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# WF CHRIE CONFERENCE Proceedings

Editors: Amrik Singh, PhD & Muhittin Cavusoglu, PhD

Hosted by: William F. Harrah College of Hospitality
University of Nevada, Las Vegas


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2023 WFCHRIE
Fabulous
UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS
2023 West Federation CHRIE Conference
Feb 16-18

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"Betting on the Future"

# Preface
# 2023 WF CHRIE Conference!

I am thrilled to share that it was another great WF CHRIE Conference this year, with 130+ conference attendees! After two years of virtual conferences, this was our first in-person conference. The 2023 West Federation Council on Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Education (WFCHRIE) Conference was sponsored by the William F. Harrah College of Hospitality at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. The WFCHRIE was very honored and excited to host the 2023 WFCHRIE Conference. This was the 21st conference that WFCHRIE was organizing. This regional conference offered a diverse array of opportunities, for both WFCHRIE members and non-members, as it focused on a broad range of topics related to education, industry, and research in hospitality and tourism.

The 2023 WFCHRIE Conference received more than 90 proposals for the conference from 170+ authors. Eighty-three of these presentations are accepted to be presented at the 2023 WFCHRIE Conference. We would like to thank each author for submitting their research papers to the 2023 WFCHRIE Conference. As the 2023 WFCHRIE Conference was a double-blind peer-reviewed conference, we would like to thank each and every reviewer who ensured that the paper review process was of high quality and smooth.

We would like to thank our sponsors for making this conference possible. Without their support, this conference would have not been possible. We would like to thank William F. Harrah College of Hospitality at the University of Nevada Las Vegas for hosting our conference, and the Hospitality & Tourism Alliance at the California State University for sponsoring the Community College Welcome Session and Ice Cream Social Activity (Diamond Sponsors); Hospitality, Recreation, and Tourism Department at the California State University East Bay for sponsoring the awards, School of Hotel and Restaurant Management - W. A. Franke College of Business at the Northern Arizona University for sponsoring the Innovative Award for the Most Impactful Research Proposal (Research in Progress), College of Merchandising, Hospitality, and Tourism at the University of North Texas, Knowledge Matters, CoStar Group - SHARE Center, and the School of Travel Industry Management - Shidler College of Business at the University of Hawaiʻi's Mānoa (Platinum Sponsors), Hospitality and Retail Management - College of Human Sciences at the Texas Tech University (Gold Sponsor); and the Collins College of Hospitality Management at the Cal Poly Pomona (Silver Sponsor). We also like to thank California State University, Sacramento for sponsoring the Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion Award.

We also would like to extend our gratitude to our keynote speakers and panelists; Dr. Shane C. Blum, Dr. Fevzi Okumus, Dr. Sandra Sun-Ah Ponting, and Dr. Cass Shum (Moderator) for participating in Professional Development Session 1: From Job Application to Interview: Academic Job Seeking 101; Dr. Saehya Ann; Mr. Carl H. Winston; and Ms. Corinne Youngholm for participating in Professional Development Session 2: Welcome Session for Community Colleges; Dr. Matt Ryan delivering a keynote speech in General Session: The Future Challenges and Needs of the Hospitality Industry; Ms. Patti Fisher, Mr. Carmen M. Rubino, Jr., and Mr. Britt Mathwich, (Moderator) for participating in Education Session: Industry Trends and Hospitality Programs: Are We Providing What Is Needed?; Mr. Lucio Arancibia, Mr. Mark Sandoval, and Dr. Angelo A. Camillo (Moderator) for participating in the Industry Session: The Effect of Technology on Food Preparation and Service; and Mr. Duane Vinson for delivering an Industry Presentation: The New CoStar SHARE Center.

We hosted the 3rd research hackathon with great success. It was our first time working with the three ICHRIE journals, JHTR, JHTE, and JHTC. I would like to thank all editors who joined the research hackathon and provided feedback to the participants. We look forward to having more opportunities to work with ICHRIE journals in the future! I would like to thank Dr. Jie Sun, Dr. Erika Sung and Dr. Amrik Singh for leading the 3rd research hackathon

Moreover, I sincerely express my appreciation to all board members: Dr. Sandra Ponting (Vice President), Dr. Saehya Ann (Immediate Past President), Dr. Shane Blum (Treasurer), Dr. Harold Lee (Secretary), Dr. Ryan Giffen (Director of Member Services), Dr. Michelle Alcorn (Director of Networking), and Dr. Amrik Singh (Director of Research). Big thanks go to Dr. Cass Shum and her wonderful student volunteers. I also like to thank the ICHRIE office for their support.

Congratulations to all of the presenters and award winners - *Scholarship Winners:* Pemba Mwepu and Vinh Le; *Best Reviewer Award*: Michelle Russen; *Undergraduate Research Award*: Maycee Quick and Kristin Malek (Advisor); *Best Posters Award*: Mana Azizsoltani & Jennifer Martinez and Betsy Stringam (Advisor); *Innovative Award for the Most Impactful Research Proposal*: Minji Kim and James Busser; *Best Paper Award for Education Track*: Cho Tin Tun Kirkpatrick; *Best Paper Award for research Track*: Kwangsoo Park, Jooyeon Ha, and Seobgyu Song; *Lifetime Service Award*: Britt Mathwich**,** *Excellence in Diversity & Inclusion Award for Academic Track*: Dipra Jha; and *Excellence in Diversity & Inclusion Award for Industry Track*: Margaret Y. Wong.

The conference is over, but our WF CHRIE will never stop. We are excited to come back to you with new activities and news very soon!

Thank you all!

***Yours in Hospitality,***

***Muhittin Cavusoglu, Ph.D., CHE, CHAE, CHTP, CHIA***
***President, West Federation CHRIE***

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# Completed Research Track

# Mapping Travelers' Evaluations of a Hotel: A Case of Brand Versus Non-Brand Affiliated Hotels

**Lenna V. Shulga and Kwanglim Seo**

Shidler College of Business
University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa

## Abstract

Using text-mining software Leximancer and sentiment analysis, this study aims to provide in-depth insights into the underlying meaning of travellers' comments and reviews of accommodations. Specifically, travellers' online reviews (*N*=58,670) of brand-affiliated and non-brand-affiliated hotels and resorts in Hawaii were analyzed to identify key concepts and attributes relative to brands based on travellers' positive and negative online sentiment. The findings reveal that branded hotels relate to travellers' experience, and non-branded hotels are associated with hotel attributes.

**Keywords:** online reviews, TripAdvisor, text-mining, sentiment analysis, hotel brand

## Introduction

Choosing an accommodation is one of the major travel decisions as it is a key to shaping tourists' travel experiences. The recent advancement of internet technologies has enabled travellers have access to information about hotels in a tourism destination, resulting in severe competition. In response to intensified competition, global hotel companies, such as Marriott, Hilton, InterContinental, and Hyatt, have begun to focus more on their marketing activities to attract and retain their customers. In particular, O'Neill and Mattilla (2010) argued that branding is an integral part of hotel marketing strategies as customers tend to perceive brand as signals of quality. According to signaling theory, in the presence of imperfect information and information asymmetry, brands can serve as quality signals that facilitate customer choice (Lynch & Ariely, 2000).

From a consumer-psychology perspective, a brand's equity (e.g., added value) is determined by consumers' perception of the brand (Schmitt, 2012). Using various constructs for measuring brand equity, prior research has examined the role of brands in many different contexts. For example, consumers' brand attachment and brand attitude can predict their behavioral actions towards products, such as intention to purchase and purchase behavior (Schmitt et al., 2015). Hospitality researchers have shown that branded hotels likely outperform non-branded hotels as customers tend to believe that the brands provide added value to them while guaranteeing high-quality service (Vu et al., 2018; Xia et al., 2019). The findings of these studies call for a more comprehensive and thorough understanding of how brands relate to certain attributes and/or perceptions in the minds of customers.

Using a content analysis technique, this study aims to provide in-depth insights into the underlying meaning of travellers' comments and reviews of an accommodation. In particular, travellers' online reviews of brand-affiliated and non-brand-affiliated hotels and resorts in Hawaii were analyzed to identify key concepts and attributes relative to brands. Travellers' ratings of an accommodation were incorporated into the analysis to further explore relationships among brand, rating, and any identified concepts.

## Methods

An advanced text analytics visualization and content analysis machine learning software, Leximancer V5, was used to examine the content of TripAdvisor reviews (Boo & Busser, 2018). The reviews (N=58,670) of hotels and resorts on an island of Oahu in Hawaii were collected. Hawaii lodging market is known for a strong presence of independent hotels, small local hotel chains, and local hotel brands, which might be unknown to the general traveler outside of Hawaii (Fischer, 2019). Brand-affiliated hotels (N=20,528, 34.99%) were represented by 27 properties and included such international brands as Marriott, Hilton, Holiday Inn, Hyatt, Westin, Sheraton, Ritz Carlton, Four Seasons, Ramada, Trump, and Best Western. Non-brand-affiliated hotels consisted of 55 properties (N=38,142, 63.31%), and included both independent hotels and local chain properties. About 71.11% of the reviews were based on the properties located in Waikiki, which represents the densest concentration of hotels and resorts on the island. The average number of reviews per hotel was 1,397. The rating on TripAdvisor ranged from 1 to 5, with the average rating for Oahu hotels at 4.13. The highest rating of five stars was given to 47.73% of reviews (N=28,003). The low rating of combined one- and two- stars included 8,092 reviews (13.79%). Only reviews in English were considered for analysis. The majority of reviews were posted by couples (38.66%) and families (32.04%), followed by business travelers (8.65%) and solo travelers (6.19%).

### *Content Analysis*

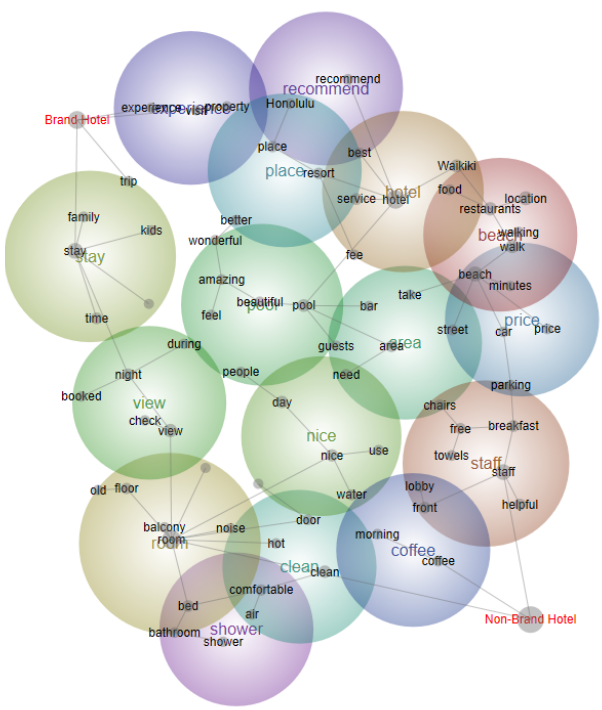
In the first step, all reviews were examined for the presence and relationship among main concepts. The Leximancer extracted 73 concepts and produced 12 main themes to describe the reviews (in the descending order): room, hotel, beach, stay, location, pool, staff, night, nice, coffee, recommend, and bathroom. The themes that are included by the reviewers more frequently were represented by larger circles, the concepts and themes that were described together (i.e., distance) appeared on the concept map close to each other (Figure 1).

In the next step, the reviews were analyzed by category: brand-affiliated hotel versus non-brand-affiliated hotel. Categories landed on the opposite sides of the concept map (Figure 2). Themes and concepts describing overall customer experience, stay at the property, attachment to the place, and intention to recommend were closely connected to the brand-affiliated hotels. On the other side, themes linked to the attributes of the property, such as room, shower, coffee service, cleanliness of the place and staff were related to the non-brand-affiliated hotels.

Figure 3 demonstrates knowledge pathways between categories and intention to recommend based on the Leximancer cloud view (Boo & Busser, 2018). Multiple pathways among concepts may lead to *recommend.* However, that the connection for the brand-affiliated hotels had strongest and most straightforward pathway, through stay/experience and hotel, to *recommend*. Where non-brand-affiliated hotels had longer connection and more hurdles to bypass to *recommend*: staff, walking distance, restaurant, location, proximity to Waikiki, and hotel.

**Figure 1.** Concept Map of Full Set of Reviews


**Figure 2.** Concept Map of Online Reviews for Brand-Affiliated and Non-Brand-Affiliated Hotels




In the final step, positive versus negative rating categories were added to the analysis (Figure 4). Positive rating included all reviews with five-star overall rating, negative reviews included all one- and two- star ratings. Positive reviews were more likely to be linked with brand-affiliated hotels. Experience theme was the closest to the positively rated reviews. Negative reviews were more likely to be linked with non-brand-affiliated hotels. Negative reviews were closely connected with the bathroom, overall room and cleanliness attributes.

**Figure 3.** Knowledge Pathways: Brand-Affiliated Versus Non-Brand-Affiliated Hotel to Recommend

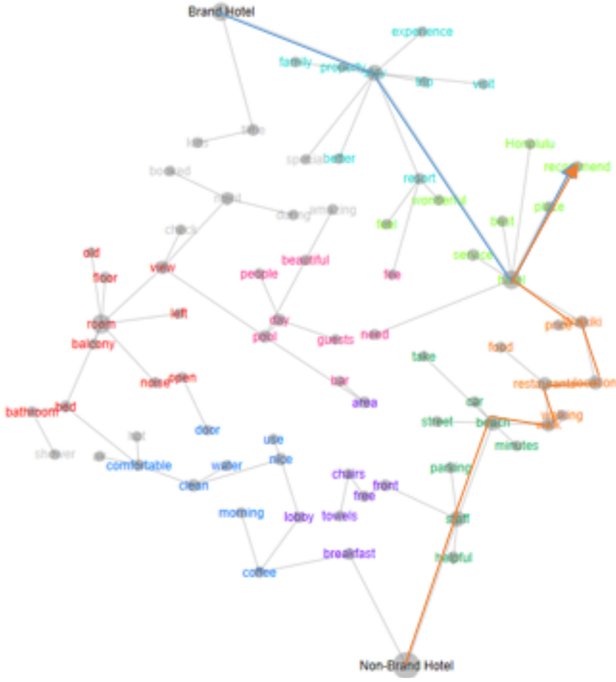
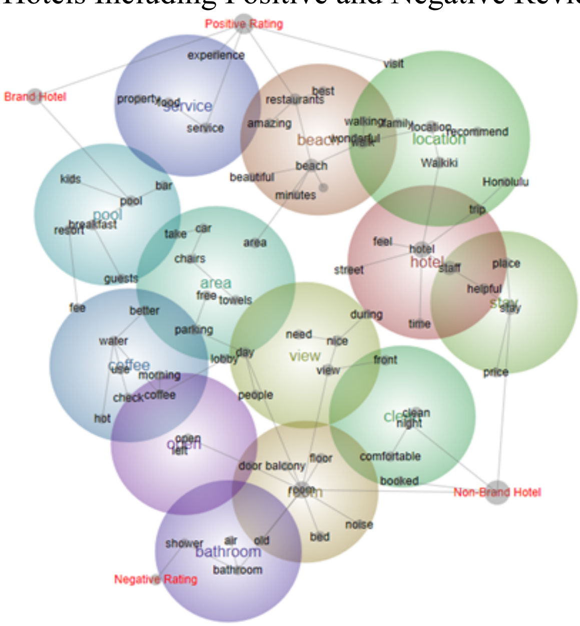



**Figure 4.** Concept Map of Online Reviews for Brand-Affiliated and Non-Brand-Affiliated Hotels Including Positive and Negative Review Ratings




**Conclusion and Discussions**

The findings indicate that brand-affiliated hotels are more closely related to the concepts describing overall customer experience whereas non-brand-affiliated hotels are linked to the themes portraying the attributes of the property. Furthermore, the results demonstrate that reviewers might be more critical of non-brand-affiliated hotels based on their attributes and service quality. This study contributes to the literature on branding, signaling theory, and customer experiences by demonstrating concepts, themes, connections and pathways to behavioral intention and by providing an alternative way to analyze perceptions and attitudes towards a brand- and non-brand-affiliated accommodations. Identifying important concepts and themes emerging from travellers' online reviews also provide opportunities for both brand- and non-brand-affiliated hotel companies to improve their competitive advantages.

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# A Study of a Selected Set of the Costlier Physical Hotel Amenities (PHA) on Customer Satisfaction Chinese Luxury Hotel Guests

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## Abstract

The paper attempts to identify the type(s) of physical hotel amenities (PHAs) that contribute to the most perceived value, satisfaction, and willingness to pay (WTP) of luxury hotel guests in China. The study has collected a sample of 290 usable responses and applied PLS-SEM to analyze. This paper provides guidance for planners and practitioners in China to more accurately compose facility blueprints for luxury hotel projects with optimized return on investment (ROI) rates by avoiding what is less wanted and valued.

**Keywords:** hotel amenities, Chinese luxury hotels, guest satisfaction

## Introduction

As the second largest economy in the world, China has exhibited unprecedented growth in hotel development in the last 10 years (Crawford, 2021; Goh & Gan, 2013). The country's latest lodging offerings with eye-catching hotel projects such as the J Hotel (which occupies the 84th to 120th floors of the 2000-foot-tall skyscraper in Shanghai; LHW.com, n.d.; USAToday, 2021) seem either ostentatious or somehow byzantine to the contemporary in-progress projects in other countries. The word "overprovisioned" may sound subjective but it becomes legitimately objective if the measurement of annual profitability or ROI is applied versus the outlay of the capital investment upfront. Let alone the recent plunge in luxury stays due to the "unending" pandemic in China (Cheng, 2022; Yoong, 2020; Zhong et al., 2022), starting in 2010, the yearly average daily rate (ADR) of 5-star hotels in China has recorded an average annual incremental rate of less than 3% in key gateway cities such as Beijing and Shanghai (Wong & Leung, 2020) juxtaposed against the near-7 percent of average annual GDP growth. Amid the impacts of COVID, it is widely believed that the country's economic future is doomed to a slower pace. There are also no signs of a sharp rebound in the prospect of the luxury lodging industry in China given the increasing tension between the world's two largest economies (Jayathilaka, 2022).

Many studies cover the hotel development prospects in China, but only a few address the challenges of overprovisioned amenities (or guest comfort-oriented facilities) in luxury hotels in China (Dai et al., 2021; Gu et al., 2012; Kong & Cheung, 2009). Considering the increasing role of China tourists in global tourism (Dichter et al., 2018; Xu et al., 2020), more research is needed to accurately profile their pattern of preferences in terms of hotel amenities for foreign hotels to equip themselves with the correct set of "gears" to accommodate as well as to please. To build or not, it should be more than simply to satisfy the prescribed brand standards or the ego of a couple of the reining shareholders or key representatives. Albeit the work of previous studies on most-wanted hotel amenities (Goldberg et al., 1984; Kucukusta, 2017; Spinks, 2018; Stringam, 2008) an updated list of performance rankings capturing paying customers' preferences and actual evaluation, with a timely Chinese luxury hotel focused study will enable the planners, operators and most importantly the investors to fine-tune the provision of more valued and sought-after amenities, therefore boosting the ROI of a particular combination of amenities or facilities.

## Methods

Physical hotel amenities (PHA) are defined as the importance of a set of (21 or 18) selected (costlier) hotel amenities commonly found and provisioned in luxury hotels (in China). The original set of PHA was compiled based on literature and consultation with hotel practitioners (mainly hotel general managers). A Pilot survey was launched in mid-2021 to refine the original set comprising 21 PHA to 18 for finalized online survey. The remaining PHA items are organized under 4 groups: Wellness and Fitness (WELL), in-room comforts related (ROM), public hotel areas (PUB), and tech-related (TEC).

**Figure 1.** Proposed Model

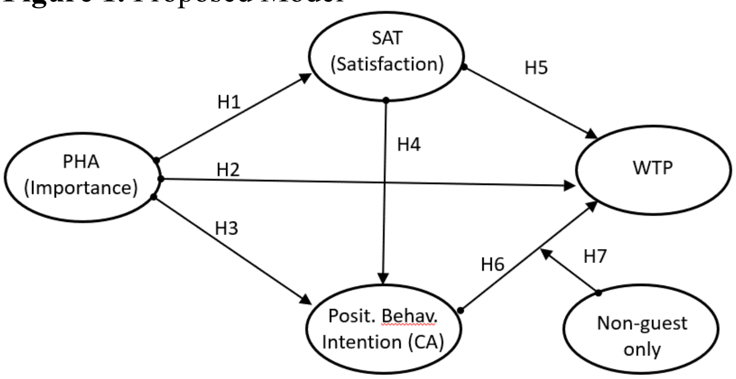


Table 1 exhibits the proposed model and 7 hypotheses will be tested based on a quantitative research design and a self-administered online questionnaire. H7 is worth special attention as it tests if the non-guest only (NGST) status positively moderates the correlation between guests' positive behavioural intention (CA) and guests' willingness to pay (WTP) for a premium for staying at luxury hotels (in China) (i.e., the presence of NGST (positively) strengthens the relationship between CA and WTP).

A pilot survey (n=290) has been conducted online on the platform of Qualtrics in a one-session-only arrangement for identifying issues such as clarity of questions and issues of (partial) attrition as suggested by previous research (Regmi et al., 2017).

The importance of refined (or highlighted) PHAs will be measured on a scale adapted from the sets by Callan & Bowman (2000), Walls (2013), and Dev & Kumar (2019) using a 6-point Likert scale (1 = Not at all important to 6 = Extremely important), given that there are only 18 selected PHAs chosen for this study (reduced from 21 after a pilot test). A synthesized scale excerpted and adapted from scales by Gundersen et al. (1996) to measure levels of Guest Satisfaction (SAT). The same 6-point Likert scale will be used. The last scale is adopted from Kang et al. (2012) and Ryu et al. (2012) comprising questions measuring a guest's likeliness to return and recommend a past hotel stay (positive behavioural intentions "CA") to predict the willingness to pay for high-provisioned PHA (measured by a scale ranging from below zero to above 25%) during the stay.

An online survey was launched to collect a sample approximately of 300 on WenJuanXing (WJX;

Kuo, 2018) after observing major access challenges and an unsatisfactory full-completion rate on Qualtrics.

