 mean versus the white non-Hispanic group (1) with a 2.04 mean. Although both are low scores, meaning neither group is influenced to travel by ways of advertisement through TV/Online services, the white non-Hispanic group (1) is least influenced. The offering of Travel Packages (#12) had most significance in Race/Ethnicity groups. Here the minority group (2) had a 3.70 mean versus the white non-Hispanic group (1) with a 3.00 mean. The difference in mean is so significant; we can conclude that minorities are the most affected in deciding on a destination based on the availability of travel packages. Overall, the millennial traveler ranked Personal Income (#5) highly, and it may be assumed that their household income will be their motivation for travel, rather than price sensitivity. Perhaps the more money the millennial traveler makes, the more they are willing to spend, rather than trying to travel on a budget.

5.2 Implications

With results showing that, millennials want to travel twice as much as they already do and 55.3% having incomes as high as \$50k to \$100k plus, it will be important for destinations to develop a strategy to cater to this target market. In this study, with 68% of millennial tourists having already graduated from college and with the ranking of Personal Income (#5) being high, shows that this target market is possibly willing to spend more for their leisure trips as they are making more money. For these reasons, destinations should find the millennial tourist as great opportunity for capital gain for their areas.

Due to high ranking of the attribute Local Foods & Authentic Cuisines, I suggest destinations may want to concentrate on Food Tourism or expand their local food scene in order to attract the millennial tourist. Local Foods & Authentic Cuisines was a high-ranking attribute that showed in both attractiveness and propensity to travel. Studies show Millennials want to immerse themselves into new cultures and local cuisines, with 86% wanting to experience a new culture and 69% wanting to eat local foods (Lane, 2016). In a study involving 3,000 Food Lovers for a project with the Swedish Board of Agriculture (Getz et al., 2014), it was discovered that the “Foodie” traveler, had the highest propensity to travel to attend food events. Based on the ranking results, millennial tourist may play a big part in Food Tourism. From Getz’s study, it was discovered that the “foodie” traveler is younger, have high incomes, better educated and about 49% female. Respondents in this study are from the younger generation, ranging 18-35 years old, predominantly female and about 55.3% making \$50,000-\$100k+ a year, which fits directly with the demographics of a “Foodie”. In the Swedish Project, it was also

discovered that this target market is willing to pay the most money for their preferred activities (Getz et al., 2014). Which directs back to the influence that the attribute Personal Income has on this target market. Relating to findings from the Swedish study, destinations may look to expand by adding food festivals, farmers markets and bringing in celebrity chefs or local chefs for millennial tourists to meet and learn from. For the development of the food tourism strategy to be successful with the millennial traveler, it will also be important for the destination to be safe (#1), clean and sanitary (#2) and obtain a good reputation (#2) as these attributes are very high ranking in attractiveness and propensity and should increase drawing power.

Reputation refers to the “social evaluation of the destination on particular criteria” (Getz, 2013, pp 123). Having a positive reputation is very much desired by destinations as it can have long-term benefits. For the millennial traveler, how they view the destination or any preconceived notions of the destination, may influence their propensity to travel. Branding and Image building or co-branding will be important elements in a destination’s strategy to capture the millennial tourist.

Based on results of the study, millennial tourist gravitate naturally toward technology-based attributes like Telecommunications (#3) and access to Online/Mobile Booking (#4). Millennials are a generation born with technology at their fingertips. In a study conducted (Gotardi et al, 2015, pp 3), it was found that the two most frequent uses for technology, by the young international traveler, was “taking pictures and connecting to social media”. Studies also show 97% of millennials post on social media platforms and share experiences with friends while travelling (Goldberg, 2014). Because technology plays an important role with the level of experience of their travel,

destinations must be able to provide them access to book their travel arrangements with online or mobile devices for convenience and provide Wi-Fi, internet access and cell phone towers for usage.

Trying to get the millennial tourist to visit a destination based on TV ads (#17) and Social Media ads (#16) will not be as successful as Word of Mouth (#6) due to their rankings in propensity to travel. Since Word of Mouth from family and friends has overall importance, destinations will need to develop a strategy to get tourists to share experiences with their family and friends. Although technology like Social Media is very popular with the millennial generation, getting them to share posts and ads on various platforms will be the key to getting Social Media Ads to turn into visits, specifically for those that fall within minority groups. Television ads being dead last proves to have little influence on travel for this target market, but because of the significant difference with the minority group, destinations should gear ads more towards minorities' interests to benefit from the ads.

Destinations look to draw tourist in with the development of Amusement/ Theme Parks, but for the millennial tourist, overall they find it to be the least attractive attribute. This attribute may be more important for other generations, but when it comes to the millennial generation those in the minority group find it of higher importance. For destinations, this means that any plans for development of Amusement/Theme Parks should reside where minorities live or tend to visit. Advertisement for these attractions should also be directed toward minority groups.