**Results/Discussion/Implication (Preliminary Results)**

A sample comprising 290 usable responses was obtained via the platform of WJX. The main preliminary results derived by Factor Analysis, Multiple Regressions and PLS-SEM support the hypotheses (H1, 3, 4 & 6) and the moderation effect (H7) of non-guest-only (associates of owners, hotel companies, and designers) status who may be consistently overestimating a guest's WTP commensurating a given set of high-provision PHAs.

The study serves to identify a set of more desired and valued PHA items, which are more likely to command a "significant" premium in WTP of the paying guests. By focusing on the more valued (which is more important than desired) PHA items, hotel developers and planners will be provided with updated knowledge to help them make more rational and judicious decisions in avoiding what to skip for a better return rate.

**Practical Implications**

This paper will guide planners, practitioners, and most importantly investors in China to more accurately compose facility blueprints for (4-star and above) upscale/ luxury hotel projects. Furthermore, the findings will also benefit the non-Chinese hotel operation and asset managers outside of the Middle Kingdom to fine-tune the service and amenity offerings, in the case that a decision has been confirmed to target more of the incoming Chinese luxury guests.

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# Examining the Goldilocks Dilemma in Festivals & Events: Trying to Find the 'Just Right'

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## Abstract

As the festival and event industry works through dynamic changes caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the question of what is 'just right' regarding festival and event operations is critical for recovery and sustainability. Using four years of survey data from the Vancouver Queer Film Festival, comparisons of in-person (2019), virtual (2020/2021), and hybrid (2022) festival formats provide insights into differences, similarities, opportunities, and challenges faced by festival organizers in the past, present, and future.

**Keywords:** 2SLGBTQ+, festivals, events, COVID-19, queer, Vancouver

## Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented a variety of challenges for the festival and event industry (i.e., Anderson & Knee, 2021; Bachman & Hull, 2022; Rowen, 2020). As the pandemic has evolved, festivals and events have been presented with a challenging question: What should a new normal look like? Societal changes have dictated temporary and permanent changes for festivals and events, including virtual components of festivals, size and scope considerations, and adjusting to different markets for attendees.

These changes have been particularly difficult for smaller arts-related festivals who serve traditionally disadvantaged and/or transgressive communities who are understudied in the literature (Bachman & Hull, 2022; Binnie & Klesse, 2018; Damiens, 2018; Usai et al., 2022). The study site for this research, the Vancouver Queer Film Festival (VQFF), fits this scope and has experimented with a variety of festival formats including in-person (2019), virtual (2020/2021), and hybrid (2022). Given the reliance on physical space and social gatherings for queer (2SLGBTQ+) leisure events in the past (Bachman et al., 2022; Markwell & Waitt, 2009; Vo, 2020), it is necessary for festival organizers to experiment, innovate, and create future strategies that lead to organizational success and positive economic and non-economic festival outcomes. By examining attendee data from four years of VQFF held in three different operational formats, this research provides insight for industry to consider as global recovery from COVID-19 progresses.

## Methods

In order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of festival attendees, quantitative research was conducted from 2019-2022 at the VQFF. The VQFF is a 10–12-day festival that has occurred annually since 1988 in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. The 2019 version of the festival was held in-person at venues throughout Vancouver with over 100 screenings and an attendance of 9,866. The 2020 and 2021 VQFFs were held virtually, with geo-blocking allowing only those with

IP addresses within British Columbia from accessing the virtual festival platform. Total attendance across the 40+ virtual sessions in 2020 and 2021 was 4,076 and 3,813, respectively. Finally, the 2022 VQFF was held in a hybrid format with nearly 30 virtual and 20 in-person screenings and a total combined attendance of 3,078 (Out On Screen, 2022).

From 2019-2022, a Qualtrics survey invitation was sent via email to all ticket purchasers and passholders. The total number of survey respondents from 2019 to 2022 was 845. The survey in all years remained mostly identical with all years asking questions related to demographics, behaviours, perceived benefits, and festival outcomes (Bachman et al., 2022; Báez-Montenegro & Devesa-Fernández, 2017; Lee et al., 2016; Yolal et al., 2016). For the purposes of this research, only questions identical in nature both in verbiage and in scaling across all four years of data collection were used for the analysis.

**Results/Discussion**

For demographics, household income and number of years attending VQFF remained steady across the last four years of VQFF. For age, results were non-significant, but did skew slightly younger over the 2019-2022 period with the percent of respondents 19-39 slightly decreasing along with the mean age increasing steading from 45 to 49. This indicates that the festival has maintained its age diversity well across festival formats.

For both sexual orientation and gender identity, there have been changes. Most interestingly, the percentage of respondents who identified with multiple sexual orientations (SO) and multiple gender identities (GI) has increased dramatically from 2019 to 2022 (SO: 4.7%/GI: 1.1% in 2019 to SO: 26.9%/GI: 6.0% in 2022). For sexual orientation, while there were some variations year-to-year, the percentage who identified as queer has risen substantially from 2019-2022. For gender identity, the percentage identifying as non-binary, queer, or trans has over doubled over the four-year period from 11.1% in 2019 to 25.6% in 2022. These results indicate that the hybrid and virtual formats of VQFF provided greater SO and GI diversity.

For number of film screening sessions attended, patrons attended a higher number of film screenings during the hybrid format of VQFF in 2022 compared to the in-person and virtual formats in 2019-2021. This indicates that the hybrid format resulted in higher involvement in more aspects of the festival for those who attended. It is important to note that the hybrid format had the lowest total attendance and lowest satisfaction of the last four years despite the higher involvement. Finally, future behaviour and festival outcome metrics remained consistent across all VQFF formats. This included re-attendance intention, likelihood to recommend, sponsorship impression, cultural-educational benefits, community benefits, and subjective well-being. This indicates that the festival was able to achieve similar future behaviour intentions and festival outcomes regardless of festival format.

As a whole, the case of VQFF demonstrates that behaviour and outcomes can be achieved equally across festival formats. While this eliminates a potential variable in describing challenges and opportunities, there are other components that have had differences. The dramatically increased attendance and satisfaction for the in-person format in 2019 may indicate that for achieving highest festival attendance, there is no substitute for a fully in-person event. However, attendees were most involved in the festival when conducted in a hybrid format. Likewise, while the in-person format skewed a bit younger, hybrid and virtual formats created a more diverse and older (and more likely to donate to the organization) demographic.

These contradictory findings indicate that there is not a singular perfect fit for festivals moving forward. There are financial and non-financial particulars unique to every festival. It will be vital moving forward for festival organizers to use strategic planning to define their version of organizational success to determine the direction of festival operations. All aspects of operations should be audited and scrutinized. Experimentation, innovation, and flexibility will be essential for survival and success of festivals and events individually and as an industry.

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# What Makes You Want to Work in a Restaurant? The Role and Influence of Socio-Economic Status

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## Abstract

There is emerging evidence that restaurant and foodservice employers needs to look beyond former employees as a source of labor. The findings from N=1000 individuals (i.e., potential job seekers) who had never worked in the industry but would consider employment opportunities showed that occupational climate perceptions about the restaurant and foodservice industry were positively associated with three job search indicators, and that the relationships were moderated by socio-economic status.

**Keywords:** occupational climate perceptions, socio-economic status, restaurant and foodservice industry

## Introduction

Labor shortages continue to plague the restaurant segment, a notably "low wage, low skill" occupational context (e.g., US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022), and recent job market data indicates that those who left the industry do not intend to return (Bloomberg, 2021). Moreover, the challenges associated with the negative industry image are compounded by increasing consumer demand (CNBC, 2022), making it extremely difficult for many owners and operators to meet their operational needs. If those who left the industry are not coming back, it would seem advisable for restaurant owners and operations to focus their attention on sourcing and attracting individuals who have never worked in the industry. This suggestion begs the question: Can restaurant owners and operators attract individuals who have never worked in the industry to work in what appears to be an unattractive "low wage, low skill" occupational context?

Prior research has shown that job seekers consider a variety of industry- (e.g., image), firm- (e.g., brand) and job-related factors (e.g., skill, experience, and knowledge requirements) when making decisions about pursuing employment opportunities. For example, Dineen and Allen (2016) found that an organization's use of formal branding strategies (e.g., "Best Places to Work certification) was positively related to applicant pool quality. Additionally, Pfeiffer, Hbidpour, and Jegers (2018) showed that both industry image and employer image contributed to job pursuit intentions. These findings suggest that firms operating in an industry that is viewed negatively may have difficulties attracting the attention of job seekers. However, not all individuals may view industries with a negative image to be negative. For example, despite claims about a negative industry image, Brien, Thomas, and Brown (2017) showed that current hotel employees perceive working in hotels to be a "good place to work" (p. 235). This result suggests that the employees' work experiences may have confirmed their pre-employment perceptions about working in the hotel industry. Thus, despite a negative industry image, there is clearly variance in such perceptions. Similarly, Le and Tracey (2022) showed that employee "occupational climate perceptions" specific to the restaurant and foodservice industry were positively related to their work experiences and intentions to stay.

By extension, we contend the same finding applies to job seekers and their intentions to pursue employment opportunities in the restaurant and foodservice segment. Specifically, despite claims about a negative industry image, we contend that individuals who would consider working in the restaurant and foodservice industry will have positive views about the industry (i.e., positive occupational climate perceptions, or positive "OCP").

However, we also contend that positive views about working in the restaurant and foodservice industry and the extent to which such views are related to job search intentions and behaviors may be influenced by an individual characteristic that is aligned with the industry's "low wage" feature, namely, socio-economic status (SES). This contention is based on arguments that those who come from lower SES contexts have different motivations (i.e., greater necessity and less discretion) to work compared to those come from higher SES contexts (e.g., Hannah & Kahn, 1989). As such, these motivational differences may affect job search efforts such that higher SES individuals will demonstrate stronger perceptions about employment opportunities because they have less necessity and greater discretion to work compared to lower SES individuals (i.e., necessity has a mitigating or dampening effect on positive perceptions, while discretion has an amplifying or augmenting effect). Therefore, to examine this potentially important boundary condition, we tested the following hypotheses:

- The relationship between OCP and consideration of work opportunities in the restaurant and the relationship will be moderated by one's SES such that higher SES will increase the strength of the focal relationship.
- The relationship between OCP and the likelihood to search for work in the restaurant and the relationship will be moderated by one's SES such that higher SES will increase the strength of the focal relationship.
- The relationship between OCP and the intention to look for employment in the restaurant and the relationship will be moderated by one's SES such that higher SES will increase the strength of the focal relationship.

**Methods of Inquiry**

To examine the proposed relationships, we utilized a subset of data gathered by the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation. As part of a larger study about working in the restaurant and foodservice industry, online survey responses were gathered during September and October 2021 from N=1000 individuals who have never worked in the restaurant and foodservice industry but identified a willingness to consider working in the industry. The respondents were aged 18-89 and weighted to the then-current U.S. Census data for age, gender, and region. The survey included 13 items that assessed OCP, one item that assessed participant's consideration of work opportunities in the restaurant (Q77), one item that assessed participant's likelihood to search for work in the restaurant and foodservice industry (Q78), one item that assessed participant's current stage of looking for employment in the restaurant and foodservice industry (Q79), and several measures of the respondents' demographics, including gender, race, household income, and education level. Our analytic strategic included a series of hierarchical regression analyses to examine the proposed influences associated with OCP on one's consideration, likelihood, and intention to search for a job in the restaurant and foodservice industry, the extent to which these relationships differ by SES.

## Findings

As predicted, OCP was a significant predictor of consideration, likelihood, and intentions to search for a job in the restaurant and foodservice industry ($b = 0.58$, $p < 0.01$; $b = 0.34$, $p < 0.01$; $b = 0.16$, $p < 0.01$ respectively). Furthermore, as SES increases, the relationship between OCP and consideration, likelihood, and intention to search for a job in the restaurant and foodservice industry becomes stronger ($b = 0.04$, $p < 0.05$; $b = 0.03$, $p < 0.01$; $b = 0.01$, $p < 0.01$ respectively). Thus, the findings confirmed all three posited relationships and demonstrate support for the proposed boundary condition effects associated with socio-economic status.

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# Motivational Factors of Students in Hospitality and Resort Management Programs to Obtain Hospitality Certifications

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## Abstract

Students in college hospitality programs often do not seek relevant certifications associated with their courses and the industry. Extensive literature review confirmed lack of studies on motivations for students to be certified. This qualitative study was designed to understand motivational factors affecting rates of hospitality certifications earned by students in the United States. Results could help stakeholders in the industry to understand motivational factors to obtain valuable industry certifications during coursework.

**Keywords:** hospitality industry, certifications, resort management, ServSafe, motivation, self-perceived employability

## Introduction and Background

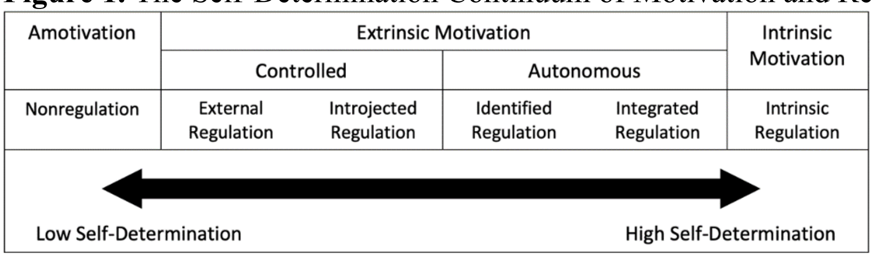
Graduates and individuals who hold certifications awarded by an industry or occupational association are highly desirable to hiring organizations (Boo & Kim, 2020; Deal & Schoffstall, 2015; Samuels, 2000). Prebil and McCarthy (2018) presented certification programs as a voluntary process regulated by a profession to measure competencies possessed by its practitioners. They are designed to create a professional identity both within and outside of the profession, a certain level of quality in providing services within various segments represented, and increase salaries as a result of being certified (Samuels, 2000). Certifications often incorporate a variety of standards including competency exams, hands-on experiences, and professional development (Koenigsfeld et al. 2011; Prebil & McCarthy, 2018), educators perceived certifications are useful for their students in demonstrating knowledge and skills and enhancing career opportunities (Deale & Schoffstall, 2015), and being certified demonstrate students have specific, industry-desired skills and abilities, which increase their opportunities beyond the classroom (Boo & Kim, 2020). Several researchers have indicated the number of hospitality certification programs have increased and continue to grow (Boo & Kim, 2020; Deale & Schoffstall, 2015; Pavesic, 1993). Samuels (2000) uncovered more than 150. However, only 7% of U.S. workers have a certification (Prebil & McCarthy, 2018). Burning Glass Technologies (2017) noted lack of certified workers leading to no-certifications-required job postings, where only 5% of recruitments are necessary to have a bachelor's degree. Although students benefit from professional certifications, many do not seek certifications (Boo & Kim, 2020; Cumberland et al., 2018, Deale & Schoffstall, 2015; Samuels, 2000), which was the problem addressed in this research.

## Literature Review

Hospitality industry values various certifications (Moreo et al., 2018), certified individuals are desirable (Boo & Kim, 2020), and certifications provide immediate employability (Deale & Schoffstall, 2015). Some increase customer confidence and trust (Cumberland et al., 2018;

Marzuki et al., 2012) or enhance organizational placement, such as sanitation scores (McFarland et al., 2019; Murphy et al., 2011). Schmidgall and Damitio (2015) recommended increasing awareness of selective certifications. Communicating the value of certifications motivates students to become certified (Cheng et al., 2011). However, cost, perception of not being valued by employers, and no partnership and alignment amongst academia and industry (Griffin, 2020; Zanville et al., 2017) are negative factors. Wakelin-Theron et al. (2018) indicated a lack of research on tourism industry requirements and graduate perceptions. The actual student motivation and perception, successfully identifying best practices, and understanding the value of programs offered through various hospitality and travel trade or educational organizations have barely been studied (Cumberland et al., 2018). The author identified two theoretical frameworks to address this gap. Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan,1985) introduced extrinsic motivation, doing something because it results in a distinct outcome or reward and intrinsic motivation, doing something because it is interesting in and of itself. Figure 1 exhibits levels of motivation and self-determination.

**Figure 1.** The Self-Determination Continuum of Motivation and Regulation




*Note.* Figure created by the researcher based on "Overview of Self-Determination Theory: An Organismic Dialectical Perspective," by R. M. Ryan and E. L. Deci, 2002, in E. L. Deci & R. M. Ryan (Eds.), *Handbook of Self-Determination Research*, p. 16.

**Figure 2.** The Student Self-Perceived Employability Matrix


*Note.* Reprinted with permission from "Self-Perceived Employability: Construction and Initial Validation of a Scale for University Students," by A. Rothwell, I. Herbert, and F. Rothwell, 2008

Self-perceived employability (SPE) is a motivation when students perceive the certification will enhance employment prospects (Zanville et al., 2017). Self-Perceived Employability defines employability as different from employment where employability is the perceived ability to attain sustainable employment appropriate to one's qualification level (Rothwell et al., 2008, p. 20). Figure 2 displays students' perceptions of their SPE utilized in this study.

### *Purpose And Research Questions*

The purpose of this study was to identify and describe the motivational factors affecting rates of certifications earned by students in U.S. hospitality resort management programs. Two theoretical frameworks and four research questions guided this exploratory qualitative study. Table 1 at the end of methodology shows research and interview questions.

## Methods

Ethnography, grounded-theory have a focused approach and phenomenology was considered but the aspect of extrinsic motivation and external contexts was outside the realm of beliefs and cognition of participants (see Percy et al., 2015). Therefore, a generic qualitative design was most appropriate (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A semi-structured interview protocol was used to gather perceptions and data from the purposeful sample of 12 individuals who had experienced the phenomenon (Creswell, 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Samples provided by Echo Market research was graduates of hospitality and resort management programs from higher education institutions in the U.S. who were U.S. residents and over age 18. Interviews were recorded on Zoom and NVivo was utilized. To add validity, a three-member Steering Committee served as a formative and summative committee. Three pilot studies were conducted.

**Table 1.** Research Questions and Interview Items

| Research Question | Interview Questions |
|---|---|
| 1. How do hospitality and resort management degree program alumni describe their process and motivations to obtain – or choose not to obtain – certifications? | Describe your motivations to achieve hospitality certifications during the program.<br>Describe why you did not gain certain (or any) hospitality certifications during the program. |
| 2. How do hospitality and resort management degree program alumni perceive self-perceived employability due to certification (intrinsic motivation)? | How do you think certifications will affect your value or retention in your current organization?<br>How do you think certifications will affect your ability to be employed by other organizations? |
| 3. Which certifications are perceived as having the most positive and least positive effect besides employability (extrinsic motivation)? | What hospitality certifications help you in your job besides for *employability and job opportunities, and why?*<br>Are there any common hospitality certifications you feel are not worthwhile? Which ones, and why? |
| 4. Which certifications are perceived as having the most positive and least positive effect on personal knowledge and skills (intrinsic motivation)? | a. What hospitality certifications do you feel helped you in improving your personal *knowledge, and why?*<br>b. What hospitality certifications do you feel helped you in improving your *skills, and why?*<br>Are there any common hospitality certifications you feel are not worthwhile? Which ones, and why? |

*Note*. Interviews were 45 minute, semi-structured with open-ended questions.

## Results/Findings

Results indicate various hospitality certifications provide confidence for employability, related to food safety, alcohol awareness, introduction to hospitality, customer/guest service, and cruise lines. When cost is included in tuition and required by curriculum, students are more likely to obtain certifications. Participants reported the importance of food and alcohol safety certifications related to protecting the public and patrons, rather than certifications being perceived to increase salary. Additionally, everyone reported hands-on practical experience increases skills, see Table 2.

**Table 2.** Emergent Themes and Findings

| Themes | Findings |
|---|---|
| 9 themes emerged from four research questions. | Through the motivation and self-perceived employability theories, findings indicate certifications are valued by individuals, employers, and hospitality organizations. |
| Themes from RQ#1<br>1. Requirement<br>2. Cost<br>3. Interest<br>4. Passion<br>5. Increase salary or gain employment | RQ#1 uncovered five themes. The first is 'requirement'. The findings suggested that when a certification program is made required, every student obtained certification. Specific certifications are made required by most degree programs. Participant 5 shared "No matter the specialization of the degree program in food and beverage, hotel management or resort management, ServSafe certification was a requirement." Another participant 4 shared that ServSafe also provide knowledge and keep the public safe. The second theme in relation to requirement is 'cost'. The initial ServSafe certification was also included in the cost of tuition for many participants. In this research, many hospitality alumni expressed they were certified because of requirement and certification programs being included in the cost of tuition. However, they also find value in being certified. P2, who is a chef but transitioning to a career in healthcare is still ServSafe certified. Due to labor shortage, this participant is able to help a friend who has a bakery. Evidence that certifications are valued by employers. Interest emerged as the 3rd theme where P3 and P9 indicated that they chose to obtain a minor in hospitality while studying for a finance degree. Both of them have certification in intro to hospitality industry. Passion is theme 4. P10 has loved cooking 2 meals a day for family since age 9. P5 found passion for the industry while working at a catering company, shared "I just fell in love with food and cooking and you know, that kind of stuff, and you know, catering service growing up." A handful of participants stated getting certified to increase salary or gain employment, an extrinsic motivation. Especially for participant 1, being certified helped moving up rather than going bilateral. None of the participants though seek certifications to gain respect or for networking opportunities. This is the same findings as Cumberland et al. (2018) study. |
| Theme from RQ#2<br>6. Confidence in employability due to certification | For RQ#2, a theme emerged in connection with the five domains of student self-perceived employability matrix. All participants feel confidence in their employability due to being certified. The brand of the certification does provide this confidence – for example ServSafe certifications. In the case of P2, not only the brand of certification, but also the current external labor market due to the COVID-19 pandemic proves the value of being certified and employability. P5 related to the field of study in addition to the brand where certificate provided credibility. Because of being certified this participant was made into a GM of a restaurant within 6 months while in hospitality school. Self-belief is one of the five domains P6 related. Prior to being certified, the participant felt inadequate and insisted, "So sometimes, I would think that if they (the employers) only knew that I have skills, that I have experience. You know, so I wished that they would take a chance on me." Participant 9 feels certificates increase employability. Evidence that employers and organizations value certified individuals. Participant 12, who has certifications in the food and beverage sector shared ServSafe and BarSmarts are necessary for the job. |
| Theme from RQ#3<br>7. Certifications associated with the culinary and food and beverage sector have the most positive effect for employment. Additional positive certifications are introduction to hospitality, customer/guest service, and Cruise Lines International Association. | RQ#3 focused on extrinsic motivation such as salary, pride, academic achievement, the desire to impress others rather than employability. The most positive are ServSafe, Alchol awareness certifications such as TIPs (Training for Intervention Procedures), BarSmarts, Introduction to Hospitality Industry, customer service, and Cruise Lines International Association. P10 shared "Being ServSafe certified will provided opportunities to work and for change in career." P12 who is ServSafe and TIPs certified stated "…do not improve salary but it is responsible..." Participants 3, 6, and 9 found intro to hospitality certifications to be the most positive. Others find customer service to be the most positive. P11, who is awaiting to become an immigration officer share while working for the US Census Bureau, the participant was given a compliment for being very patience. The gentlemen (customer) said "I have never seen anybody so much patience as you have. You must be a teacher.", where the participant replied "I learned that working in the hotel industry." Cruise Lines International Association certifications are positive for those who are in the sector such as participant 7. Finance certification was mentioned by P1, who is in the gaming sector. |
| Themes from RQ#4<br>8. The certifications perceived as having the most positive effect on personal knowledge are in the food and beverage sector.<br>9. All participants reported hands-on practical experience increases skills. | RQ#4 uncovered the most and least positive effect on personal knowledge and skills. The same certifications in the food and beverage sector are perceived to be the most positive.<br>Participant 11, who is a front desk agent and a room inspector shared that once a hotel guest brought a pet monkey as a service animal. Since the hotel policy specified service animals should be dogs up to 50 pounds, coworkers rejected service to the customer. P11 stated the coworker was about to start yelling at the customer. But an embarrassing situation was stopped by the participant because of certification in recognizing people with disabilities. As for skills, all participants enormously stated hands-on practical experience increase skills. |

*Note.* Findings in relation to research questions.

## Discussion, Limitations, Future Research

Understanding the motivational factors benefit many stakeholders, such as students enrolled in the programs, faculty, curriculum designers, hiring agencies, communities, vocational colleges, and any organizations that offer certification programs.

A limitation is the use of a small sample as sample may not be as diverse as desired, although rich data was gathered. As it is voluntary, participants may have perceptions or motivations different from the whole population of graduates of U.S. hospitality and resort management programs. Researcher bias is a limitation in qualitative studies (Corbin & Strauss, 2015).

A future study using students who are currently enrolled in U.S. hospitality programs would offer a different perceptive from a new generation and possibly provide different motivational factors. A qualitative longitudinal study can address motivational factors of students over time. A mixed method study involving students, teachers, and industry experts could provide a deeper understanding of students' motivations towards certification programs and their success. Another study on student motivation and self-perceived employability in the near future only including hospitality alumni who have graduated from programs in the past three-five years will allow comparison of results.

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# To Cruise or Not to Cruise: The Effect of Media Sensationalism on Perceived Risk

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## Abstract

This research examines the effect of news media portrayal of COVID-19 cases on cruise ships. Two experiments were conducted in which news stories were varied according to format, base rate, framing, and number size. The research also examined individuals' prior cruise experience and risk tolerance. The results showed that prior cruise experience increases travel intentions and cruise image and lowers perceptions of cruise risk. Individuals' risk tolerance mediates the effect of prior experience on judgments.

**Keywords:** cruise travel, decision making, risk perceptions, cruise image, travel intentions

## Introduction

The news media can promote or deter travelers from visiting a destination or engaging in a specific type of travel (Susilowati & Sugandini, 2018). Moreover, messages in the news media can influence destination image and tourism demand (Stepchenkova & Eales, 2011). The pandemic created a new concern for cruise travel and an onslaught on media coverage that continues to plague the cruise industry, leading to increased perceptions of risk. Utilizing a two-study experimental approach, this research examines decision-making biases in the context of the news media's portrayal of COVID-19 cases onboard cruise ships.

## Literature Review

Risk tolerance is often thought of as an individual's attitude towards risk (Shou & Olney, 2022); essentially how much risk and uncertainty the individual is willing to accept. Risk perception was found to moderate the relationship between travel motivation and destination image on travel intentions (Caber et al., 2020). Research suggests that prior cruisers are less risk averse when it comes to cruise travel due to their prior experience in cruising, whereas non-cruisers perceive high health risks on a cruise (Holland, 2020). Judgmental heuristics are mental shortcuts that can lead to systematic biases in decision-making (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974). This research applies dual processing theory and principles of heuristics to investigate how the wording of a news story can influence responses to the same information. Specifically, this research examines the role of availability bias, base rate information, framing, and the law of small numbers on consumers' perceptions.

## Methods

Both studies utilized respondents (Study 1: n=315; Study 2: n= 202) recruited through Qualtrics. Subjects had to be at least 18 years old. Because previous cruise experience has demonstrated a strong impact on cruise ship image (Sanz-Blas et al, 2019; Park & Petrick, 2009), the study collected data from both cruise takers and non-takers to assess the effects of experimental manipulations.

Study 1 utilized a 2 (vividness: plain vs. vivid) x 2 (base rate: present vs. absent) x 2 (format: abstract vs. concrete) between-subjects experimental design. Study 2 utilized a 2 (framing: positive vs. negative) x 2 (number: small vs. large) between-subjects experimental design. Within each experiment, participants were first classified as cruisers or non-cruisers and then randomly assigned to a particular condition. Subjects read a scenario that was described as a news story that recently appeared about COVID-19 cases detected on a cruise ship. The scenario was based on an actual news story in which the wording was modified to fit the research purposes. Following the scenarios, subjects were asked to provide their likelihood of planning the different types of vacations. They were also asked questions about their perceived risk of cruise travel, questions about cruise image, and questions related to their personal tolerance of risk.

## Results

### *Study 1*

A series of 2 (prior cruise: no-yes) x 2 (format: abstract-concrete) x 2 (base rate: provided-not provided) ANOVAs was performed on the likelihood to travel in different formats. These results are presented in Table 1. Participants with prior cruise experience were significantly more likely to engage in all types of travel.

**Table 1.** Effect of Prior Cruise Experience on Likelihood to Travel (Study 1)

| Type of Travel | Non-Cruise - $n$=160 | Cruise - $n$=155 | $F_{1,307}$* | Eta$^2$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Caribbean resort | 2.71 | 4.63 | 83.85 | .215 |
| Cruise | 2.43 | 4.89 | 138.83 | .311 |
| Domestic car | 5.08 | 5.38 | 2.53 | n/a |
| Domestic air | 3.76 | 4.93 | 26.50 | .079 |
| International | 2.45 | 4.03 | 49.38 | .139 |
| Mean likelihood ($\alpha$ = .806) | 3.30 | 4.76 | 93.19 | .233 |

*All Fs significant at $p < .001$ except domestic car

A 2 (cruise) x 2 (format) x 2 (base rate) ANOVA was performed on the mean rating of cruise risk ($\alpha$ = .903). There were main effects for cruise, $F_{1,307} = 6.86$, $p = .009$, and format, $F = 7.74$, $p = .006$. Perceptions of cruise risk were higher for non-cruisers (M = 4.78) versus prior cruisers (M = 4.28) and for concrete (M = 4.78) versus abstract (M = 4.26) formats. There was no effect for base rate and no interactions.

A 3-way ANOVA revealed a main effect for cruise on all three measures, with higher ratings for prior cruisers versus non-cruisers. Results are displayed in Table 2.

**Table 2**. Effect of Prior Cruise Experience on Cruise Image (Study 1)

| Image Measure | Non-Cruise - n=160 | Cruise - n=155 | $F_{1,307}$* | Eta$^2$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Affective | 4.30 | 5.54 | 54.01 | .150 |
| Cognitive | 5.15 | 5.61 | 13.15 | .041 |
| Overall | 4.50 | 5.88 | 65.27 | .175 |

*$p<.001$

***Study 2***

As in Study 1, prior cruise passengers were more likely to engage in all forms of travel. The means are displayed in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Effect of Prior Cruise Experience on Likelihood to Travel (Study 2)

| Type of Travel | Non-Cruise - n=90 | Cruise - n=103 | $F_{1,194}$ | $Eta^2$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Caribbean resort | 3.41 | 5.21 | 48.56** | .200 |
| Cruise | 3.08 | 5.35 | 83.08** | .300 |
| Domestic car | 4.50 | 5.25 | 8.73* | .043 |
| Domestic air | 3.75 | 4.85 | 17.50** | .083 |
| International | 2.89 | 4.56 | 32.96** | .145 |
| Mean likelihood (α = .81) | 3.30 | 4.76 | 93.19** | .253 |

*p < .01, **p < .001

A 3-way ANOVA was conducted on the mean of the cruise risk items (α = .904). There was a main effect for cruise, $F_{1,194} = 15.77$, $p < .001$, $eta^2 = .075$, with lower perceived risk for cruisers (M = 3.57) than non-cruisers (M = 4.52). There was a main effect for framing, F = 3.80, p = .053, $eta^2 = .019$ with higher perceived risk when results were framed negatively (M = 4.23) versus positively (M = 3.81).

A series of 3-way ANOVAs on the three image measures revealed a significant effect for prior cruises and no other effects. In all cases, prior cruisers had a more favorable image than non-cruisers. For cognitive image (α = .88), mean ratings for cruisers and non-cruisers were 6.04 and 5.42 respectively, $F_{1,194} = 22.08$, $p < .001$, $eta^2 = .102$. For affective image (α = .89) the means were 5.97 for cruisers and 4.80 for non-cruisers, $F_{1,194} = 34.37$, $p < .001$, $eta^2 = .151$. For overall image, the means were 6.33 and 5.15 for cruisers and non-cruisers respectively, $F_{1,194} = 40.64$, $p < .001$, $eta^2 = .173$.

**Discussion**

The results indicate that cruisers are more likely to engage in all modes of travel, suggesting that prior cruise experience is indicative of general propensity to travel. The findings are consistent with Park and Petrick's (2009) research, showing that cruisers have a more favorable image, lower risk perceptions, and greater behavioral intentions than non-cruisers. Perceived risk from cruising was higher when the number of cases was presented in concrete numbers versus abstract percentages. Framing affected risk perceptions, which were higher when framing was negative (i.e., positive tests) versus positive (i.e., negative tests).

Cruise companies need to engage in effective communication in all media outlets regarding safety and sanitation efforts as a way to combat negative perceptions caused by the news media. The news media will continue to enlist various tactics to gain interest from readers, often at the expense of the cruise and tourism industry. Through a detailed public relations strategy, cruise companies can offset these negative effects and gain the trust of new and existing customers alike.

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# Effective Color Marketing for Restaurants: The Matching Effect of Color and Sustainability

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## Abstract

This study investigated the matching effect of color and sustainability on customer attitude toward a restaurant in conjunction with the moderating role of perceived credibility. A 2 food source (sustainable vs. non-sustainable) x 2 color consistency (consistent vs. inconsistent) factorial design experiment was conducted. Results suggest that customer attitude toward a restaurant is higher when the background color of a marketing message is consistent with the food source due to the matching effect.

**Keywords:** matching effect, sustainability, color psychology, perceived credibility

## Introduction

Due to increased consumer attention towards sustainability (Emmert, 2021), the hospitality industry has become increasingly interested in sustainability (Han *et al.,* 2018). Green color marketing is a common marketing tactic to increase green image due to the psychological effect of color on people's cognition (Elliot & Maier, 2014). Sustainable restaurants adopt the color green because of its associated environmentally friendly image (Seo & Scammon, 2017). However, despite the growing literature on restaurant sustainability, previous studies have primarily focused on explaining ethical purchasing decisions using the links among attitudes, subjective norms, and behavioral intentions (e.g., Jang & Cho, 2022). There is limited understanding of the influence of color marketing promotions on consumers' perceptions of sustainable restaurants. It is unclear how cognitive congruency between color and sustainability attributes affect ethical dining behaviors. Sustainable restaurants earn credibility by disclosing food sources and origins, such as organic ingredients and local foods (Nagy et al., 2022). Since credibility is an indicator of the salience of food source, it may affect the decision-making process by taking color into consideration. The following questions are addressed:

- Do customers associate local food with sustainable restaurants?
- Is the color green appropriate for a sustainability marketing message?
- Does perceived credibility influence the effect of sustainability marketing?

## Literature Review

### *Color Marketing and the Matching Effect*

Color is an external sensory cue that consumers unconsciously process as critical information when making purchase decisions (Lim *et al.,* 2020). Colors stored in an individual's memory deliver symbolic messages that trigger affective responses, causing consumers to assume product attributes, functionality, taste, and quality (Karnal *et al.,* 2016). In the restaurant industry, different colors are used in logos based on the type of restaurant (Singh, 2006).

Consumer research suggests that congruency between symbolic color messaging and product type is key to successful color marketing (Huang & Lu, 2015). The matching effect in persuasion explicates the effect of congruency between symbolic color meanings and product types (See *et al.,* 2008). When message content matches information recipients' knowledge and goals, message persuasiveness is increased (See *et al.,* 2008). It is expected that consumers will process information more easily when available information is consistent with the primary attribute of the stimulus, and in turn, the information will positively influence judgment. Perceived fit between color and product increases message persuasiveness. This study expects that congruency between color and sustainability will increase processing fluency and result in the matching effect exerting positive restaurant evaluation.

- **$H_1$:** A restaurant is perceived as sustainable when a local food source is promoted via social media.
- **$H_2$:** Color influences the effect of food source on customer attitude toward a restaurant.
- **$H_{2a}$:** A restaurant using a sustainable food source will be rated more positively when a promotion message uses a consistent color versus when a promotion message uses an inconsistent color.
- **$H_{2b}$:** Color will not significantly influence customer attitude when the food source is not disclosed.

### *Moderating Role of Perceived Credibility*

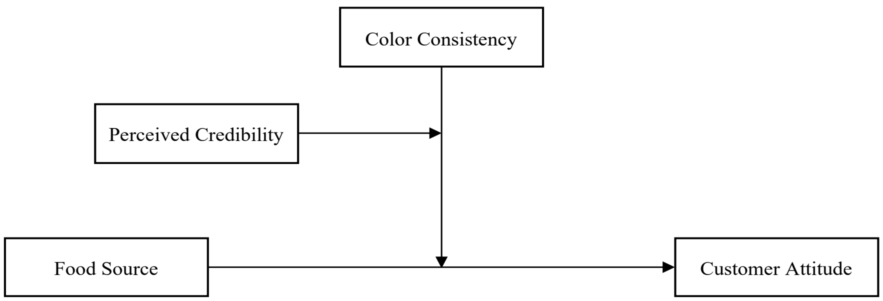
Perceived credibility is a critical factor for consumers making purchase decisions in the hospitality industry (Kim & Song, 2020). High perceived credibility of a product reduces consumer choice uncertainty (Bachmann & Ingenhoff, 2016). As a result, information associated with high credibility is salient and consumers do not search for other cues to make decisions (Kim & Tanford, 2009). In the current research, the matching effect of color refers to additional external cues. When restaurant customers perceive low credibility, customers will seek other external cues to reduce perceived risk. It is expected that the matching effect of color will be more effective when perceived credibility is low. In contrast, consumers will be less influenced by the color matching effect when there is high perceived credibility regarding a restaurant's level of sustainability.

- **$H_3$:** The matching effect between food source and color consistency on customer attitude toward a restaurant attenuates as perceived credibility increases.

## Methods

A 2 food source (sustainable vs. non-sustainable) x 2 color consistency (consistent vs. inconsistent) factorial design (n=213) experiment was conducted. Food source represented the restaurant's level of sustainability and color consistency referred to the level of sustainability representativeness. Stimuli simulated a marketing message broadcasted via social media. The food source was identified as local for the sustainable condition and not disclosed for the non-sustainable condition. The background color of the message was green for the consistent condition and orange for the inconsistent condition.

**Figure 1.** Conceptual Model




## Results

The effect of food source on perceived sustainability was tested in a one-way ANOVA. Results revealed that a restaurant's perceived sustainability level significantly differed by food source ($F_{1,229}$=3.99, p=.047). H1 was supported. A two-way food source x color consistency ANCOVA on customer attitude toward a restaurant was performed while controlling for individual's environmental concern. There was a food source main effect ($F_{2,226}$=10.99, p=.001, $\eta_p 2$=.046) and a two-way interaction with color consistency ($F_{2,226}$=5.59, p=.019, $\eta_p 2$=.024). Customer attitude was significantly higher when color was consistent with the food source and lower when color was inconsistent. However, when the food source was non-sustainable, customer attitude was not statistically different by color consistency. H2 was fully supported. PROCESS model 3 was used to examine whether the matching effect of food source and color consistency differs by credibility while controlling for an individual's environmental concern. Results showed a food source main effect (b=5.51, se=1.60, t=3.45, p<.001), a color consistency main effect (b=2.71, se=.87, t=-3.13, p<.001), a two-way interaction (b=-3.72, se=1.00, t=-3.72, p<.001), and a three-way interaction among food source, color consistency, and credibility (b=.33, se=.04, t=7.83, p<.001). H3 was supported.

## Discussion

Results confirmed that advertising local food via social media is representative of a sustainable restaurant. The effect of a sustainable food source on customer attitude increases when a promotion message utilizes a consistent background color. However, the matching effect between food source and color consistency varies with credibility. This research contributes to the marketing persuasion literature by aligning food source with restaurant sustainability to a sensory cue to affect an unconscious mental process. Findings suggest that a matching effect exists between message content and color to increase promotional message persuasiveness.

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# Risky Business: Effects of Risk-Related Reviews and Priming Cues in Uncertain Times

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## Abstract

This research examined how affective and behavioral priming influence travelers' responses to valence and risk cues within online reviews. Prospect theory, whereby people place more weight on avoiding risk than on gaining a reward, in conjunction with the asymmetry effect of positive and negative information, underpinned the study. The results revealed that negative affective priming amplifies the effect of negative review risk. The research provides suggestions for navigating risk-related travel influences during times of uncertainty.

**Keywords:** risky business, primming cues, uncertain times

## Introduction

The recent pandemic exemplifies the way in which uncertainty can profoundly influence the hospitality business and demonstrates how decision-making can change dramatically as a function of situational factors that increase risk (Conchar et al., 2004). Consumers are exposed to internal and external factors that influence their responses to risk cues. Risk content within reviews serves as a cue to influence travel decisions (e.g., Kim et al., 2021), and priming operates to make information within stimuli more accessible (Janiszewski & Wyer, 2014). Affective priming can temporarily elevate or deflate mood and behavioral priming could make consumers more sensitive to risk content within reviews. By understanding the two types of priming, operators can predict and manage consumer responses to review content in times of uncertainty. Therefore, this research evaluates how review valence, risk content, and affective and behavioral priming influence lodging choices.

It is hypothesized that when choosing between properties, consumers are more favorable towards a hotel with positive versus neutral reviews. However, a single negative review can reduce booking intentions and evaluations (Book et al., 2016; 2018). Negative affective priming will cause individuals to focus on the negative information (Taylor, 1991), thereby reducing preferences when the negative review involves risk.

## Methods

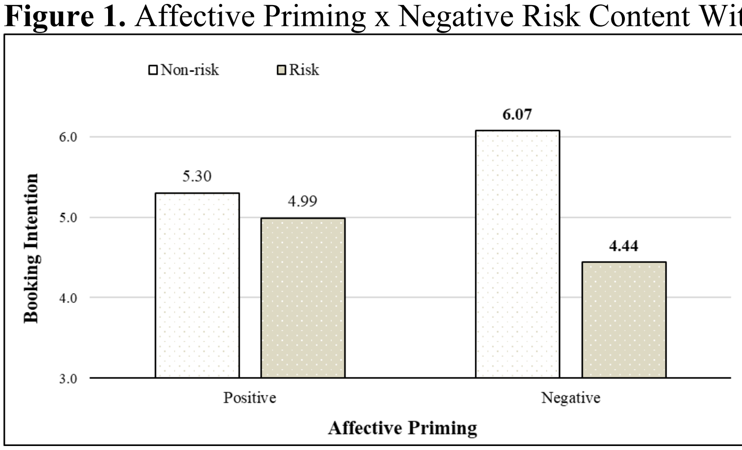
A 2 (affective priming: positive vs. negative) x 2 (behavioral priming: no priming vs. priming) x 2 (review content: non-risk versus risk) factorial design was used. Affective priming refers to a video distributed through social media consisting of an animated short film (5-7 minute), that was unrelated to the hotel booking task. Positive priming was intended to induce positive feelings, whereas negative priming was designed to generate negative emotions. Behavioral priming was manipulated by having participants complete a risk tolerance scale before (priming) or after (no priming) the main stimuli, thereby activating their risk-related attitudes.

Stimuli consisted of photos of two resorts side-by side followed by five customer reviews for each resort. A base resort was included as a control that remained constant, while a target resort contained the review content manipulations. The target resort had four positive reviews (P) and a single negative focal review with non-risk (N) or risk (NR) content. The base resort contained a set of five neutral reviews (O). The target sample was participants who have booked through an OTA within the past 12 months. A sample of 271 responses was recruited from an online M-Turk sample and randomly assigned to each experimental condition.

**Results**

A 3-way ANOVA on booking intention for the target resort ($\alpha$=.885) obtained a significant effect of negative risk content ($F_{1, 162}$=4.49, p=.036, $\eta_p^2$=.027), a 2-way interaction between affective priming and risk content ($F_{1, 162}$=5.54, p=.040, $\eta_p^2$=.022), and a 3-way interaction with behavioral priming ($F_{1, 162}$=4.70, p<.032, $\eta_p^2$=.028). Two-way ANOVAs were performed to analyze the effect of affective priming and risk content at each level of behavioral priming. With behavioral priming, there were no significant effects. Without behavioral priming, there was a main effect for risk content ($F_{1,83}$=4.78, p=.031, $\eta_p^2$=.055) and an interaction between affective priming and risk content ($F_{1,83}$=10.49, p=.002, $\eta_p^2$=.112). One-way ANOVAs were performed on negative risk content at each level of affective priming. With positive priming, the effect of risk content was not significant, $F_{1,58}$=1.25, p=.269. With negative priming, there was a large and significant effect negative risk content, $F_{1,25}$=6.72, p=.016, $\eta_p^2$=.212. Booking intention was lower with negative risk content (M=4.44) versus non-risk content (M=6.07). The interaction is graphed in Figure 1.