Lastly, the development of shopping facilities must also be targeted toward minority groups. Although this attribute is not high in ranking for attractiveness (#13) and

propensity (#10), it had the highest significance with the minority group. This tells destinations that millennial minority groups do the most shopping while travelling. Shopping facilities should be placed in areas where more minorities reside or where more minorities travel.

5.3 Recommendations

Some of the limitations when deciding to focus on one Niche market, like the millennial traveler, include risks of eventually becoming undifferentiated. Other risks also include excluding other target markets and potentially losing those capital gains. A great recommendation by Getz (2013) is to package experiences for special interest, like Food Tourism as an example, with broader interest, as a compliment to the traditional attractions.

Other limitations of the study is the lack of being able to compare the millennial tourist to what other generations find attractive. Recommendations for further research should look towards finding differences between generations to get a better sense of what a destination can capitalize on based on their current attractions or future development of attractions.

Although college students and recent graduates in this study came from various locations in the USA, the actual geographic location was not obtained. It is recommended for further research to add this demographic variable in the study. Capturing the geographic location variable can help compare which attributes are most significant to millennials from certain parts of the country. For instance, possibly those respondents residing south of the USA, may be more prone to travelling to areas of Winter Climate rather than those respondents who are located in the Northern part of the Country. The

geographic variable could help answer these type of questions, especially for destinations that are located in cold climates and looking for ways to attract more visitors.

Another limitation in this study was the lack of diversity in terms of gender. It was difficult to compare significant differences amongst Male and Females because there was a 72% female respondents. It is recommended for further research of the millennial tourist target market, for there to be a closer percentage between genders of respondents. This will help destination marketers establish valuable strategies pertaining to gender of their visitors.

Due to time constraints, this study focused primarily on capturing millennials that were college students or recent graduates. Recommendations for further research of the millennial tourist is to capture a broader audience, which would include millennials that are not college students. This would help gauge a wider spectrum of preferences pertaining to attractiveness and propensity for the millennial generation.

Appendices

Appendix One

INDIANA UNIVERSITY STUDY INFORMATION SHEET FOR

Millennials' Perception of Destination Attractiveness

You are invited to participate in a research study involving a survey of the millennial generation's viewpoint on destination attractiveness. You were selected as a possible participant because you are currently a college student in the USA, over the age of 18, in a Hospitality and/or Tourism program.

The study is being conducted by Dr. Godwin-Charles Ogbeide and Cori Lee Johnson (Graduate Student) as part of her Master's thesis for Indiana University, Tourism, Convention and Event Management Program.

STUDY PURPOSE: The purpose of this study is to explore the millennial generation's perception of destination attractiveness and their tendency to visit a destination.

PROCEDURES FOR THE STUDY: After participants have read and understood the Study Information Sheet, they can begin filling out the survey. The millennials' perception of destination attractiveness survey includes three sections with a total of 56 questions. The duration of the survey will be approximately 10-15 minutes. We hope to finish collecting data from all the participants within three weeks.

RISKS AND BENEFITS: This study intended to provide some background information towards an efficient destination marketing to attract the millennial generation. There are no anticipated risks to participating in the study.

CONFIDENTIALITY: All responses will be anonymous and all data will be kept confidential to the extent required by law and University policy. All data will be combined and only group summaries will be included in the survey reports. No data will be reported in a manner that would allow a reader to associate any responses to individual participants. Results from the research will be reported as aggregate data. Organizations that may inspect and/or copy the aggregate records for quality assurance and data analysis include groups such as the study investigator and his/her research associates, the Indiana University Institutional Review Board or its designees, and (as allowed by law) state or federal agencies, specifically the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP).

CONTACTS FOR QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS: For questions about the study, contact the researcher Cori Lee Johnson.

For questions about your rights as a research participant or to discuss problems, complaints or concerns about a research study, or to obtain information, or offer input, contact the IU Human Subjects Office at (317) 278-3458 or (800) 696-2949.

VOLUNTARY NATURE OF STUDY: Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to take part or may leave the study at any time. Leaving the study will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled. Your decision whether or not to participate in this study will not affect your current or future relations with your university or program.

This research is intended for individual 18 years of age or older. If you are under age 18, do not complete the survey.

Please respond immediately! **Click below to access the survey now:**

<http://iu.qualtrics.com>

Thanks in advance for taking the time to help with this important project.

Appendix Two

Survey: Millennials' Perception of Destination Attractiveness

Part 1. Attractiveness Factors

Listed below are different factors that attract tourists to different destinations.

Instructions: Using the following key, indicate how much you agree or disagree with each factor.