**Figure 1.** Affective Priming x Negative Risk Content Without Behavioral Priming




For target resort evaluation ($\alpha$=.840), there was no effect for behavioral priming. There was a significant main effect for risk content, $F_{1,162}$=10.31, p=.002, $\eta_p^2$=.060 and a 2-way affective priming x risk content interaction, $F_{1,162}$=8.76, p=.004, $\eta_p^2$=.051. The 3-way interaction including behavioral priming that was observed for booking intention was marginally significant for evaluation, $F_{1,162}$=3.015, p=.084, $\eta_p^2$=.018. Like booking intention, risk content did not affect evaluation with positive priming (F<1) with means of 5.32 and 5.28 for non-risk and risk content. With negative priming, evaluation was more favorable with non-risk content (M=5.85) versus risk content (M=4.69), $F_{1,56}$=8.95, p=.004, $\eta_p^2$=.138.

**Discussion/Implication**

The most important finding was the interaction between review content and affective priming. Affective priming increased the influence of negative risk content. The process was indirect affective priming, whereby two negative cues (negative priming and negative risk) were sufficient to overcome positive reviews. Negative affective priming shifted focus from positive review valence to negative risk content. Therefore, judgments were lower with negative risk reviews versus non-risk reviews. Behavioral priming did not influence responses when negative reviews were risk related versus non-risk related. The findings can be explained by the negativity bias, which is the result of an emotional response to negative information (Taylor, 1991). As a form of cognitive priming, behavioral priming did not activate negative emotions, whereas affective priming did. This research emphasizes the importance of situational cues to understand decision processes in the hotel booking environment. Prospect theory highlights unbalanced perceived value between losses and gains, suggesting that the negative impacts of losses outweigh the benefits of gains (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979). The research exemplifies the application of prospect theory in hotel booking decisions during times of uncertainty.

Hotel website managers should highlight that proper protocols, safety and hygiene are being followed, as individuals are likely to have been primed through external stimuli like news sources (Kim et al., 2021). Additionally, if the hotel receives positive messaging surrounding its protocols, it behooves the organization to highlight these positive reviews in prominent text or with video content. This study shows that when customers write negative reviews that include information about risk, outside stimuli that evoke a negative mood can influence consumers' decision-making and decrease likelihood to book. To counteract this effect, it is suggested that hotel website managers include short, uplifting films and ensure that any pop-up content or ads related are positive in affect. The recent crisis highlights the need to understand travel purchase decisions in times of uncertainty and this study offers new insight into the role of risk cues in decision-making.

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# Why Do Tourists Visit Farms? Exploring the Value Drivers of Agricultural Tourism

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## Abstract

Agritourism is currently experiencing a dramatic increase in popularity in the United States. Research has examined why farmers are interested in pursuing agritourism from a fiscal perspective, but the consumer desire for agritourism has not been thoroughly examined. This study utilizes the consumer perceived value theory to explore what elements of agritourism present value to tourists. Three different aspects of agritourism were found to contribute to value perceptions: intangible elements, tangible products, and nostalgia.

**Keywords**: perceived value, agritourism, nostalgia, tangible, intangible

## Introduction

Agricultural tourism (agritourism) includes a wide range of activities taking place in an agricultural setting such as a farm, ranch, orchard, or winery. These activities present value to the agricultural operators in terms of both socioeconomic benefits and heritage preservation (Barbieri, 2013; Kim et al., 2018; Lane, 1994; McGehee, 2007). For the tourist agritourism presents an alternative to conventional tourism destinations (Ruiz-Real et al., 2020), but the benefits and value of agritourism to tourists has not been thoroughly examined. This study seeks to identify what unique aspects of agritourism drive tourists' value perceptions and subsequent intentions to revisit these types of destinations. Products, both tangible and intangible, must present value to consumers in order to be purchased (Gallarza et al., 2011). Consumer perceptions of value are often examined through the perceived value framework presented by Sweeney and Soutar (2001). Consumer perceived value (PERVAL) is a multi-dimensional concept which includes four value dimensions: emotional value, social value, price/ value for money, and performance or quality value. It is through this framework that we examine which dimensions of agritourism drive consumer value perceptions. Agritourism experiences are unique in that they provide tourists with access to tangible products, intangible experiences, and a sense of nostalgia. The tangible agritourism products can include agricultural items such as food, beverages, and other non-consumable products. The desire for these products is often a tourists first introduction into the world of agritourism. Every year tourists visit pumpkin patches, u-pick berry patches, flower fields, and Christmas tree farms to acquire the unique products they provide. The intangible aspects of agritourism include educational opportunities, culture, heritage, atmosphere, and a connection to nature. These intangible elements are especially prevalent in agritourism. Additionally, agricultural experiences often elicit a sense of nostalgia for a simpler and slower way of life, natural lifestyle, the past, and traditional agricultural activities (Bartoletti, 2010; Christou et al., 2018; Skuras et al., 2006).

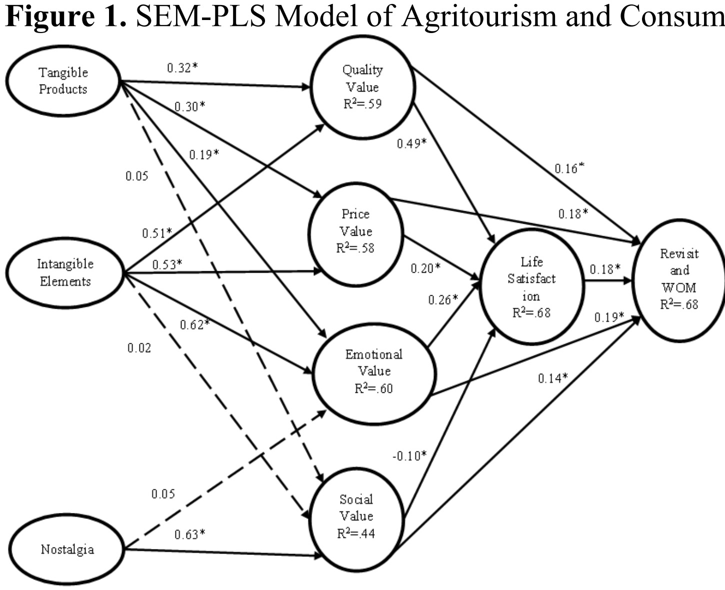
The authors of this study propose that these three aspects of agritourism experiences, tangible products, intangible elements, and nostalgia, are contributing to tourists' agritourism value perceptions. The perceived value each of these three elements is examined through the lens of the consumer perceived value theory, utilizing the PERVAL scale (Sweeney and Soutar, 2001). The authors hypothesized that each of the three aspects of agritourism would positively influence the four PERVAL dimensions. Additionally, greater perceptions of value will have a positive effect on tourist sense of life satisfaction and subsequent revisit and word of mouth (WOM) intentions.

**Methods**

United States based panelists were surveyed via Amazon Mturk and asked to reflect upon their experience with agritourism. Panelists were prompted with a short explanation of what agritourism entails prior to the survey and asked to reflect upon their prior experience, if any, with agritourism. A total of 321 panelists passed two attention checks and indicated that they could recall participating in some sort of agritourism experience. Since the newly proposed drivers of agritourism have not previously been studied, the authors compiled a list of 33 items based upon literature review and similar previously validated scales. The items reflecting the three proposed agritourism drivers (tangible products, intangible elements, and nostalgia) were analyzed via exploratory factor analysis (IBM SPSS version 24) with principal axis factoring and Promax rotation, using a subset (100 responses) of the overall data. Seventeen items were retained and assigned to the three proposed drivers. Confirmatory analysis of the proposed model was conducted in SmartPLS 3.2.8 (Ringle et al., 2015) using the remaining 221 responses. Three additional items were removed from the agritourism drivers, resulting in four items being assigned to the tangible factor, five on intangible, and five on nostalgia. Following item refinement, the PERVAL scale retained four items for the quality value dimension, three on price value, three on emotional value, and four on the social value dimension. Satisfaction retained three items and revisit/ WOM intentions retained four. The full proposed structural model was tested using partial least squares regression equation modeling (PLS-SEM) in SmartPLS 3.2.8 (Ringle et al., 2015).

**Results and Conclusions**

**Figure 1.** SEM-PLS Model of Agritourism and Consumer Perceived Value Results[a]




[a]Solid lines are significant, * ρ≤0.05, dashed lines are not statistically significant

Each of the three proposed drivers of agritourism exhibited a positive effect on some of the dimensions of perceived value. Tangible products and intangible elements both had positive effects on quality, price, and emotional value dimensions, but not the social value dimension. Nostalgia exerted a positive influence on only the social dimension of value. The results of the PLS-SEM analyses can be found in figure 1.

The tangible products of agritourism exhibited a positive total effect on tourist life satisfaction (0.26, $p<.001$) and revisit/WOM intentions (0.19, $p<.001$). The intangible elements also exhibited a positive total effect on tourists' life satisfaction (0.51, $p<.001$) and revisit/WOM intentions (0.39, $p<.001$). Nostalgia exhibited a significant positive total effect on revisit and WOM/intentions (0.09, $p=.04$) but not on life satisfaction. Despite both the tangible and intangible dimensions exhibiting a significant positive effect, the greater effect was exhibited by the intangible elements of agritourism. It is interesting that even though the products provided by agritourism act as the initial attraction of agritourism the intangible aspects of the experience have a greater effect on the perception of value. Providers of agritourism experiences should emphasize the positive aspects of the intangible experience elements when advertising their destinations in addition to the products available. It may also be beneficial to emphasize the nostalgic aspects of the experience.

This study is the first to examine what aspects of the agritourism experience are driving tourists' perceptions of value in addition to the subsequent effects on life satisfaction and revisit/WOM intentions. Tangible products, intangible elements, and nostalgia all exhibited positive effects on tourists' perceived value, with the intangible agritourism elements having the greatest effect. This study extends the very limited understanding of what drives tourists to visit agritourism destinations instead of conventional ones. This information should prove invaluable both for agritourism providers and the tourism industry.

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# Effects of Tls Guide’s Professional Competencies on Rapport, Attachment, and Reuse Intention

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**Abstract**

Despite the growth of live streaming in the tourism industry, more research needs to examine the aspects that affect visitors’ reuse intention of travel live streaming (TLS), which incorporates professional guides. To bridge the gap in the literature, this study proposed a stimulus-organism-response (SOR)-based theoretical framework for rapport, TLS satisfaction, attachment, and reuse intention based on the competencies of TLS guides. Findings revealed that the TLS guide’s professional skills and attitude had a significant impact on developing rapport, showing that it is a critical mediator in customer satisfaction and attachment to TLS. Therefore, the intention to reuse TLS was favorably influenced by satisfaction and attachment to TLS.

**Keywords**: TLS guide, guide’s professional competencies, rapport, attachment, reuse intention

## Introduction

The demand for smart tourism that enables services to be digitally delivered to consumers has dramatically increased (Sigala, 2020). Hospitality industry technology as a catalyst has energized travelers, tour guides, and even whole communities by allowing them to maintain commercial activity without physical visits or direct contact (Sigala, 2020; UNWTO, 2020). As a result, there is an increasing number of marketing applications for live streaming that emphasize “nowness” and feeling like “almost being there.” (Buhalis & Sinarta 2019; Wongkitrungrueng et al. 2020).

To satisfy tourists’ expectations of personalized and positive experiences by travel live streaming (TLS) tour guides must be competent, exhibiting professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Hwang & Lee, 2018; Tu et al., 2019). The performance of TLS tour guides greatly affects attachment and, ultimately, customers’ satisfaction. TLS tour guides need to minimize the difference between the virtual experience and the actual experience and provide a positive travel destination image (Hwang & Lee, 2018; Jeong & Shin, 2019; Tu et al., 2019).

Research on the relationships between tour guides and tourists in traditional tourism and tour guide competencies is well developed (Hwang & Lee, 2018). However, few studies have focused on the participation of professional TLS tour guides and consumers (Liu et al., 2022), including the factors that drive people to reuse TLS with a guide.

To bridge this literature gap, this research aims to examine TLS tour guides using the stimulus-organism-response (SOR) theory. The study will examine the competencies of TLS tour guides and their influence on the live streaming experience. More specifically, the purpose of this study is to determine 1) the effect of a TLS tour guide’s perceived professional competencies on relationships with participants, 2) the influence of rapport between TLS tour guides and participants, and 3) participants' satisfaction with guide services, attachment to TLS, and reuse intention of TLS (see Figure 1 and Table 1).

**Figure 1.** Research Model

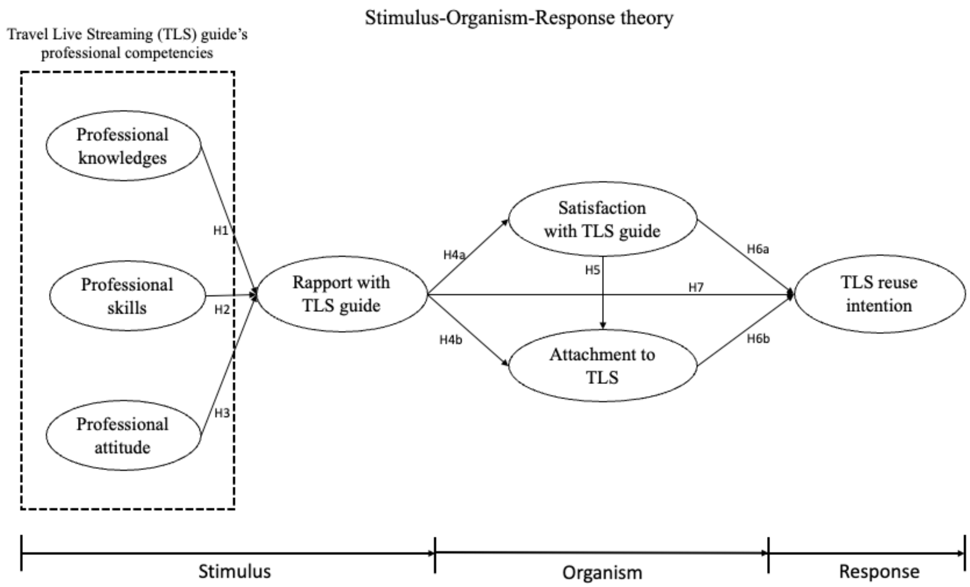



**Table 1.** Hypotheses

| | |
|---|---|
| $H_1$ | Professional knowledge has a positive influence on rapport with the TLS guide. |
| $H_2$ | Professional skills have a positive influence on rapport with the TLS guide |
| $H_3$ | Professional attitude has a positive influence on rapport with the TLS guide |
| $H_{4a}$ | Rapport with the TLS guide has a positive influence on satisfaction with the TLS guide. |
| $H_{4b}$ | Rapport with the TLS guide has a positive influence on attachment to TLS. |
| $H_5$ | Satisfaction with the TLS guide has a positive influence on attachment to TLS. |
| $H_{6a}$ | Satisfaction with the TLS guide has a positive influence on visit intention. |
| $H_{6b}$ | Attachment to TLS has a positive influence on visit intention. |
| $H_7$ | Rapport with the TLS guide has a positive influence on TLS reuse intention. |

## Methods

Consumers who have used TLS conducted by a guide within the past year participated in a survey through Prolific. This study employed partial least squares–structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis to examine the proposed theoretical model and hypotheses. SmartPLS 4 was used to analyze the measurement and structural models (Ringle et al., 2022). Following the measurement model evaluation of the reflective model, statistical analysis was performed in the order of structural model evaluation, bootstrapping, and hypotheses testing.

## Results

### *Measurement Model*

Convergent and discriminant validity of 29 indicators was assessed using component-based PLS-SEM. The results for reliability and validity, including the factor loadings for the items, are shown in Table 2. All alpha values (Campbell & Fiske 1959) and CR levels were above the suggested value of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2010). The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and factor loadings (FL) were higher than 0.50, supporting convergent validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

**Table 2.** Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis

| Construct | Items | FL | *t* Value | AVE | CR | *α* | rho_A |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Professional knowledge [PK] | PK1 | .89 | 51.56 | .73 | .89 | .88 | .92 |
| | PK2 | .85 | 37.02 | | | | |
| | PK3 | .86 | 44.69 | | | | |
| | PK4 | .83 | 34.89 | | | | |
| Professional skills [PS] | PS1 | .84 | 38.90 | .63 | .81 | .80 | .87 |
| | PS2 | .69 | 17.11 | | | | |
| | PS3 | .80 | 26.58 | | | | |
| | PS4 | .84 | 36.14 | | | | |
| Professional attitude [PA] | PA1 | .78 | 29.30 | .61 | .79 | .79 | .86 |
| | PA2 | .81 | 34.09 | | | | |
| | PA3 | .79 | 28.36 | | | | |
| | PA4 | .74 | 23.62 | | | | |
| Rapport with the live streaming travel guide [RP] | RP1 | .74 | 21.40 | .56 | .85 | .85 | .88 |
| | RP2 | .73 | 21.50 | | | | |
| | RP3 | .71 | 21.04 | | | | |
| | RP4 | .80 | 36.63 | | | | |
| | RP5 | .78 | 30.23 | | | | |
| | RP6 | .72 | 21.18 | | | | |
| Tourist Satisfaction [ST] | ST1 | .86 | 41.69 | .76 | .90 | .90 | .93 |
| | ST2 | .89 | 68.04 | | | | |
| | ST3 | .88 | 70.52 | | | | |
| | ST4 | .87 | 49.42 | | | | |
| Attachment to TLS [ATT] | ATT1 | .79 | 37.13 | .73 | .81 | .81 | .89 |
| | ATT2 | .89 | 64.03 | | | | |
| | ATT3 | .87 | 48.35 | | | | |
| TLS reuse intention [RI] | RI1 | .91 | 62.41 | .85 | .94 | .94 | .96 |
| | RI2 | .92 | 79.19 | | | | |
| | RI3 | .93 | 83.40 | | | | |
| | RI4 | .93 | 97.13 | | | | |

*Note*. α = Cronbach's alpha; AVE = average variance extracted; CR = composite reliability; FL = factor loadings; rho_A = reliability coefficient (cutoff > 0.7).

Discriminant validity was assessed through cross-loadings (Ahrholdt et al.,2017; Henseler et al., 2015). The results show that all HTMT values of the latent variables were below the critical and conservative value of 0.85 (Table 3). which further indicates satisfactory discriminant validity.

Multicollinearity of each independent variable was assessed using the variance inflation factor (VIF). Because all values for VIF were between 1.28 and 4.54, multicollinearity was not an issue in this research (Hair et al. 2010; Hair et al. 2012). Based on do Valle and Assaker's (2016) suggestion, the effect size of each endogenous variable was tested using the $f^2$ and $q^2$. All values for the effect size of $f^2$ fell between 0.23 and 0.03, which are greater than the medium effect size (e.g., large = 0.35, medium = 0.15, small = 0.02) (Cohen, 1992), except PK (0.00) and ATT (0.01). Additionally, all values for the effect size of $q^2$ fell between 0.03 and 0.22, which are greater than the medium effect size, except RP2 (0.00) and RP3 (0.01).

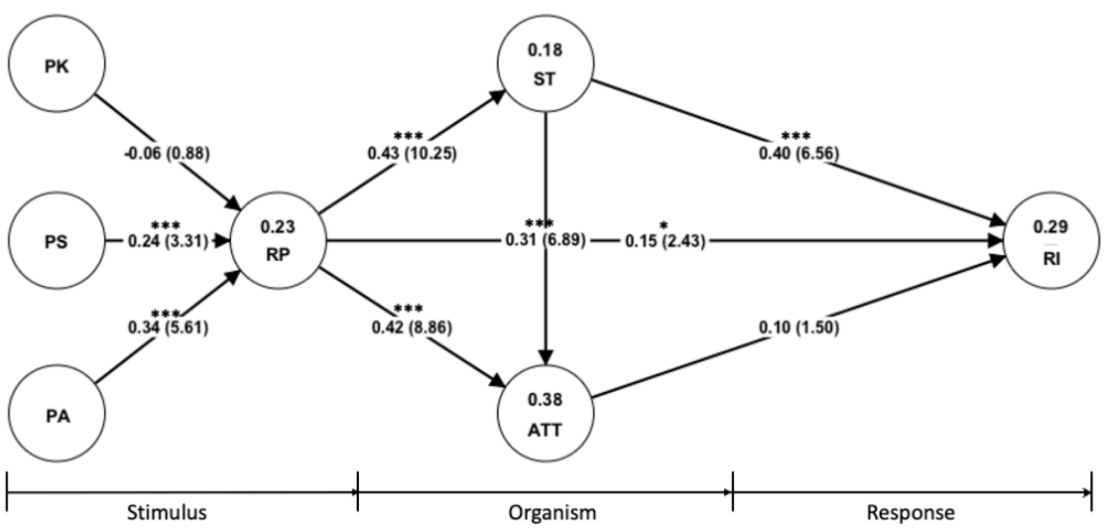
**Table 3.** Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations (HTMT)

| Construct | Correlation of the constructs | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **(1)** | **(2)** | **(3)** | **(4)** | **(5)** | **(6)** | **(7)** |
| (1) PK | | | | | | | |
| (2) PS | .76 | | | | | | |
| (3) PA | .67 | .79 | | | | | |
| (4) RP | .30 | .46 | .52 | | | | |
| (5) ST | .50 | .46 | .54 | .47 | | | |
| (6) ATT | .30 | .42 | .44 | .68 | .57 | | |
| (7) RI | .42 | .37 | .45 | .40 | .56 | .43 | |

### ***Structural Model***

Because the data were insufficient for the criterion of multivariate normality, bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples was used to analyze the relational assessment and hypotheses by *t* statistics using PLS-SEM to test the research model (Hair et al. 2012). As shown in Figure 1, the $R^2$ of variance explained for rapport with TLS guide (38%), satisfaction with TLS guide (18%), attachment to TLS (38%), TLS reuse intention (29%) were calculated as predictive power (Hair et al. 2010). As shown in Figure 2, seven hypotheses were supported, whereas hypotheses 1 and 6b were not supported. Both TLS guide's professional skills and professional attitude were found to significantly influence rapport with a guide in TLS respectively ($H_2$: ɣ = 0.24, *t* value = 3.31, $p < 0.001$; $H_3$: ɣ = 0.34, *t* value = 5.61, $p < 0.001$), which reflected the strong effects among TLS users in the proposed research model.

**Figure 2.** Results of Path Analysis




*Note*. *$p$<0.05; ***$p$<0.001. The figures in parentheses are *t* values.

### *Mediating Effects*

As presented in Table 4, rapport with TLS guide, and satisfaction with TLS guide played significant mediating roles in the model, except TLS guide's professional knowledge and attachment to TLS.

**Table 4.** Mediating Effects

| Hypothesis | Path | Direct effect | Indirect effect | Total effect | *p*-value | Supported |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| H1 | PK -> RP | -.06 | | -.06 | .38 | No |
| H2 | PS -> RP | .24 | | .24 | .00 | Yes |
| H3 | PA -> RP | .34 | | .34 | .00 | Yes |
| H4a | RP -> ST | .43 | | .43 | .00 | Yes |
| H4b | RP -> ATT | .42 | .13 | .55 | .00 | Yes |
| H5 | ST -> ATT | .31 | | .31 | .00 | Yes |
| H6a | ST -> RI | .40 | .03 | .43 | .00 | Yes |
| H6b | ATT -> RI | .10 | | .10 | .13 | No |
| H7 | RP -> RI | .15 | .23 | .38 | .02 | Yes |

## Implications

This study demonstrates that the competencies of a TLS guide, especially professional skills and attitude, have a significant impact on the rapport established between a TLS guide and users in a TLS context employing live streaming technology. Specifically, the professional abilities of a TLS guide include the ability to comprehend and operate TLS technology, such as displaying tourist sites on a screen, interacting with users via a microphone, and applying various visual effects. As with a tour guide of traditional in-person tourism, the TLS guide's professional attitude reflects the mindset of delivering service by connecting with travelers and performing the overall TLS. In addition, the rapport between the guide and the user in TLS has a significant impact on the user's satisfaction with the TLS guide, attachment to the TLS platform, and intent to reuse TLS in the future. Thus, people will become more interested in efficient travel methods with the findings if competent guides effectively engage with users via diverse live streaming technologies and operate TLS.

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# Research in Progress Track

# Connecting Sounds to Food Item Names Translations in Ethnic Restaurant Menus: The Effect of Translation Approaches on Perceived Authenticities

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## Abstract

Menu is an attribute for customers to evaluate their dining experience. When the restaurant is in a culture that has a language other than the local language, they need to translate their dish names either using meaning or sound. The present research aims to compare the two methods regarding their effect on customers' perceived authenticity and purchase behaviors. Building on the congruity theory, this research employs an experimental design to explore the relationship.

**Keywords:** ethnic restaurants, menus, perceived authenticity, translation approaches, purchase intention, sound

## Introduction

Because of the multicultural nature of the United States, ethnic restaurants that represent diverse cultures have become a significant sector of the foodservice industry (Jang et al., 2011; Tsai & Lu, 2012). Restaurant managers create an exotic cultural experience with different themes and provide authentic foods to customers (Ebster & Guist, 2005). Perceived authenticity is one of the goals that ethnic restaurant managers would like for the customers to perceive because it is a vital factor customers consider when choosing an ethnic restaurant and evaluating their dining experience after visits (Bell et al.,1994). Previous literature indicated that aspects including food, decoration (Jang et al., 2011), the appearance of employees, menu, and background music are significant factors that contribute to customers' authenticity evaluation of the restaurant (Song et al., 2019). Because of the cross-cultural variation between ethnic restaurants and many customers, several food item labels need to be translated from their original language to English. However, language and translation in the ethnic restaurant contexts and its role toward perceived authenticity are less in literature. This research aims to fill this gap and explore a translation method that connects the sound of a language to another, creating perceived authenticity, which in turn increases purchase intention and willingness to pay more.

In this research, customers' perceived authenticity toward menu labels translated using two different translation approaches, namely translation (by meaning) and transliteration (by sound) (El-Saba, 2020), was compared. Translation is translating words by their meaning, while transliteration translation is translating words by their pronunciations. Because of that, food item labels translated using literal translation will be easier for customers from another culture to understand. In contrast, food item labels translated using transliteration translation will sound like the original name. The current research is built on the congruity theory. The theory claims that when individuals perceive an object as in line with the expectation they hold, they tend to have positive attitudes toward it (Osgood & Tannenbaum, 1955). The research finding can be used as a reference to help ethnic restaurant managers make decisions in their menu translation approaches.

## Literature Review

### *Perceived Authenticity*

Authenticity of food is a key issue in distinguishing local ethnic food options from their local counterparts (Chandon et al., 2000), and it functions as a means of communication that allows local consumers to interact with foreign cultures (Wood & Munoz, 2007).

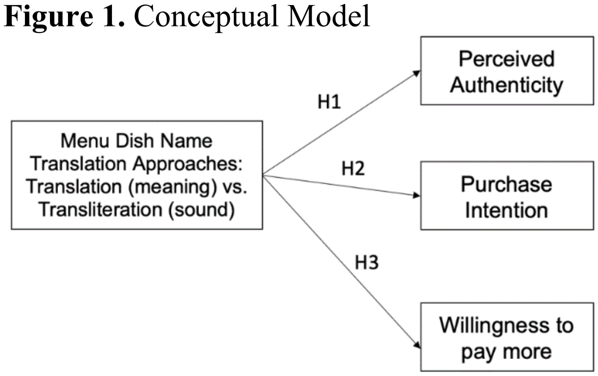
### *Translation in the Restaurant Industry*

House (2015) states that translation, in all life aspects, is crucial because it allows "access to a different world of knowledge, traditions, ideas" (p. 3). Translating food menus is a key communication tool restaurants employ to market their items and to provide customers with details pertaining to their menu offerings, such as the type and quality (Al- Rushaidi & Ali, 2017).

### *Congruity Theory*

Song et al. (Song et al., 2019) applied the congruity theory and found that customers' perceived authenticity is positively related to the consistency of the appearance of employees and customers to the restaurants' theme.

**Figure 1.** Conceptual Model




In this research, customers are assumed to have a higher perceived authenticity when they read the food item label and find the sound similar to what they expect. Thus, it is proposed here that:

- $H_1$: Customers have lower perceived authenticity toward menus where dish names are translated using translation (meaning) compared to menus with dish names translated using transliteration (sound).
- $H_2$: Customers have lower purchase intentions toward menus where dish names are translated using translation (meaning) compared to menus with dish names translated using transliteration (sound).
- $H_3$: Customers are less willing to pay more for foods on menus where dish names translated using translation (meaning) compared to menus where dish names translated using transliteration (sound).

## Methods

The present research employs an experimental design approach and will conduct two online scenarios in a simulated Jordanian-themed restaurant in the US. Two conditions were created, each with one of the two menus translated from Arabic to English with different approaches. In one menu, the dish name is translated using translation (translated based on meaning). In the other menu, the dish name is translated using transliteration (translated based on sound).

Target participants are U.S.-based customers who have ethnic restaurant dining experiences or intentions to dine in ethnic restaurants. Online experiment scenarios and surveys will be built on Qualtrics, and a total of 70 responses will be collected from Prolific, 35 for each condition. The survey includes three sections. Firstly, participants will be presented with a paragraph describing the scenario, a picture of a Jordanian restaurant, and a menu. A between-subjects design is applied, and participants will only be assigned one condition. One question will be added to test the manipulation: "Based on the menu, are the dish names translated using meaning or sound?" Moreover, participants are asked to respond regarding their perceived authenticity, purchase intention, and willingness to pay more. Purchase intention will be measured via three items from Yu et al.'s research (2020). The willingness to pay more will be assessed with three items (Jang et al., 2021). Lastly, how participants are familiar with Middle Eastern Restaurants and the Arabic language will be asked. In addition, participants' demographic information will be collected.

Independent sample t-tests will be conducted to explore the difference between the effect of two dish name translation approaches toward the three dependent variables. The means of each dependent variable will be compared.

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# Family Dynamics and Culture: An Exploration of Work-Life Balance in Family-Owned Hospitality Businesses.

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## Abstract

Working in family-owned businesses demands engagement and long hours from staff that can hamper their work-life balance. Furthermore, cultural and family dynamics are essential to job satisfaction among these employees. This study will explore the perceptions of work-life balance in family-owned businesses based on family dynamics and culture. Four hundred participants from family-owned hospitality businesses in the United States who represent Hispanic, Asian, African American, and White-American cultures will be recruited.

**Keywords:** family-owned hospitality business, work-life balance, culture, cross-cultural research, job satisfaction, hospitality business.

## Introduction

Work-life balance (WLB) is highly evaluated and discussed in the literature (Delecta, 2011). WLB has various stakeholders, such as researchers, business owners/managers, and staff. The significance of WLB varies with the perspectives of each stakeholder. From a research perspective, WLB is a necessary research topic because WLB is an essential element to society's well-being as it contributes to an individual's way of living (Halpern, 2005). From the management perspective, the significance of WLB is related to employee commitment and job satisfaction, as work-life conflict increases the intention of job turnover (Allen, Herst, Bruck, & Sutton, 2000). From an employee perspective, WLB affects organizational performance (Sirgy & Lee, 2018), health, family, and overall life satisfaction (Keyes, 2000).

WLB can be more challenging for family-owned businesses because the boundaries between work and family are blurred (Stafford & Tews, 2009). A family-owned business (FOB) requires extensive money, time, and energy (Gudmunson, Danes, Werbel, & Loy, 2009). FOB is a business bonded by family kinships, ethics, and values (Olson, Zuiker, Danes, Stafford, Heck, & Duncan, 2003). The values and visions can vary in a FOB as owners usually bring their family and cultural behaviors into their business operation. While research is readily available for family dynamics (Ghee, Ibrahim, & Abdul-Halim, 2015) and cultural differences (Pounder, 2015) in the FOB context, there is a shortage of literature on the perceptions of WLB. Thus, the purpose of this study is to explore the perceptions of WLB in FOB based on family dynamics and cultures.

## Literature Review

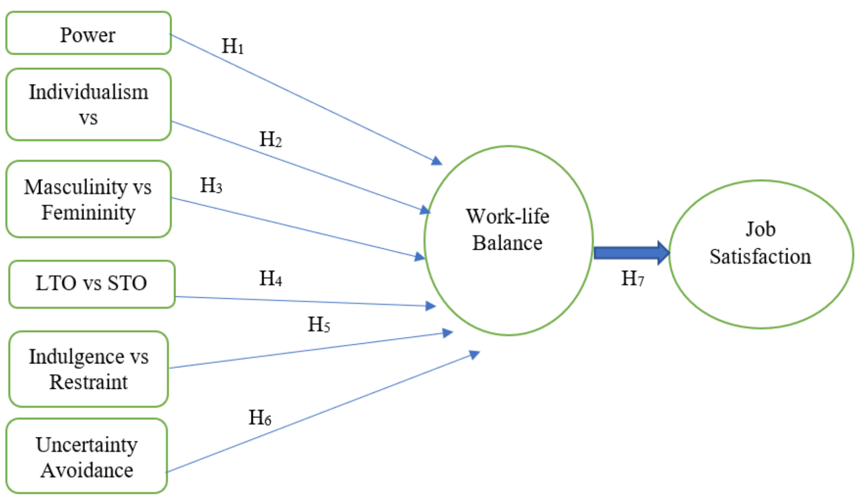
Family dynamics and culture affect various operating decisions in a FOB (Chrisman, Chua, & Sharma, 2005; Dyer, 2003). For example, the operating policies, succession tendencies, and operating styles of FOBs are often influenced by family dynamics and the culture of that family

(Olson et al., 2003). Thus, family dynamics affect the decision-making of a FOB (Chrisman et al., 2005), whereas cultural differences affect its operation and succession process (Santiago, 2000).

Geert Hofstede's cultural dimensions are applied in this cross-cultural research as part of a conceptual model to compare WLB in various cultures and family dynamics within FOB. Geert Hofstede is the pioneer of cross-cultural research as he introduced various dimensions that can reflect the differences in various cultures in people's behavior, attitude, values, and ethics. Hofstede's cultural dimensions are highly popular and is used for cross-cultural research by numerous researchers for last two decades. Hofstede's research uses the six cultural dimensions of power distance, individualism vs. collectivism, masculinity vs. femininity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term vs. short-term orientation, and indulgence vs. restraint (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2001). Hofstede's survey questions and scoring system will be used in this study to measure participants' cultural traits (WVS, 2001). Hofstede applied his cultural dimensions and survey questions to compare cultural traits in different countries. However, this study will apply Hofstede's survey questions to compare cultures within a country.

***Research Hypotheses***

**Figure 1.** Research Model




- **$H_1$:** People identified in a high power distance culture will rate lower on the work-life balance scale than those identified in a low power distance culture.
- **$H_2$:** People identified in an individualistic culture will rate higher on the work-life balance scale than those identified in a collectivist culture.
- **$H_3$:** People identified in a feminine culture will rate higher on the work-life balance scale than those identified in a masculine culture.
- **$H_4$:** People identified in a short-term orientation culture will rate higher on the work-life balance scale than those identified in a long-term orientation culture.
- **$H_5$:** People identified in an indulgence culture will rate higher on the work-life balance scale than those identified in a restraints culture.
- **$H_6$:** People identified in a low uncertainty avoidance culture will rate higher on the work-life balance scale than those identified in a high uncertainty avoidance culture.

- **$H_7$:** People who score high on work-life balance scale will rate high on the job satisfaction scale.

## Methods

This online survey will ask 42 questions in total. Questions will be related to participants' cultural traits, work-life balance, and job satisfaction. Hofstede's Value Service Module (VSM)-13 (Hofstede, Hofstede, Minkov, & Vinken, 2013), work-life balance (Wong & Ko, 2009; Netemeyer, Boles, & McMurrian, 1996), job satisfaction, and demographic questions (Judge, Bono, Erez, & Locke, 2005) will comprise the survey for this research.

This study aims to collect data from 400 owners, successors, and employees of hospitality family-owned businesses in the United States representing four cultures (Hispanic, Asian, African American, and White American). Participants include members of a family business who are connected with the owners by blood as well as the outside members who are not connected with that family business by blood. As family business literature indicates family business staff who are not part of that family also maintains the same cultures and dynamics that are represented and brought by the family-members of that particular family business. Recruitment will include a snowball sampling method by contacting administrators at both hospitality associations and cultural-specific hospitality associations (Latino Hotel Association and American Hotel and Lodging Association) and requesting they disseminate the survey link to their members. Two separate analyses will be applied. Firstly, Cluster Analysis ANOVA will be applied to compare each cultural dimension with each culture, followed by Regression Analysis to compare each dimension and culture with participants' work-life balance and job satisfaction. SPSS statistical software will be used for analyzing the data.

## Significance

Firstly, this study will add to the literature on the theory of WLB by focusing on the FOB context and the relationship between the variables WLB, culture, and family dynamics. Secondly, this study can explore the perceptions of work-life balance and job satisfaction of family-owned business representatives by evaluating multiple cultures and family dynamics. Thirdly, the results will provide FOB owners/managers with valuable practical information on the importance of WLB. Finally, by understanding the relationship between family dynamics, culture, and WLB, owners can implement policies that will help employees achieve a healthy WLB.

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# Systematic Evaluation of the Mediators of Food Insecurity and Obesity Among Adults in Northwest Indiana

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## Abstract

Food insecurity, the limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe food, is associated with a poor diet, potentially increasing the risk for obesity. Studying the factors that explain the association between food insecurity and obesity is crucial for public health, since obesity increases the risk for numerous chronic diseases. This study explores new evidence regarding mediators that influence food insecurity and its impact on body weight among adults in Northwest Indiana.

**Keywords:** body mass index, food insecurity, obesity, socio-economic status

## Introduction

One in seven American households experience food insecurity at times during the year, and lack of money and other resources hinder their ability to maintain consistent access to nutritious foods (Franklin et al., 2012). Obesity is considered a 21st-century epidemic that is associated with increased risk for non-communicable diseases such as type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, hypertension, and some types of cancer (De Lorenzo et al., 2019; Gonzalez-Muniesa et al., 2017). Therefore, obesity is a serious public health concern (Jastreboff et al. 2019). According to the most recent data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the prevalence of obesity in the United States is alarming (Hales et al.,2020). Furthermore, according to the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), in 2021, the obesity and overweight rates for adults more than 18 years old in Indiana were approximately 36.3% and 33.3%, respectively. This means over two thirds (69.6%) of adults in Indiana are either overweight or obese.

Obesity within the context of food insecurity adds an additional layer of complexity to the current obesity epidemic. Therefore, efficient policies and interventions ought to take into consideration the effects of food insecurity on the risks for developing obesity among food insecure households. The understanding of the coexistence of both food insecurity and obesity, although it might seem contradictory, is relevant for generating public health actions. The purpose of this project is to analyze the relationship between food insecurity and obesity and its mediators among adults in Lake County, in Northwest Indiana.

## Methods

We will conduct a longitudinal study to determine the associations between food insecurity and obesity among adult women and men ages 18-59 years old living in Lake County, in Northwest Indiana. The age limit of 59 will be used because the Administration on Aging refers to individuals over the age of 60 as older adults and oversees the provisions of the Older Americans Act, which provides special services and programs designed to assist these individuals to live independently.

This longitudinal study will include approximately 300 adult men and women living in Lake County, in Northwest Indiana.

To ensure alignment with our theoretical sampling framework, we will utilize a brief participant qualifying protocol. First, the 10-item US Adult Food Security scale will be employed to ascertain if participants are experiencing food insecurity. The scale utilizes a three-stage design with screeners to determine if subjects are experiencing food insecurity. Second, participants' body weight and height will be collected to determine BMI, which will be used to reflect their obesity status (e.g., healthy weight, overweight, obese). Third, a variety of socio-demographic variables will be assessed including age, gender, gross monthly income, household composition, marital status, educational level, employment status, smoking status, alcohol use, food bank use, pregnancy status, and physical activity. Last, we will collect their contact information for future study participation. We will review this data to intentionally recruit a representative sample of participants according to the theoretical sampling framework (details for proposed sampling shown below). Furthermore, the approach will provide us with a database of potential participants to meet the necessary sample requirements.

Theoretical sampling will be employed to ensure accurate representation of the participants this study intends to generalize its findings towards, a precedent set in prior health-related research (Draucker et al., 2007). Accordingly, residents experiencing food insecurity will be sampled in three categories: healthy weight (~n=91), overweight (~n=100), and obese (~n=109), based on the overweight and obesity rates in the state of Indiana as discussed previously. Data collection will involve a mixed-method approach, including (a) the dissemination of a quantitative survey, (b) a semi-structured interview protocol, and (c) the collection of anthropometric measurements. A cohort will be recruited into the study to participate in this longitudinal study: time point #1 (Summer 2023), time point #2 (Summer 2024), and time point #3 (Summer 2025). Each visit should take no more than 2 hours which should make the visits convenient for participants.

The prevalence of obesity will be determined relative to food security status. Linear trends will be evaluated using chi-square analysis. Logistic regression will be used to evaluate the relationship between food insecurity and obesity, with the model controlling for characteristics expected to be related to obesity status, including household income level, race/ethnicity, alcohol use, age, gender, gross monthly household income, household composition, marital status, educational level, and employment status. Two-way interactions between food insecurity status and all other variables in the model will be tested individually.

**Implications**

The quantitative component of our research design is different from a cross-sectional model that most studies have used; instead, we will use a robust longitudinal design that will lead to testing the associations of different variables in the same population over a 3-year period, specifically such as the causal relationship between variables. Ultimately, this mixed approach will allow us to come up with concrete evidence on how these factors either individually or collectively contribute to food insecurity and/or obesity. Moreover, we can disentangle how obesity and food insecurity are experienced differently by sub-segments of our population, such as along the lines of ethnicity/race, age, gender, etc. It will only be from such a systematic approach that we will then be able to formulate accurate, effective policies and design interventions that can be used among those who experience obesity and the varying degrees of food insecurity in Northwest Indiana.

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# Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Hospitality and Tourism Industry: Why Should We Care

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## Abstract

The increasing number of reported lawsuits against hospitality and tourism (HT) organizations which are accused of all kinds of discrimination, exclusion, and inequalities towards their employees is alarming. Meanwhile, very few studies have focused on this topic. This paper aims to close this gap by increasing awareness around diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), stressing the importance of fostering and protecting the related laws in the HT industry, and helping managers foster ethical work environments.

**Keywords:** diversity equity and inclusion (DEI), diversity management, equal employment opportunity commission (EEOC), hospitality and tourism (HT) industry, injustice in workplace

## Introduction

In recent years, the number of unethical scandals and lawsuits for all kinds of discrimination, exclusion, and inequalities in the hospitality and tourism (HT) industry have significantly increased around the world. The number of cases reaching the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) is alarming and the posed punitive measures and fines are huge. Considering the associated bad publicity and damage to the brand image, it becomes apparent that this issue should not be taken lightly. Meanwhile, hardly any HT studies are devoted to equity, inclusion, and all forms of diversity, ranging from gender and religion to race and sexual orientation. The purpose of this study is to close the gap in the literature and help the industry realize the importance of focusing on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and its proper implementation.

## Literature Review

According to the University of Iowa, Michigan, and Washington (2022), diversity is related but not limited to individual differences such as race, sex, gender identity, socio-economic status, ethnicity, religion, age, disability or ability. Inclusion relates to sense of belonging and participation and as Espinoza (2007) explains, equity is "associated with fairness or justice in the provision of education or other benefits and it takes individual circumstances into consideration" (p. 345) and "is used as a synonym for justice and, especially, as a negation when inequity is equated with injustice (p. 348). The HT industry is filled with unethical scandals. According to the EEOC, over 90 lawsuits have been filed against HT organizations in the past 5 years. Tables 1-7 provide specific details of each case that the EEOC has investigated and are organized by when they occurred, and the type of discrimination involved.