1 = Strongly Disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree

4 = Agree

5 = Strongly Agree

Please select your answer

1. Destination must have infrastructure in place (e.g., roads, buildings and utilities)
1 2 3 4 5
2. Destination must have health and medical facilities in place to serve tourists
1 2 3 4 5
3. Destination must have telecommunication systems available (e.g., Wi-Fi , internet, and cell phone usage/reception)
1 2 3 4 5
4. Destination must have public safety and security system in place
1 2 3 4 5
5. Destination must have transportation services in place (e.g., taxis, Uber, rental cars and metro system)
1 2 3 4 5
6. Destination must have a sustainability plan
1 2 3 4 5
7. Destination must have historic/heritage sites to visit (e.g., historic landmarks and historic buildings)
1 2 3 4 5
8. Destination must have artistic architectural features to visit (e.g., art galleries, museums and statues)
1 2 3 4 5
9. Destination must have local foods and authentic cuisines
1 2 3 4 5
10. Destination must have special events or festivals to attend (e.g., sporting events and cultural festivals)
1 2 3 4 5

11. Destination must have a variety of lodging options
1 2 3 4 5
12. Destination must have an accessible airport facility
1 2 3 4 5
13. Destination must have access to user-friendly tourist information (e.g., visitor centers and tour guides)
1 2 3 4 5
14. Destination must be clean and sanitary
1 2 3 4 5
15. Destination must have natural attractions/scenery (e.g., mountains, beaches, lakes etc.)
1 2 3 4 5
16. Destination must have water-based activities (e.g., swimming, snorkeling, jet skiing, rafting etc.)
1 2 3 4 5
17. Destination must have nature-based activities (e.g., hiking, mountain climbing and camping)
1 2 3 4 5
18. Destination must have a climate for winter-based activities (e.g., skiing)
1 2 3 4 5
19. Destination must have a climate for summer-based activities
1 2 3 4 5
20. Destination must have recreational facilities/sport events
1 2 3 4 5
21. Destination must have access to shopping facilities
1 2 3 4 5
22. Destination must have a local support opportunity (e.g., community service, volunteerism, medical tourism and agricultural tourism)
1 2 3 4 5
23. Destination must have access to amusement/theme parks
1 2 3 4 5
24. Destination must have a nightlife (e.g., casinos, bars, clubs and concerts)
1 2 3 4 5

Part 2. Propensity Questionnaire

Listed below are attributes associated with one's propensity to travel. These characteristics describe what a tourist may instinctively pick, when choosing one destination over another.

Instructions: Using the following key, indicate how much you agree or disagree with each attribute.

1 = Strongly Disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree

4 = Agree

5 = Strongly Agree

Please select your answer

25. I prefer a destination with telecommunication systems available (e.g., Wi-Fi , internet, and cell phone usage/reception)

1 2 3 4 5

26. I prefer a destination with artistic architectural features to visit (e.g., art galleries, museums and statues)

1 2 3 4 5

27. I prefer a destination with local foods and authentic cuisines

1 2 3 4 5

28. I prefer a destination with special events or festivals to attend (e.g., sporting events and cultural festivals)

1 2 3 4 5

29. I prefer a destination based on climate being (e.g., summer or winter)

1 2 3 4 5

30. I prefer a destination based on the nightlife to be (e.g., casinos, bars, clubs and concerts)

1 2 3 4 5

31. I prefer a destination with shopping facilities

1 2 3 4 5

32. I prefer a destination based on its currency exchange rate

1 2 3 4 5

33. I prefer a destination based on its cost of living

1 2 3 4 5

34. I prefer a destination based on my personal income

1 2 3 4 5

35. I prefer a destination with ease of obtaining a visa or passport

1 2 3 4 5

36. I select a destination based on advertisement through TV/online services to be (e.g., Cable, Netflix and Hulu)
1 2 3 4 5
37. I select a destination based on advertisement through social media to be (e.g., Facebook, twitter, Instagram, Pinterest etc.)
1 2 3 4 5
38. I select a destination based on word of mouth from friends and family
1 2 3 4 5
39. I prefer a destination that provides travel packages
1 2 3 4 5
40. I prefer a destination that provides access to online/mobile travel booking
1 2 3 4 5
41. I prefer a destination based on its reputation/ perception
1 2 3 4 5

Part 3. Participant Demographic Information

Please select your answer

42. What is your gender?
a. Male
b. Female
43. What is your age?
a. 18-35
b. 36-40
c. 41-64
d. Above 65
44. Which of the following represents your race or ethnic background? Select one.
a. Hispanic
b. Black, not of Hispanic origin
c. White, not of Hispanic origin
d. Asian or Pacific Islander
e. American Indian/Alaskan Native
f. Mixed ethnicity
g. Do not wish to answer
45. Current college education level
a. Freshman
b. Sophomore
c. Junior
d. Senior
e. Graduated