**Table 1.** The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Sex Discrimination Lawsuit

| Year | Date | Company Involved |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **2022** | 09-29 | Red Robin Casual Dining Chain was sued for sexual harassment and retaliation when they didn't respond to the repetitive reports of women being harassed by a male line cook. The sexual harassment included offensive sexual comments, unwanted remarks about women's bodies, and leering and touching women without their consent (EEOC, 2022a). |
| | 09-29 | A local Mexico Restaurant on the island of Oahu in Hawaii was sued for sexual and racial harassment. The restaurant allowed a bartender to sexually harass the women employees by unwanted touching, excessive and inappropriate comments about the employees' bodies and requests for dates and the manager took no action against it. Moreover, the general manager was accused of racial harassment by referring to a female employee as a "white devil" and although she reported it to the restaurant owner, the situation did not change (EEOC, 2022b). |
| | 09-22 | IHOP Franchisee had to pay $125,000 and other non-monetary relief to settle sexual harassment lawsuit that happened to at least two female, teenage employees by a male manager. The harassment included graphic sexual comments and questions about employees' sex lives, groping, and displaying pornographic material, etc. Since the company did not take appropriate steps to solve the problem, the employees were forced to quit (EEOC, 2022c). |
| | 09-12 | Chili's Grill and Bar was sued for sexual harassment of teens in Texas and Arkansas Restaurants that was committed by a male cook, 33 years old. The harassment involved physical assaults and made one of the victims resign (EEOC, 2022d). |
| | 09-07 | Bojangles Restaurant was alleged of sexual harassment and retaliation when a female employee was subjected to harassment by the general manager who made numerous sexual remarks and touched and grabbed her. Because she complained, she was denied a promotional opportunity and transferred to another location as retaliation (EEOC, 2022e). |
| | 08-25 | Justin Vineyards & Winery and the Wonderful Company were sued for sexual harassment and retaliation as they allowed sex-based harassment of women at Southern California locations by male managers, who made repeated sexual advances, sexual comments, and sexually offensive conduct, such as physical contact (EEOC, 2022f). |
| | 08-24 | Il Fornaio (America) LLC was alleged of sexual harassment and retaliation because the male supervisors, managers, and co-workers harassed the women employees with repeated, frequent, and offensive sex-based remarks, and unwanted physical touching. Although the women complained, the restaurant failed to prevent it (EEOC, 2022g). |
| | 08-17 | Skywest Airlines was sued for Sex discrimination and retaliation that happened to a female employee. Sexual conversations and conduct were so common in the work environment that made it hostile for the female employee and after she reported the incident to management, she was placed on indefinite administrative leave and never asked for returning to work by the airline (EEOC, 2022h). |
| | 07-12 | Green Lantern and Pullman Associates had to pay $60,000 and other relief to settle a sexual harassment lawsuit. The female employees were harassed by a male head chef and kitchen manager through sexually explicit derogatory comments and threats of physical harm (EEOC, 2022i). |
| | 07-11 | Applebee's Restaurant was sued for sexual orientation, race discrimination, and retaliation and agreed to pay $100,000 and other reliefs to settle the lawsuits. A Black employee was harassed by two other staff verbally by subjecting him to racial and homophobic epithets frequently. After he complained, his scheduled hours were cut and he was forced to quit (EEOC, 2022j). |
| | 06-30 | Major New England McDonald's Owner/Operator, the Vermont-Based Coughlin had to pay $1,600,000 and furnish other relief to settle sexual harassment and retaliation lawsuit by a male night shift manager who touched employees inappropriately, hit and groped their genitals, breasts, and buttocks, and made sexually explicit derogatory comments and threats of physical harm. When at least one employee complained, the employer forced her to quit her job (EEOC, 2022k). |
| | 05-31 | Chipotle Mexican Grill, Inc. which operated in Alabama was alleged of sexual harassment when a male manager sexually harassed the employee through unwanted sexual advances, sexual comments, and sexually offensive physical contact. Although the restaurant received the complaints, they failed to address them (EEOC, 2022l). |
| | 03-17 | Long John Silver was sued for sexual harassment and retaliation and as a result, had to pay $200,000 to settle the lawsuit. Two adult male managers kept harassing a teenage female through lewd comments, unwanted touching, propositions for sex, and sexually explicit text messages and videos, and when she complained, her work hours were reduced as retaliation (EEOC, 2022m). |
| | 03-09 | Chipotle was alleged of sexual harassment and constructive discharge when the supervisors ignored teenage female workers' reports of sexual harassment by a male service manager and a male crew member that forced the two employees to leave their jobs because of the hostile workplace (EEOC, 2022n). |
| **2021** | 12-09 | Carrabba, the Florida Restaurant, was sued for sexual harassment of female employees and had to pay $690,000 which would be distributed among the female employee victims, implement a new sexual harassment policy and new sexual harassment investigation procedures in its restaurants across the United States and train certain HR and management officials on sexual harassment to settle the lawsuit. (EEOC, 2021a). |
| | 10-20 | The two restaurants in Weirton, Route 22 Sports Bar and Crazy Mexican Restaurant & Grill were accused of sexual harassment and retaliation lawsuit and in order to settle it, they had to pay $217,500 and provide significant equitable relief. The male spouse of an owner of the two mentioned restaurants frequently subjected a female bartender and other employees to unwanted and offensive sexual harassment, including touching and comments, luring female employees to his secluded office, and propositioning some of them for sex. Other male coworkers also did the same things to the female workers (EEOC, 2021b). |
| | 09-30 | Various McDonald's Restaurants were sued for sexual harassment of young female workers by supervisors, managers, and coworkers throughout the tri-state area. The harassment included repetitive unwanted groping and touching, offensive comments and gestures regarding male genitalia, unwelcome sexual advances, sexual ridicule, intimidation, and insults. As no step was taken, many workers found the working conditions so intolerable that they had to quit (EEOC, 2021c). |
| | 09-30 | Lodging Lane Hospitality was alleged of sexual harassment and retaliation when the hotel manager kept harassing a female housekeeper for months by making inappropriate comments to her about her intimate body parts and waiting to have sex |

| Year | Date | Company Involved |
|---|---|---|
| | | with her, requesting sex, and physically touching her on an intimate body part. After she complained, she was fired (EEOC, 2021d). |
| | 09-17 | Liberty Warehouse and Restaurant Group were sued for sexual harassment and had to pay $125,000 and provide extensive non-monetary relief to settle the lawsuit. The head chef harassed a female kitchen staff by unwanted touching, sexual comments, throwing objects at them, and belittling them based on their sex in front of coworkers and fired her (EEOC, 2021e). |
| | 08-09 | Chipotle was alleged of sexual harassment and retaliation so it had to pay $70,000 and other relief to settle the suit. After the female service manager complained about the harassment by the male crew, she was fired (EEOC, 2021f). |
| | 06-03 | Long Island Diner owners were accused of sexual harassment of female employees verbally and physically. The working conditions were so intolerable that they had to quit their job (EEOC, 2021g). |
| | 04-27 | Imperial Pacific was sued for sex discrimination, sexual harassment, and retaliation and had to pay $105,000 and furnish other relief to settle it. The company allowed a drunk customer to sexually harass its employees and after she made a complaint, she was terminated and forced to quit (EEOC, 2021h). |
| | 04-23 | El Vallarta Restaurants were alleged of sexual harassment of a teen female employee by the manager and other workers who repeatedly made inappropriate comments about the teen's body. When she complained about it to the manager, she was forced to quit her job. The restaurant had to pay $85,000 and furnish other relief to settle the lawsuit (EEOC, 2021i). |
| | 04-21 | Bay Club which operates 24 resort-style athletic facilities in California and Oregon, had to pay $500,000 and provide other relief to settle sexual harassment lawsuits. Some of the female employees especially those in the Food and Beverage department at Fairbanks Ranch and at another location were sexually harassed by the managers and some customers and when they complained, they were retaliated against (EEOC, 2021j). |
| | 03-16 | Virginia IHOP Owner was sued for sexual harassment and constructive discharge when the restaurant general manager sexually harassed women with unwanted advances and touching, made sexual comments about female employees' attire and bodies, called them by denigrating sexual epithets, asked intrusive questions about their personal relationships, and showed one of the teenagers an explicit sexual video (EEOC, 2021k). |
| | 02-10 | Medford Restaurant was forced to pay $120,000 to settle sexual harassment and retaliation suit. The male restaurant manager frequently subjected the female employees to sexual comments and unwanted touching (EEOC, 2021l). |
| | 02-08 | James Mitsubishi Hamburg and its parent company, James Auto Management LLC, had to pay $110,000 and provide other relief to settle the sexual harassment lawsuit. The general manager and two other dealerships in Rome and Greece made lots of unwelcome sexual advances and comments to two female employees and frequently made physical contact with them (EEOC, 2021m). |
| **2020** | 12-10 | Protocol Restaurant had to pay $90,000 to settle the sexual harassment lawsuit that happened to female employees by the restaurant owner and general manager. As the work environment was so hostile, some of them had to quit their jobs (EEOC, 2020a). |
| | 10-30 | Locos Grill & Pub was sued for sexual harassment and retaliation after a male cook made sexual advances toward a female one. As a result, it had to pay $20,000 and other relief to settle the lawsuits (EEOC, 2020b). |
| | 10-13 | Cincinnati-Area Group of Korean Restaurants had to pay $75,000 and provide other relief to a former employee to settle sexual harassment lawsuit because she was targeted by the male owner and chef for unwelcome and offensive sexual harassment. At the end, she had to quit her job (EEOC, 2020c). |
| | 09-25 | American Glory was sued for race and sex harassment and retaliation. The owner and president frequently harassed Black employees with racist comments and slurs and when one of the employees made a complaint, he forced him to resignation (EEOC, 2020d). |
| | 09-17 | Hawthorn Suites was sued for sexual harassment and retaliation when its manager harassed two female Latina housekeepers by cornering and groping them, and making sexual comments while they were alone cleaning hotel rooms. When one of them reported the harassment to the general manager, her work hours were drastically cut (EEOC, 2020e). |
| | 08-05 | Doubletree Hotel had to pay $45,000 and change policies and procedures in order to settle sexual harassment lawsuit when it allowed a male room inspector to sexually harass a female housekeeper and failed to stop him from doing so (EEOC, 2020f). |
| | 07-17 | Par Ventures, McDonald's Franchisee, was accused of sexual harassment and had to pay $12,500 and implement other relief to settle the lawsuit which happened to the teenage female employee by the male people manager. He frequently made sexual comments and requests, unwanted touching as well as offered her money for nude pictures of herself (EEOC, 2020g). |
| | 02-07 | Rainbow Tree LLC / Persian Room Fine Dining was sued for sexual harassment when one of its owners sexually harassed one of its employees. To settle it, the company had to pay $65,000 and provide other relief (EEOC, 2020h). |
| | 02-05 | Pei Wei Fresh Kitchen in Little Rock was sued for sexual harassment and constructive discharge when it failed to take steps to the pervasive sexual harassment by the general manager of the young female employees. The company had to pay $300,000 to settle it (EEOC, 2020i). |
| | 01-23 | Swami Pancake, LLC had to pay $70,000 and provide significant relief to settle the sexual harassment of a female employee by the owner who frequently targeted her through unwelcome touching, stalking, and sexual comments, and when she rejected any sexual advances, she suffered negative changes in her work schedule (EEOC, 2020j). |
| | 01-09 | Carmel Restaurants were accused of sexual harassment when they refused to address the harassment by the kitchen manager, cook, and chef of the male line cook at Porta Bella Restaurant. As a settlement, the company had to pay $175,000 (EEOC, 2020k). |
| **2019** | 12-20 | United Airlines had to pay $321,000 to settle discrimination. A United captain repeatedly posted explicit images of a flight attendant to several websites with references to her name and home airport while she didn't know. It resulted in her humiliation and embarrassment and negatively impacted her workplace (EEOC, 2019a). |
| | 12-11 | Burgers & Beer was sued for sex discrimination because the restaurant denied server positions to men and had to pay $150,000 to settle it (EEOC, 2019b). |

| Year | Date | Company Involved |
|---|---|---|
| | 12-04 | Chipotle was alleged of sexual harassment and retaliation when the female manager repeatedly touched the 22-year-old male employee as well as verbally and physically harassing him, and after he complained, she retaliated. As a settlement, the company had to pay $95,000 and make substantial changes (EEOC, 2019c). |
| | 12-03 | Fairbanks Ranch Country Club was accused of sexual harassment and had to pay $125,000 and provide other relief to settle the lawsuit because the female servers were harassed by the manager at the Rancho Santa Fe. Due to the hostile work environment, some females had to resign (EEOC, 2019d). |
| | 08-09 | El Tio Tex-Mex Grill was sued for a sexual harassment lawsuit that subjected to a gay male server and his straight friend by one employee who had unwelcome harassing and offensive behavior (EEOC, 2019e). |
| | 02-21 | Christini's Ristorante Italiano was sued for sexual harassment and retaliation when the owner created a work environment where unwelcomed, sexual comments and conduct were commonplace. When one of the female employees complained, the restaurant fired her. As a result, it had to pay $80,000 and furnish other relief as settlements (EEOC, 2019f). |
| **2018** | 10-15 | Rosebud Restaurants, which owns about nine Italian restaurants in the Chicagoland area, had to pay $160,000 as a settlement for sexual harassment and retaliation of two female servers at Rosebud's Centro location in Chicago in 2013 and 2014. The females were sexually harassed through unwelcome sexual comments, sexual propositions, unwanted touching, and assault and when one of them complained, she was retaliated against and fired (EEOC, 2018a). |
| | 10-02 | Daisy Dukes & Boots Saloon was sued for sexual harassment and retaliation when an assistant manager sexually harassed female employees with sexual comments and touching. After one employee complained, the company reduced her work hours, and then she had to quit her job, the same as other sexually harassed women (EEOC, 2018b). |
| | 09-27 | Sol Mexican Grill was sued for sex discrimination and retaliation where female employees were targeted for lewd comments, inappropriate physical contact, etc., by their supervisor. Despite making repeated complaints, no action was taken and they were terminated (EEOC, 2018c). |
| | 06-07 | LA Fiesta Fresh Mexican Grill and Cantina were alleged of sexual harassment and to settle the lawsuit, they had to pay $25,000. A male manager, who had previously been involved in the same harassment, sexually harassed an 18-year-old female through unwelcome sexual comments and touching, and after that she complained, La Fiesta reduced her work hours (EEOC, 2018d). |
| | 05-30 | Discovering Hidden Hawaii Tours was involved in male-on-male sexual harassment and had to pay $570,000 and furnish other relief to settle the lawsuit because the company president harassed male employees for over a decade and some of them were forced to quit (EEOC, 2018e). |
| | 01-08 | Indi's Fast Food Restaurant was sued for sexual harassment and had to pay $340,000 to 15 former female employees who were subjected to sexually harassed behaviors including requests for sexual favors, sexually offensive comments, and unwanted sexual touching, and furnish other relief to settle the lawsuit (EEOC, 2018f). |

## **Table 2.** The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Disability Discrimination Lawsuit

| Year | Date | Company Involved |
|---|---|---|
| **2022** | 09-28 | Omaha Hospitality Group was sued for disability discrimination when they fired a general manager, who worked at the Holiday Inn Express & Suites, after being hospitalized for depression. The company told him because they were afraid he might hurt other people at work, they have to fire him (EEOC, 2022o). |
| | 05-10 | RCC Partners had to pay $30,000 to settle disability discrimination because Subway Franchise failed to accommodate an autistic worker and then fired him, instead of providing the required accommodation (EEOC, 2022p). |
| **2021** | 09-02 | JDKD Enterprises were sued for disability discrimination against a long-term 37-year-old employee for his autism spectrum disorder being fired by the McDonald's Franchise (EEOC, 2021n). |
| | 02-05 | Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, a major restaurant chain, was accused of disability discrimination when they declined to hire a deaf job applicant for the position of the dishwasher and had to pay $15,000 to settle it (EEOC, 2021o). |
| | 01-05 | Northwest Indiana Fast Food Restaurant was sued for disability discrimination when rescinding a job offer and refusing to accommodate an applicant with a disability. The excuse was that they were concerned she might hurt herself due to her cognitive disability (EEOC, 2021p). |
| **2020** | 10-01 | PML Services has to pay $60,000 to settle the disability discrimination lawsuit that happened in IHG Army Hotel when they fired an employee with epilepsy after she experienced a seizure. When she returned back to work after the two days off for recovery, the employee's supervisor and the hotel's manager fired her (EEOC, 2020l). |
| | 09-14 | Red Roof Inn was accused of disability discrimination in the case of a visually impaired employee whom the inn refused to accommodate and then denied him a promotion (EEOC, 2020m). |
| **2019** | 10-15 | Fourteen Foods, LLC d/b/a Dairy Queen Brazier was sued for disability discrimination when the company denied a hearing-impaired applicant a reasonable accommodation and did not hire him because of his disability (EEOC, 2019g). |
| | 09-23 | Entertainment Benefits Group had to pay $925,000 as settlements for two lawsuits because it failed to provide accommodation for employees with disabilities and moreover, it failed to cease the harassing behaviors (EEOC, 2019h). |
| | 08-22 | Oklahoma Burger King Franchise had to pay $30,000 to settle a disability discrimination suit and furnish other relief that happened to a job applicant, first being accepted and then withdrawing the job offer because he needed a job coach (EEOC, 2019i). |
| | 05-13 | Verona Resort and Spa was accused of pregnancy and disability lawsuit when it denied to provide a pregnant front desk agent who suffered from gestational diabetes with a reasonable accommodation, and then fired her right after she made the request. As a result, it had to pay $15,871.56 and other relief to settle the suit (EEOC, 2019j). |
| **2018** | 11-29 | Merritt Hospitality was sued for disability discrimination and had to pay $125,000 to settle it. The Embassy Suites hotel in San Diego fired an employee with asthma after she asked for accommodation in her workspace that did not have ventilation or windows and it exacerbated her disability (EEOC, 2018g). |

| Year | Date | Company Involved |
| --- | --- | --- |
| | 08-15 | Grand Hyatt was sued for disability discrimination when the hotel denied accommodations to a front desk agent who suffered a chronic back impairment. He asked for accommodation or doing his job while sitting on a chair that first the hotel permitted but after two weeks, they denied it (EEOC, 2018h). |
| | 02-01 | Kentucky Fried Chicken Franchise was sued for disability discrimination after firing a female employee for taking prescribed medications for bipolar disorder. As a result, it had to pay $30,000 to settle the lawsuit (EEOC, 2018i). |
| **2017** | 11-20 | American Airlines and Envoy Air were accused of disability discrimination and had to pay $9.8 Million and other significant relief to settle the suit because they denied reasonable accommodations to hundreds of employees who wanted to return to work following a medical leave (EEOC, 2017). |
| **2015** | 06-11 | United Airlines was sued for disability discrimination because it prevented employees with disabilities from continuing employment with the company frequently. To settle the lawsuit, United Airlines agreed to pay over $1 million (EEOC, 2015). |

**Table 3.** The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Race, Color, National Discrimination Lawsuit

| Year | Date | Company Involved |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **2022** | 09-29 | A local Mexico Restaurant on the island of Oahu in Hawaii was sued for sexual and racial harassment. The restaurant allowed a bartender to sexually harass the women employees by unwanted touching, excessive and inappropriate comments about the employees' bodies and requests for dates and the manager took no action against it. Moreover, the general manager was accused of racial harassment by referring to a female employee as a "white devil" and although she reported it to the restaurant owner, the situation did not change (EEOC, 2022b). |
| | 07-11 | Applebee's Restaurant was sued for sexual orientation, race discrimination, and retaliation and agreed to pay $100,000 and other reliefs to settle the lawsuits. A Black employee was harassed by two other staff verbally by subjecting him to racial and homophobic epithets frequently. After he complained, his scheduled hours were cut and he was forced to quit (EEOC, 2022q). |
| | 05-17 | The owner of Brandon Denny's franchisee, a Florida-based company, was sued for national origin harassment when a Mexican employee was subjected to a hostile workplace that ended in his termination. As a settlement, the company agreed to pay $45,000 (EEOC, 2022r). |
| | 02-28 | Pensec, which operates nine McDonald's franchises in Wisconsin, had to pay $31,137 and provide other relief to resolve a race discrimination lawsuit subjected to a Black job applicant (EEOC, 2022s). |
| **2020** | 11-24 | Smashburger agreed to pay $70,000 to settle a race harassment suit when the manager in Long Island targeted an African American employee and racially harassed him by referring to him with racial slurs. After he complained, she transferred him to another far location (EEOC, 2020n). |
| | 09-25 | American Glory was sued for race and sex harassment and retaliation. The owner and president frequently harassed Black employees with racist comments and slurs and when one of the employees made a complaint, he forced him to resignation (EEOC, 2020d). |
| **2018** | 11-07 | Lancaster's BBQ & Wings was sued for racial harassment and constructive discharge. A white employee repeatedly made offensive racist statements to a Black employee and used the N-word and racial jokes about Blacks. As a result, he had to quit his job to avoid the hostile environment (EEOC, 2018j). |
| | 07-30 | SLS Hotel had to settle a race, color, and national origin lawsuit by paying $2.5 million and providing other forms of relief as a result of firing Black Haitian dishwashers and being replaced by a staffing agency workforce of mostly light-skinned Hispanics (EEOC, 2018k). |

**Table 4.** The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Pregnancy Discrimination Lawsuit

| Year | Date | Company Involved |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **2021** | 03-24 | Lucy's Cantina Royale and Restaurant Group was sued for pregnancy discrimination and had to pay $45,000 to settle the lawsuit when the specific Mexican restaurant and bar in Manhattan, fired a female server when they found out that she was pregnant and was having pregnancy-related medical issues. She was told that she was no longer "a good fit" (EEOC, 2021q). |
| | 09-29 | The A.V.I. Sea Bar & Chophouse in Wichita, Kansas, was involved in pregnancy discrimination when it terminated a hostess because she was pregnant and needed reasonable accommodation (EEOC, 2021r). |
| | 09-10 | Bourne's House Restaurant in Louisiana was sued for pregnancy discrimination when the manager fired a newly-hired pregnant employee after sending her a social media message saying: "I'm not gonna be able to hire you. I didn't realize that you were expecting a baby" and refused to rehire her (EEOC, 2021s). |
| **2020** | 01-07 | Italian Restaurant Maurizio Trattoria Italiana was accused of pregnancy discrimination after firing a server because of her pregnancy in 2018. First, they reduced her work hours and less pay, and right after she gave birth, fired her, instead of returning her back to her previous position. As a result, it had to pay $18,800 to settle the lawsuit (EEOC, 2020o). |
| **2019** | 11-19 | Albuquerque Mexican Seafood Restaurant was sued for pregnancy discrimination when fired an employee because of her condition, and as a result had to pay $32,000 and furnish other relief to settle the lawsuit (EEOC, 2019k). |
| | 05-13 | Verona Resort and Spa was accused of pregnancy and disability lawsuit when it denied to provide a pregnant front desk agent who suffered from gestational diabetes with a reasonable accommodation, and fired her right after she made the request. As a result, it had to pay $15,871.56 and other relief to settle the lawsuit (EEOC, 2019j). |

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|---|---|---|
| **2018** | 12-18 | Rocco's Pub was accused of pregnancy discrimination when they demoted a pregnant female employee from a bartender position to a lower-paying server position, although her condition did not affect her ability. As a result, the restaurant had to pay $15,500 to settle the lawsuit (EEOC, 2018l). |

**Table 5.** The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Religious Discrimination Lawsuit

| Year | Date | Company Involved |
|---|---|---|
| **2022** | 06-06 | Del Frisco's of Georgia, a restaurant in Atlanta, was sued for religious discrimination when it fired an employee because she couldn't work on December 31, 2019 because of her religion (EEOC, 2022t). |
| **2021** | 12-07 | Solé Miami was involved in a religious discrimination lawsuit and as a settlement, it had to pay $99,000. The hotel refused to accommodate a seventh-day Adventist employee who needed Saturdays off due to her religious beliefs and fired her when she missed work (EEOC, 2021t). |
| **2020** | 08-19 | McDonald's Franchisor was sued for religious discrimination and as a result, it had to pay $69,555 and furnish other relief to settle the lawsuit, when it refused to accommodate a Jewish worker who wore a beard due to his religious practices (EEOC, 2020p). |
| | 07-20 | United Airlines was alleged of religious discrimination in the case of a Buddhist pilot whom the airline refused to accommodate his religious belief (EEOC, 2020q). |

**Table 6.** The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Age Discrimination Lawsuit

| Year | Date | Company Involved |
|---|---|---|
| **2022** | 04-15 | Hillstone Restaurant Group was involved in age discrimination when refused to hire applicants of 40 or above for front-facing positions, regardless of being well qualified, at its two New York City locations (EEOC, 2022u). |
| **2018** | 09-28 | Tennessee Restaurant Group, LLC, a DQ Grill & Chill franchisee with offices in Bellevue, TN was accused of age discrimination for not hiring applicants over the age of forty who were well-qualified, but hired 5 new employees who were all under 40 with the excuse that they "had greater flexibility and more experience" (EEOC, 2018m). |

**Table 7.** The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Pay Discrimination Lawsuit

| Year | Date | Company Involved |
|---|---|---|
| **2021** | 02-03 | Aimbridge Hospitality and AH 2007 Management were involved in pay discrimination when the management paid a male worker 28% more compared to his female supervisor and 60% more compared to his female co-worker. After that they began to pay the female supervisor more, they reduced the pay rate of the male representative unlawfully. To settle the lawsuit, it had to pay $400,000 (EEOC, 2021u). |

DEI in the hospitality industry has never been as crucial as it is now (Breezy, 2022). Mangus-Sharpe (2022) found that 30% of workers were not aware of their organizations' upcoming plans to promote gender diversity and inclusion (D&I) and supported that they should be incorporated in that process. Women felt that gender hindered their career advancement compared to men and companies should promote gender diversity and equity.

The airline industry failed miserably to respect D&I. Etihad Airways was accused of kicking a woman off the plane for being disabled (Lee, 2016). Turkish Airlines discriminated against an Indian passenger due to his nationality (Aviation India, 2017). Several Orthodox Jewish girls sued Delta Air Lines and KLM for discrimination after being barred from two flights (Business Insider, 2022). These are amongst the few reported and disclosed cases. In fact, the United Nations (2022) very clearly addresses how those rights should be protected.

Limited studies concentrated on diversity issues in the HT industry. Singal (2014) supported that not only "employees, customers, and society at large, are encouraging of diversity management in organizations" (p. 10), but also the HT industry exemplifies high interaction with customers and service plays an important role where diversity management is more prominent than other industries. A comparison between HT and non-HT firms managing diversity, revealed that HT companies take extra initiatives and invest more. When Singal (2014) used Tobin's Q and firm credit rating to measure financial performance of companies who invest in diversity management, they exhibited superior financial performance. Mistry et al. (2021)'s quantitative study on the impact of diversity management on workers' performance and conduct revealed a relationship between diversity management and positive workforce-related outcomes, including job performance, service innovation behavior and employee engagement. Stevens (2011)'s qualitative study on 35 general managers (GMs) and their perception of ethical issues in the industry and their workplace showed that 11% of them rated diversity as an industry concern and shared these issues with everyone involved.

This study aims to highlight that monetary and non-monetary expenses associated with poor diversity management are undeniably huge and hard to ignore. Of the various theories in the literature, e.g. Critical Racist Theory (Bell, 1970) and Transformative Learning (Mezirow, 1985), the authors selected ToC (Weiss, 1995) as the most applicable to investigate D&I in the HT industry because it states that initiatives of DEI must be deliberate and stakeholders must understand, accept, and welcome all demographics, genders, ethnicities, orientations, and physical abilities (Weiss, 1995).

### *Research Questions*

The proposed questions are: 1) What the specific HT companies are currently doing to address DEI, 2) How employees perceive the implementation or lack of DEI in their companies, 3) What would their suggestions/recommendations be in regards to improving DEI company strategies, 4) How satisfied employees are with their leadership and management.

## Methods

This study uses mixed-methods because they are more robust. The research began with an extensive content analysis of EEOC lawsuits against HT organizations and literature review. Qualitative research follows by purposefully sampling a total of 12 front-line employees of all genders, over the age of 18, from four- and five-stars hotels, fine-dining restaurants, and airlines, following the example of Creswell (2018), Creswell and Poth (2018), Denzin and Lincoln (2018). Major chains and companies will be selected through content analysis and HR managers will be contacted to request permission for data collection. Interviews will be recorded on Zoom and data will be transcribed and coded using NVivo software. Then, 300 employees will be surveyed using Qualtrics. SPSS will be utilized for data analysis using ANOVA/MANOVA.

## Discussion and Conclusion

HT managers must realize the seriousness of this matter and its consequences and recognize the payoffs of being ethical. Taking good care of employees should come first as dissatisfied employees can dangerously impact service quality and firm performance. Damage to a company's reputation, and unwillingness of stakeholders to invest in unethical companies should be stressed.

The lack of studies in HT coupled with the mounting ethical scandals show how desperately the industry needs to improve in this area. This study aims to close this gap in the literature, heighten awareness, and help the HT industry realize the importance of DEI so as to enjoy the benefits associated with fostering healthy work environments where employees can feel supported, respected and thrive and ultimately creating a better future for our industry.

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# Does the Use of Food Delivery Apps Influence Food Waste Behavior? A Situation-Organism-Behavior-Consequence (SOBC) Perspective

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## Abstract

This study is to explore the impact of using food delivery apps (FDAs) on food waste behavior. Applying the SOBC model, we aim to explain how price advantage and perceived trust (situation) creates the positive attitude (the organism), and how it affects FDAs use intention (the behavior), which in turn results in food waste (the consequence). Our study will contribute to the existing food waste literature by showing the association between the use of FDAs and food waste behavior.

**Keywords:** food delivery apps, SOBC model, food waste, price, attitude

## Introduction

Food waste in the hospitality sector is increasing rapidly from 12% in 2016 to 26% in 2021 (UNEP, 2021). In China, hospitality and food services outlets generate approximately half of total food waste occurring in the entire food supply chain (Filimonau, Todorova, et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2017). The emergence of technology-driven services such as FDAs influence consumers to order foods in excess which ultimately leads to food waste (Talwar et al., 2021).

Online food delivery services such as FDAs are designed to allow users to purchase food from a wide variety of restaurants across a given distance range (Ray et al., 2019). Existing studies have investigated various aspects of FDAs such as over-ordering tendency ((Sharma et al., 2021), information quality (Kang & Namkung, 2019), consumers' perceptions (Cho et al., 2019), and attitude toward FDAs (Yeo et al., 2017). However, there are still many significant aspects to be explored such as food waste (Lee et al., 2020). It is possible that the use of FDAs has increased food waste behavior by consumers. FDAs and food waste should be explored as food waste is a serious concern for the hospitality industry. Research conducted by Sharma et al. (2021) found a customer tendency to over-order while using FDAs which leads to food waste behavior. However, this study was conducted taking samples from Indian consumers which affect the overall generalizability of the findings. Further, this study leveraged Behavioral Reasoning Theory, introducing only two attributes as enablers toward using FDAs. Therefore, we aim to fill the gap by exploring the impact of FDAs on consumers' food waste behavior. Our study contributes to the existing food waste literature by investigating how the use of FDAs influence food waste behavior.

## Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

### *Situation-Organism-Behavior-Consequence Theory (SOBC)*

SOBC theory developed by Davis & Luthans (1980) helps to explain diverse human behavior phenomena. SOBC theory includes four interacting variables namely situation (s), organism (o), behavior (b) and consequences (c) (Davis & Luthans, 1980). The interactive nature of environmental events is represented by the situation. Organism represents the cognitive mental processes of a person. Behavior is defined as the intention to act in a certain way. Finally, consequences show the outcome that people receive from their action (Davis & Luthans, 1980).

Building on the SOBC theory, we aim to investigate how the use of FDAs influence food waste behavior. In this study, situation will be approached as a combination of two factors: price advantage and perceived trust. These factors might have an influence on creating positive attitude (organism) toward FDAs which will trigger their intention to continue using FDAs (behavioral response). Finally, the outcome of the behavior (consequences) will be approached as food waste behavior.

### *Price Advantage*

Price advantage gives consumers an opportunity to derive greater value from a product or a service (Kaleka & Morgan, 2017). During the global pandemic, price has become one of the most important considerations for many consumers (Leduc & Liu, 2020) and is one of the critical factors influencing consumers' perceived value. FDAs are becoming one of the most convenient platforms that offer convenient price to their customers. Therefore, price advantage for using FDAs could impact the positive attitude of consumers, leading us to hypothesize that:

- **$H_1$.** Price advantage is positively associated with positive attitude toward FDAs.

### *Perceived Trust*

Trust can be defined as the intention to make oneself vulnerable to another based on judgement, or values (Luhmann & Relations, 2000). Consumers' confidence in food quality and technology integrity depends on their perceived trust in the openness of food chain parties (Macready et al., 2020). Consumers having higher trust demonstrate a positive attitude towards FDAs (Kang & Namkung, 2019). Considering the argument, we hypothesized that:

- **$H_2$.** Perceived trust is positively associated with positive attitude toward FDAs.

### *Positive Attitude*

The term 'attitude' refers to the inner feeling of favorableness that consumers have towards something (Zaremohzzabieh et al., 2021). People are motivated to perform a specific action when they have a favorable attitude towards an action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977). Within the context of online shopping, customers' attitude to use a particular product or services are positively associated with their intention (Gupta & Arora, 2017). Hence, we hypothesize:

- **$H_3$.** Consumers' positive attitude will enhance the intention to use FDAs.

### *FDAs Use Intention*

Behavioral intentions are self-instructions to perform particular actions directed toward attaining desired outcome (Sheeran & Webb, 2016). (Bagozzi, 1986) developed a self-regulation framework which states that attitude generates desire, which then leads to individual behavioral intentions. In our study, we assume that the intention to use FDAs may result in food waste. Therefore, we propose the following:

- **$H_4$**. FDAs use intention will increase food waste behavior.

## Methods

An online survey questionnaire will be used to collect data. Measurement items will be developed from current literature. Questions will be evaluated by using a seven-point Likert scale with response choice from “Strongly disagree (1)” to “Strongly agree (7)”. This study aims to use partial least squares (PLS) - SEM to assess the proposed research model.

## Significance of the Study

The outcomes of our study will have several theoretical and practical contributions. First, our research will highlight the food waste concern in the hospitality industry and build the foundations for future research to investigate the motivations to order excessive food. Building on Sharma et al.’s (2021) study, the findings of this study can better explain U.S. consumers food waste behavior. Also, the finding will help the policy makers to develop policies to control the food waste behavior.

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# The Impact of Job Crafting on Hospitality Employees' Well-Being and Turnover Intention: The Mediating Role of Meaning of Work

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## Abstract

This study aims to understand how the meaning of work intervenes in the relationships between job crafting, turnover intention, and perception of well-being at work. A convenience sample of approximately 300 hospitality employees will be collected from Prolific Academic. Haye's PROCESS macro (Model 7) will examine the proposed relationship. Findings will demonstrate how strengthening the meaning of work, shaped by job crafting, prevents the drainage of talented employees and enhances their well-being perception.

**Keywords:** job crafting, meaning of work, turnover intention, well-being at work, perceived organizational support.

## Introduction

The hospitality industry has encountered high turnover rates, reporting an average of 88.6% between 2017 and 2021, which is over 40% higher than other industries (U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022). The reasons for the negative consequence have been extensively examined (Park & Min, 2020; Liu-Lastres et al., 2022). The nature and meaning of work in the industry may contribute to such a negative result; however, our understanding of the meaning of work is limited. Work has played a significant role in people's lives, yet, we have not understood the meaning of work in people's life (Wrzesniewski et al. 2003). Job crafting has been highlighted for enhancing individual and organizational work outcomes, including career satisfaction (Kim et al., 2018), work engagement (Bakker et al., 2012), and work performance (Demerouti et al., 2015). Further, job crafting contributes to well-being (Slemp & Vella-Brodrick, 2014). Consequently, this study aims to understand how job crafting affects employees' turnover intention and psychological well-being at work (PWBW) through meaning of work. Moreover, this study investigates the conditional indirect effects of meaning of work by perceived organizational support in the relationships mentioned above.

## Literature Review

### *The Effects of Job Crafting on Turnover Intention and Meaning of Work*

Humans have basic psychological needs for control, competence, and social inclusion to accomplish self-development and well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The workplace is a great setting to fulfill such needs when employees can tailor their jobs (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Job crafting reflects how employees proactively redesign their job tasks and related boundaries, namely physical task crafting. Cognitive task crafting includes employees recalibrating their perspective toward their job and establishing their identity at work. Within relationship crafting, employees restructure the quality and quantity of interpersonal relationships at work.

Job crafting influences employees' turnover intention and meaning of work. When individuals have opportunities to customize their task boundaries and social relationships to be congruent with their own values and preferences, they are more likely to engage in their jobs and reduce absenteeism (Bakker et al., 2007; Ghitulescu, 2006). In turn, job crafting decreases turnover intention and increases PWBW, which is employees' subjective positive experience derived from "interpersonal fit at work, thriving at work, feeling of competency at work, perceived recognition at work and desire for involvement at work" (Dagenais-Desmarais & Savoie, 2012; Sandilya & Shahnawaz, 2018, p. 180).Employees tend to behave at work based on their understanding of the meaning of work. Wrzesniewski et al. (2013, p. 288) delineate the meaning of work as the "core of employees' experience of their jobs." They argue that the level of congruence between individuals' self-concept (e.g., values, motivations, and beliefs) and their jobs influence meaning of work. Through job crafting, they realize the need for control by altering tasks and the need for self-identity by internalizing work value (Slemp & Vella-Brodrick, 2014). Employees feel the enhanced meaning of work when they change social interaction boundaries and see their critical roles in the relations among others (Wrzesniewski et al., 2013). Thereby, job crafting helps employees to reconsider work as reflecting their values, which leads to a profound understanding of the meaning of work (Wrzesniewski et al., 2013). Furthermore, as employees see their jobs as more meaningful, it buffers their intention to leave (Sun et al., 2018) and increases their PWBW. Collectively, the following hypotheses are proposed:

- **$H_1$.** Job crafting is negatively related to turnover intention.
- **$H_2$.** Job crafting is positively related to PWBW.
- **$H_3$.** Job crafting is positively related to meaning of work.
- **$H_4$.** Meaning of work is negatively related to turnover intention.
- **$H_5$.** Meaning of work is positively related to PWBW.

***The Moderated Mediation Effects of Meaning of Work by Perceived Organizational Support***

The conceptualization of meaning of work has its root in the original definition by Hackman and Oldman (1976), which includes meaningfulness, valuableness, and worthwhileness. Recently, it has received growing attention in personnel psychology and human resource management (Arnoux-Nicolas et al., 2017). Its meaningful contribution to personal well-being and job-related attitudes and outcomes has been reported in various studies (e.g., Delroisse et al., 2022; Duffy et al., 2015).

Employees' motivation at work is derived when employees experience accordance with self-identity, job characteristics, and the work environment (Duchon & Plowman, 2005). Perceived organizational support can be developed when the employees believe their companies consider them invaluable (Eisenberger et al., 1986). The effect of job crafting on job outcome and the moderating effect of perceived organizational support in the relationship has been confirmed (Cheng et al., 2021). Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed:

- **$H_6$.** The level of perceived organizational support moderates the mediation effect of meaning of work between job crafting and turnover intention.
- **$H_7$.** The level of perceived organizational support moderates the mediation effect of meaning of work between job crafting and PWBW.

**Figure 1.** Proposed Research Model

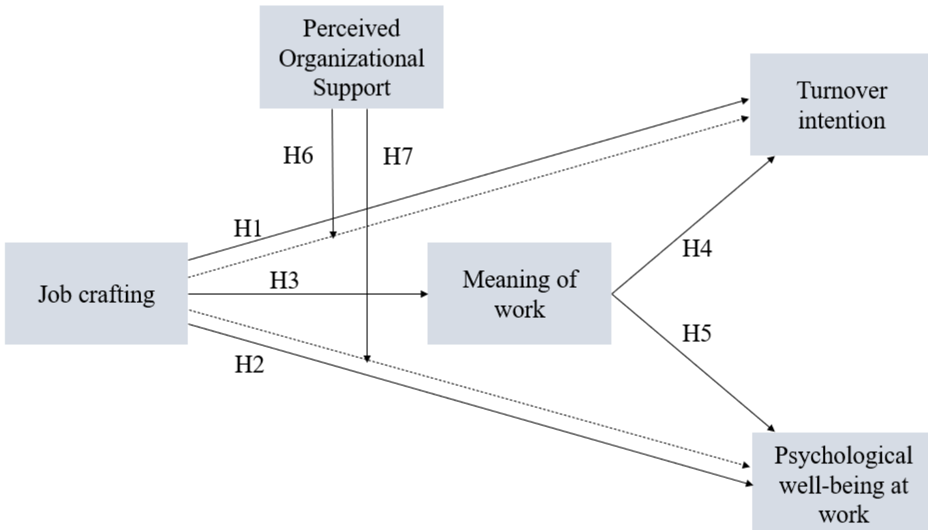


**Figure 1. Proposed research model**
Note: solid arrow: direct relationship; dotted arrow: indirect relationship

## Methods

This study will collect data using a survey adopting convenience sampling. The study sample will be employees who currently work in the hospitality industry. About 300 participants will be recruited from an online platform, Prolific Academic (https://www.prolific.co/). Data will be collected in two waves one week apart to avoid the likelihood of common method variance biases (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Measurement scales of all constructs will be adopted from existing studies. Haye's PROCESS macro for SPSS (Model 7) will examine the direct and conditional indirect effects of job crafting on turnover intention and PWBW through perceived organizational support (Figure 1).

## Contributions

The empirical evidence of this study will highlight the importance of job crafting that benefits individuals and organizations in terms of lessening turnover intention and enhancing well-being perception at work. Moreover, this study will provide valuable insights for practitioners and managers by cultivating work environments where employees add meaning to their work. Recognizing employees' contributions to the company helps them integrate their identity and the firm's goals, strengthening the meaning of work. Moreover, organizations will need to establish work environments for employees where they can develop competencies at work. Thus, companies can prevent the drainage of talented human resources and let them thrive at work.

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# The Effect of Tourism Storytelling on Tourist Visit Intentions: Case Study: Iran

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## Abstract

This work in progress speed presentation focuses on storytelling to promote and increase tourist's visit intentions for sites in Iran. Storytelling is a tool receiving increased attention in tourism marketing. Iran's spectacular world heritage sites have interesting stories. The presentation explains storytelling and its application in marketing by providing specific examples of stories and attractions. Four stories of Shirin and Farhad, Ardashir, Nikbanoo, and Qiz Qalasi related to sites are detailed for discussion.

**Keywords:** storytelling, storytelling in tourism, visit intention, tourism marketing

## Introduction

This is a work in progress that investigates the effect of storytelling on tourist visit intentions. The speed presentation focuses on a case study of storytelling in Iran, home to 26 UNESCO world heritage sites. Iran has a glorious culture and history as well as fascinating stories behind those attractions. The presentation explains how storytelling is applicable in marketing by providing specific examples of stories and attractions of Iran. The authors seek to receive feedbacks and inputs on choosing the best possible sample.

Storytelling, a method utilized by humans to transfer knowledge, wisdom, and culture (Sole & Wilson, 2002) is now being used broadly in marketing fields. As Lee (2009) has argued, tourist destinations and attractions cannot attract visitors only based on the external attractiveness of the tourist sites. Instead, they need to deliver a unique thought-provoking story that evokes emotions and dreams. Moreover, stories may provide potential travelers with special experiences by engaging the tourists' attention, participation, and immersion when highlighting the destination's attractiveness, significance, and values (as cited in Yang, 2018, p. 3). Telling stories and listening to them is enjoyable to people, even if the story might stretch the truth and may not match actual reality (Bassano et al., 2019).

Storytelling has attracted increasing attention in several research areas, including health care (Gray, 2009; Haigh & Hardy, 2011; Moreau et al., 2018), science education (Dahlstrom, 2014; Downs, 2014; Rowcliffe, 2004), anthropology (Dunn, 2017), business (Forman, 2013; Monarth, 2014; Wozny, 2022), branding (Christensen, 2002; Herskovitz & Crystal, 2010; Mucundorfeanu, 2018), etc.

Moreover, many studies have chronicled storytelling's potential in various aspects of tourism, such as Bossano et al. (2019), who worked on the digital marketing aspect. Also, Choi (2016), studied the effect of tourism storytelling on destination brand value and tourist behavioral intentions. Ko et al., and Tercia et al. investigated the storytelling and visit and revisit intentions in 2022. Each of these studies was focused on a specific geographical area. However, no study has been focused on Iran as a case study for storytelling. This study tries to bridge this gap and study the potential effect of Iranian stories on tourist visit intentions. Moreover, it examines how other cultures, not familiar with Iranian's, respond and react to Iranian stories in destination marketing.