46. College major: _____ (please write in your answer)

47. Which of the following levels best describes your household annual income? Select one.

- a. \$0-\$21,000/year
- b. \$21,001-\$35,000/year
- c. \$35,001-\$50,000/year
- d. \$50,001-\$70,000/year
- e. \$70,001-\$100,000/year
- f. More than \$100,000/year

48. Employment status

- a. Student/Unemployed
- b. Student/Part-time Employment
- c. Student/Full-time Employment

49. How often do you travel for leisure/tourism?

- a. Once a week or more
- b. Once a month or more
- c. Once in 6 months or more
- d. Once a year or more
- e. Less than once a year

50. How often would you like to travel for leisure/tourism?

- a. Once a week or more
- b. Once a month or more
- c. Once in 6 months or more
- d. Once a year or more
- e. Less than once a year

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Curriculum Vitae

Cori Lee Johnson

Education

August 2015 – December 2017

Indiana University, earned at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, IN

Master of Science in Event Tourism

January 2013 – May 2014

University of New Orleans, New Orleans, LA

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration: Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism

Administration

May 2004

South Texas College, McAllen, TX

Associate of Arts in Business Administration

May 2004

South Texas College, McAllen, TX

Associate of Arts in Fine Arts

Honors, Awards, Fellowships

October 2015- FEMA Certification- Indianapolis, IN

ArcGIS for Emergency Managers

August 2015-August 2017- Academic Award- Indianapolis, IN

Graduate Assistantship and tuition scholarship

2013-Dean's List Academic Award-New Orleans, LA

Fall 2013 Semester at University of New Orleans, 3.6 GPA

2012-2013- National Honors Society Academic Award- New Orleans, LA

Inducted February 2013-UNO Chapters of Alpha Lambda Delta, 3.5 GPA

2012- Dean's List Academic Award- New Orleans, LA

Fall 2012 Semester at University of New Orleans, 3.5 GPA

2010 South Central Arc User Group Award Winner- Texas

"Thumbs Up" State Award Winner for best effort and promotion of GIS Day event by chapters in Texas, Louisiana and Oklahoma.

2010 Rio Grande Arc User Group Officer-Vice President, Texas

Create and promote GIS Day Conference

Event planning duties: booking speakers, sponsors, booth vendors and promotion.

2009 Rio Grande Arc User Group Officer-Treasurer, Texas

Maintain budget and create financial reports

Creating chapter bank account and collect payment from participants, sponsors, and vendors.

Professional Experience

August 2015 – May 2017: Indiana University, Indianapolis- Graduate Assistant

Conduct research needed for the Tourism, Conventions and Event Management Department.

Grade undergraduate coursework in the TCEM Department. Courses include:

TCEM T 208 Tourism Geography

TCEM E 104 Principles of Event Tourism

TCEM E 104 Principles of Event Tourism –ONLINE Course

Coordinate and manage event Logistics for Global Event Congress VII, FIRM Medical Event and Annual Mini Medical School event.

Administer Noble hour webpage for TCEM department by adding volunteer opportunities in the area, approve, and track undergraduate volunteer hours.

April 2013 – January 2014: Sheraton New Orleans-Metairie Hotel, Metairie, LA- Sales & Catering Coordinator/Administrative Assistant

Served as Administrative Assistant for Executive Team, which includes General Manager, Controller, Human Resources, Accounts Payable and Director of Sales.

Designated Group Blocks for religious, sport, oil & gas and wedding groups.

Maintained flow of communication between clients and catering and sales managers.

Provided clients with invoices and maintained relationship with Food & Beverage Department.

Collected, counted and deposited cash and checks from Food & Beverage, Sales and Catering.

Answered Sales Department calls and catered to VIP guests and groups.

Maintained Social Media Platforms (Facebook & Trip Advisor) also responded to guest reviews.

Maintain client and event files.

January 2013 – March 2013: Community Coffee Headquarters, Baton Rouge, LA-

Marketing Assistant (Temporary)

Conduct competitive comparison analysis research according to product, price and shipping.

Coordinate purchasing of selling materials and point of sale items for coffee service sales locations.

Conduct inventory and maintain database of items sent in for the Cash for Schools program.

Maintain Marketing drive on server and Data Entry.

November 2004 – December 2011: Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council

(911 Administration Agency), Weslaco, TX - Planner II (Supervisor)

Conduct quality control and assurance of GIS data, and train employees on GIS software.

Coordinate data collection to eliminate duplication amongst city planning departments, appraisal districts, county departments, fire departments, emergency services, police departments and telephone service providers.

Maintained relationships with public officials, emergency outlets, local government agencies and local community.

Coordinate meetings & conferences, and book travel for staff, including: car rental, flights and hotel reservations.

Supervisor for GIS Department: managed staff of six (6).