## Literature Review

### *Storytelling in Tourism*

According to Moscardo (2018), story is a specific kind of narrative designed to entertain and engage emotions, which must encompass descriptions of set of events (plot), characters and how they react to the mentioned events, and the consequences of those responses. In his other study, Moscardo mentioned that stories are central concepts in tourist experiences and are becoming more recognized as a significant tool in the design of tourist experience opportunities (2017). A story has a message and produces meaning when the consumers feel they are part of the story and are experiencing it (Mossberg & Eide, 2017).

Storytelling can be considered as a competitive advantage for those destinations that apply it in their marketing efforts. Beautiful stories move us since they have the ability to tap into our emotions and motivate our feelings of wanderlust (Skift, 2020). As Ko et al. (2022) stated, storytelling is a powerful tool for the development and recovery of the local tourism industry. According to Abdillah et al. (2022), the story can be used to prepare a safe travel guide, develop tourist attraction, and convoying the destination's messages by the marketers. Also, Frank et al. (2004) suggested that a story helps marketers to build and keep a constant costumer-brand relationship of an experience product, especially tourism. Storytelling in tourism is able to explain identity and enhance the tourism system's reputation (Bossano et al., 2019). Furthermore, as Mossberg (2008) marked, the story of a destination evokes memorable moments in tourism which has a persuasive effect.

### *Storytelling and Learning*

Simple and powerful, storytelling is a method that well explains the complicated matters. In the past, children learned distinguishing good from bad via stories, in which a significant message was transferred (Van Gils, 2005). Thereafter, with the advent of new technologies such as film, radio, and television, and recently social media, the method of telling stories has changed. Therefore, storytelling can be employed in different ways from entertainment to informing and educating people (Van Gils, 2005).

### *Evoked Emotion and Visit Intention*

In the tourism industry, emotions are what the value proposition is significantly based on. Making a positive emotional connection between travelers and places is a key factor that tourist destinations across the world put importance on (Cohen & Areni, 1991). Emotions related to a special situation or event play a significant role in comprehending tourist behavior (Cohen & Areni, 1991). Moreover, emotions play a crucial role in stimulating tourist motivations and inputs in destination choice processes (Hosany et al., 2020).

### *Specific Examples of Iranian Stories*

Like other place, there are numerous stories about Iran's historical, cultural, and natural attractions. One of the most famous unrequited love stories in Iranian folklore is Shirin and Farhad (Ganjavi, 1985) which happened in Bisotun, Kermanshah. In this story, Farhad, who fell in love with prince Shirin was made to crave Bisotun Mountain to achieve his love, but he suicided after he received the fake news about his beloved being dead. Moreover, Shahnameh, one of the Iranian literature masterpieces by Ferdowsi (1936), describes the kingdom of Ardashir Papakan and how he created one of the first world circular cities, called Gor or Ardashir-Khwarrah. Nowadays, it is one of the tourist attractions registered on the UNESCO heritage list. Another touching story is related to Pir-e Sabz Fire Temple in Yazd, which was a furrow in the mountain that saved Nikbanoo, Yazdgerd III's daughter (Soltani, 2022). Today, it is a popular Zoroastrian place of worship. The last story is about Dokhtar Castle (Qiz Qalasi) in East Azerbaijan. The story revolves around a beautiful princess loved by a shepherd. She hated humans so much that ran away from people to isolate herself and built this castle in this uninhabited mountain (Shakouri, 2021).

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# Impact of COVID-19 on Local Restaurants: Case of the Gunnison Valley, Co

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## Abstract

COVID-19's impact on the hospitality industry has been reported. Macro-level analyses fail to differentiate why local businesses closed and to identify towns that gained versus those which did not. Content analysis and fieldwork focus on Gunnison Valley, CO. Research is expected to find more varied reasons for restaurant closures and detect different impacts in the Valley. Findings will advance understanding of the pandemic's impact on local restaurants and prepare to avoid future crises' impacts.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, Restaurant Industry, Local Impacts

## Introduction and Background

The COVID-19 pandemic started to hit Colorado restaurants hard when Colorado"s bars, hotels, restaurants, and short-term-rentals had to shut down on March 26, 2020. The lockdown was lifted on May 27, 2020, allowing operation at 50% indoor-seating capacity and 50 people maximum (Colorado Governor Jared Polis, 2020). Take-out and delivery services were permitted throughout the lockdown. Small restaurants without drive-throughs or extensive delivery systems suffered the most.

The doomsday prediction of March 2020 that 75% of the approximately 660,000 pre-pandemic U.S. eateries would close due to the pandemic did not materialize. The NRA's December 2021 estimates of 110,000 closures were downward adjusted to 90,000 by April 2021. Carman (2022) estimates 159,000 closures across the whole F&B industry. Adapted to the longtime average of 81,000 annual closures in the F&B sector, Carman (2022) estimates pandemic caused restaurant closures in the U.S. to amount to 72,700 in 2020 and 70,300 for the 2020-2021 period after some restaurants re-opened. In 2021 closures stabilized and were below the longtime average per quarter, or 19,500 instead of 20,300 (Carman, 2022). The 2020-2021 pandemic caused 9.4% of U.S. restaurants to be closed.

Dollars spent at food establishments through the pandemic varied between quick-service (QSR) and full-service restaurants (FSR) (Marchesi & McLaughlin, 2022). Between December 2019 and February 2020, spending at QSRs averaged $23.22 billion and at FSRs $14.06 billion. With the start of the pandemic in February 2020, dollars spent at QSRs dropped to $20.11 billion (-13.4%) and for FSR to $7.02 billion (-50.1%). By February 2021, spending at QSRs had increased to $25.25 billion (+26.6%) and at FSRs to 11.31% (+61.1%). While spending at QSRs in February 2021 exceeded pre-pandemic levels (+8.7%), spending at FSRs was still below pre-pandemic levels (-19.6%). QSRs benefitted and grew during COVID-19, while FSRs showed lower revenues and decline (Marchesi & McLaughlin, 2022).

Klein (2020) reports the 2020 impacts of COVID-19 across the different industry segments.

**Table 1.** Impact of COVID-19 on the Different Segments of the U.S. Restaurant Industry

| Segment | % Closed dine-in only | % Closed Completely | % Sales Decline | % Let 75% of staff go | % No employee cuts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fast Food | 90 | 10 | 42 | 5 | 49 |
| Fast Casual | 87 | 13 | 51 | 17 | 37 |
| Midscale | 75 | 24 | 70 | 45 | 9 |
| Casual Dining | 64 | 36 | 73 | 45 | 16 |
| Fine Dining | 56 | 44 | 82 | 72 | 4 |

Table 1 highlights that the QSRs saw fewer full closures, had sales declined less, and retained their employees more than FSRs. The more significant issue the restaurant industry and particularly independent smaller restaurants face relates to the additional debt burden from the pandemic and the U.S. Congress' refusal in May 2022 to provide further funds for the second round of support through the Restaurant Revitalization Fund. Based on NRA data, Song et al. (2021) report that the U.S. restaurant industry lost $120 billion in sales, and seven of ten operators had to lay off or furlough employees. Norris et al. (2021) estimated layoffs and furloughs to reach eight million in 2020 and beyond. Impacts on the restaurant industry are global, with COVID-19 effects being 'uneven in both space and time' (Dube et al., 2021, p. 1489). Complete recovery of the industry might take until 2026, with a short boom in 2024 based on pent-up demand (DeMicco et al., 2021).

## Methods

The content analysis focused on popular press articles, limited academic articles, and many National Restaurant Association statistics. Census data was used. Local background data was/will be collected in person. The author controlled data entry and descriptive statistics. This part of the research has been completed and reported in this submission. In the second step of this research, the researcher plans to conduct face-face interviews with industry segments to a) identify why restaurants closed and b) provide more insights into how sales and staffing issues affected the various restaurants.

## Findings & Discussion

The Gunnison Valley is in Gunnison County in the central Rocky Mountains of Colorado immediately west of the Continental Divide. The valley includes four towns, Gunnison, Crested Butte, Mount Crested Butte, and Almont. Table 2 provides primary population data and COVID-19 information for the county Valley's two bigger towns, Gunnison and Crested Butte.

**Table 2.** Gunnison Valley Population and COVID-19 incidents as of Sep.25, 2022

| | Population | % of CO Pop. | COVID-19 Cases in CO | % of CO Cases | Death of Cases | % of Death |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Colorado | 5,685,000 | | 1,660,000 | | 13,473 | .81% |
| Gunnison County | 17,119 | .30% | 3,779 | .23% | 15 | .11% |
| Gunnison | 6,653 | .12% | | | | |
| Crested Butte | 1,335 | .02% | | | | |

Table 2 shows that the Gunnison Valley had fewer incidents of COVID-19 and deaths from COVID-19 proportional to its share of Colorado's population and the number of deaths in the State (New York Times, 2022). This despite record-setting 2020 and 2021 summer, as well as 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 ski seasons (Krakel, 2022; Liebl, 2021), and a large influx of second homeowners who made the valley their primary residences.

The F&B industry in the Gunnison Valley includes N=95 eateries, with 45 in Gunnison and 37 in Crested Butte and the remaining eateries in Mt. Crested Butte and Almont. The eight franchised or chain restaurants are all located in Gunnison. Overall, the valley is dominated by owner-operated single-location eateries. Table 3 summarizes the different segments of the industry in the valley.

**Table 3.** F&B Industry in the Gunnison Valley (N=95)

| Town | Quick Service | Fast Casual | Family | Casual Dining | Fine Dining | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gunnison | 8 | 12 | 1 | 20 | 0 | 5 |
| Crested Butte | 2 | 7 | 0 | 21 | 1 | 5 |
| Mt. Crested Butte | 0 | 3 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 1 |
| Almont | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | |
| | 10 | 22 | 1 | 50 | 1 | 11 |

As documented in Table 3, Casual Dining (50 of 95 or 52.6%) and Fast Casual (22 of 95 or 23.2%) restaurants dominate the local offerings. Quick Service (10 of 92 or 10.5%), Family, and Fine Dining restaurants are not strongly represented in the Valley. Table 4 shows how the restaurant segments in the Valley compare to US averages.

**Table 4.** Gunnison Valley Restaurant Segments Compared to US Averages

| Segment | US | Gunnison Valley |
|---|---|---|
| Quick Service | 48.5% | 10.5% |
| Fast Casual | 7.7% | 23.2% |
| Full Service | 48.5% | 52.6% |

Table 4 documents that compared to US industry averages, the Valley's Quick Service segment is much smaller than the US average, but the valley is a small market. The Valley's Limited-service part is dominated by the more significant Fast Casual segment, which allows much more local and independent ownership. The higher percentage of Full-service restaurants reflects the Valley's tourism focus. Table 5 summarizes information about US and Gunnison Valley closures by industry segment.

**Table 5.** Restaurant Closures by Segment in the US and the Gunnison Valley and Its Towns

| Segment | % Closed Completely in the US | Closed Completely in Gunnison Valley | % Closed Completely in Gunnison | % Closed Completely in Crested Butte |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fast Food | 10 | 10% (1/10) | 0% | 50% (1/2) |
| Fast Casual | 13 | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| Midscale | 24 | 0% | 0% | |
| Casual Dining | 36 | 12.2% (5/41) | 15% (3/20) | 9.5% (2/21) |
| Fine Dining | 44 | 0% | | 0% |

The data supports that, except for closures in the Fast-Food industry, the closure rates in the Gunnison Valley are lower than US averages for all segments during the pandemic years.

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# "Wine Dealcoholization" as a Competitive Strategy

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## Abstract

Wine de-alcoholization has gained interest among stakeholders, from wine producers to retailers and consumers. This research seeks to understand the process of de-alcoholization and the demographic characteristics of a consumer's niche market with alcohol consumption constraints. Preliminary results identify consumers' segments and respective characteristics by categories, constraints, opportunities, and freedom of consumer choice. The results will benefit all stakeholders in the wine value chain.

**Keywords:** dealcoholized wines, zero alcohol wines, wine trends, wine globalization strategy

## Introduction

In this paper, we research the process of de-alcoholization, particularly the level of alcohol in a beverage, its marketability potential, and constraints from wine production to wine consumption and sales competitiveness. Specifically, we aim to investigate and explain the alcohol separation and removal process from other compounds in wine to achieve total de-alcoholization or "Zero Alcohol Content" (ZAC) as regulated by law and how this derivative product can be successfully marketed to consumers and create a competitive advantage. Within the wine business domain, wine consumption and wine typology preferences are affected by how marketers promote wine and how health scientists explain their research findings and possibly infer whether to discourage or encourage wine consumption (Li, Zhou, and He 2016; Bucher, Deroover, and Stockley, 2019). Alcohol consumption, especially wine, has been associated with various health benefits or risks for decades (Snopek et al., 2018; Takkouche et al., 2002; Nieradko-Iwanicka, 2021.) furthermore, alcohol consumption, regardless of which product contains it, is strictly regulated globally, and each country has its laws, including minimum drinking age laws. Additionally, alcohol consumption is forbidden in some religions, regardless of the benefits or risks presented in the published literature (Marsiglia et al. 2005). Nevertheless, non-alcoholic wines particularly have been produced and consumed for decades. However, due to a lack of technological advances, these wines usually contain up to .05% residual alcohol after a total de-alcoholization effort. Traditionally, non-alcoholic wines have been marketed using a differentiation strategy to position the product as a healthier and less harmful alcoholic beverage. However, the experts' sensory analysis perception reveals a taste much different from a wine not subjected to alcohol reduction or total separation. In his 1994 study, d'Hauteville (1994) speculated that "*a low-alcohol wine could have been accepted if the problem of the taste could have been solved*." Also, he argued that low-alcohol wine should not have been promoted as a diet or health drink (d'Hauteville, 1994).

### *Scope of the Research*

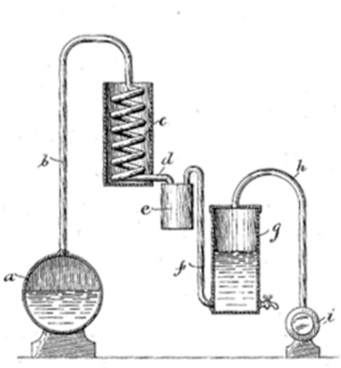
The research investigates whether a zero-alcohol content (ZAC) defined wine will be marketable to a yet unexploited global market niche of millions of new consumers who cannot ingest alcohol according to specific demographic categories/ characteristics. The main goal is to gather the necessary data to determine a possible global market expansion of a novel–diversified product to create a competitive advantage. The primary target market includes global consumers with alcohol consumption constraints not identified in previous studies which focused on consumer's health and consumption behavior alone and not on consumers' characteristics (Michalak and Trocki, 2006; Bucher, Deroover, and Stockley, 2018; Bucher et al., 2020; Mayo Clinic, 2022). Published literature provides rich content about alcohol reduction processes and technologies used since the invention patented by Jung (Jung, 2013; Jung, 2022a; Jung, 2022b). Nonetheless, there is very scarce information about marketing activities and consumer behavior, including cross-disciplinary research about the potentiality of  ZAC wines and the unexploited niche market with specific demographics who do not or cannot consume alcohol.

## Literature Review

Wine is one of the oldest alcoholic beverages in the world, dating back to about 8,000 years in Georgia and Armenia (Camillo, Kim, and Asatryan (2022.) Since the Roman era, about 2000 AD, grape growers innovated the pruning of the vine resulting in a higher quality of grapes and higher quality wine. Today, viticultural and enological innovation continues to be dynamic due to the evolution of technology which is critical in the wine value chain.   However, unlike the hi-tech industry, wine is not characterized by a high intensity of innovation and strategic planning decisions. Nevertheless, many wine producers regularly adopt innovative products and processes, often unplanned and reactionary to market demand, to attain a reasonable answer to the consumer's needs. Consequently, promotion and marketing activities follow product innovation to generate a competitive advantage. Therefore, adding a product such as Zero-Alcohol Wine (ZAC) to a producer's portfolio can create a competitive advantage (La Sala, Silvestri, and Contò, (2022), especially when a first-mover advantage is still possible. Subsequently, a consumer decides to buy a product based on prior knowledge acquired through marketing activities. A large part of the literature review will help us understand the de-alcoholization process from a business marketing perspective, not research to conduct an actual lab experiment. As for the de-alcoholization process, records show that the first device for alcohol extraction or process of de-alcoholization was invented in Germany by Carl Jung in 1908, and the wine company continues to operate in Germany today using the modernized vacuum distillation process at a temperature < 30 degrees Centigrade (Jung, 2013; Jung, 2022a; Jung, 2022b), see Figure 1.

Today, among the various methods of wine de-alcoholization, osmosis and vacuum distillation are commonly used. Figure 2. shows modern alcohol removal equipment using the osmosis process methodology. Figure 3. shows modern alcohol removal equipment using a vacuum distillation methodology.

**Figure 1.** Drawing of the Process of Dealcoholizing Beverages Patented by Carl Jung



a: vessel containing the wine in its original state

b: a pipe leading from the said vessel to a condenser

c: in the condenser the fluid passes through a warm pipe which ends in a knee or elbow

d: open receptacle

e: another pipe

f: the pipe "e" leads to a vessel

g: vessel connected to a pipe

h: pipe connected to vessel "g"

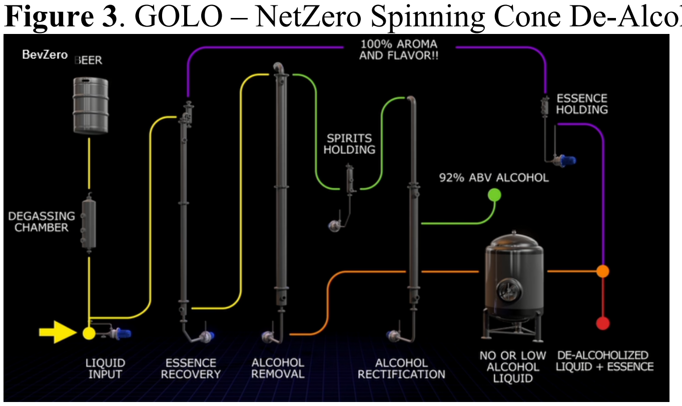
i: air pump

*Source.* Authors' representation of the process specifications from USA Patent No. 1071238

**Figure 2.** Filtration & Membrane Technologies Device for Reverse Osmosis Application


*Source***.** VinTech Pacific Wine Technologies for mobile service (VinTech, 2022.)

**Figure 3**. GOLO – NetZero Spinning Cone De-Alcoholization Process




*Source***.** NetZero GoLo Technology (NetZero, 2022.)

**Table 1.** Various De-Alcoholization Techniques

| TECHNIQUES FOR REDUCING ALCOHOL CONTENT IN WINE | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1<br>**PREVENTIVE TECHNIQUE**<br>Applied at the *pre-fermentation stage* | 2<br>**TREATMENT TECHNIQUE**<br>Applied *during the fermentation stage* | 3<br>**CURING TECHNIQUE**<br>Applied at the *post-fermentation stage* |
| **SCOPE**<br>Pre- fermentation or "preventive" technique through the reduction of sugars, thus reducing the potential alcohol conversion after fermentation | **SCOPE**<br>Reduction of alcohol conversion during the fermentation stage. | **SCOPE**<br>Post-fermentation stage, physical removal of alcohol through advanced methods |
| **PROCESS**<br>The reduction of leaves on vines slows the rate of sugar accumulation in berries and acts as a growth regulator by reducing the photosynthesis intensity while concentrating flavors and other phenolic compounds in the berries. The result will be lower sugar-to-alcohol conversion to produce low-alcohol wines or for easier alcohol separation if other de-alcoholization methods are applied at a later stage. | **PROCESS**<br>• Blending grapes and or juice with higher sugar concentration with others having low sugar concentration<br>• The addition of enzymes like glucose oxidase to grape juice before fermentation<br>• Fermenting at higher temperature and applying aeration to evaporate the alcohol under conversion process<br>• Using yeast strain that yields lower alcohol than others | **PROCESS**<br>Process for removing the total alcohol content include membrane-based systems such as reverse osmosis, evaporative perstraction, osmotic distillation, vacuum distillation, and spinning cone distillation. |

*Source.* Authors' representation, data adopted from various sources (Schmidtke, Blackman, and Agboola, 2012; Liguori, Russo, and Albanese, 2013; Varela and Varela 2019; Sam et al. 2021).

Table 1 below shows the various de-alcoholization techniques in the supply chain, broken down into three distinct processes that competing providers use according to the producer's choice and other factors such as cost, time, and efficiency.

## Methods

For the data collection, we conduct desk and online research of relevant materials linked to grape growing, wine production and trade, advances in viticulture and wine biology and toxicology, business strategy, marketing, and related existing data on consumer behavior. We use various techniques, including netnography, also termed cyber-ethnography Ward, K. J. (2019) and virtual ethnography Hine, C. (2000), to investigate online communities and companies' websites. We also consulted with actors in the value chain for their insights on the status quo of the low-alcohol and zero-alcohol market segments (NetZero, 2022). Mainly, we are interested to learn about their inferences regarding future market development through consumer preference, product positioning, and market maturation. We also research government agencies and companies within and outside the wine industry that provide stakeholders with qualitative and quantitative data and up-to-date information.

## Preliminary Results

The data collected to date has provided useful information regarding the potential new consumers not identified in previous studies. Table 2 below shows the consumers' segments and respective characteristics by categories, constraints, opportunities, and freedom of consumer choice.

**Table 2.** Characteristics of Potential Zero-Alcohol Content (ZAC) Wine Consumer

| **Alcoholic beverages consumer categories/ characteristics** | **Determining factors of alcohol consumption constraints** | |
|---|---|---|
| | **Alcohol consumption constraints** | **No alcohol consumption constraints** |
| Consumers with health-related conditions | Alcohol intolerance, diseases, temporary disabled (pregnancy) | No mandated constraints; recommended by a third party; otherwise, the decision rests with the individual consumer. |
| Young consumer | Legal age requirement | |
| Old age consumer | Limited consumption, possibly due to quantity of product intake and intolerance. | No constraints - freedom of consumer choice applies. |
| Consumers adhering to a faith. | Religious consumption constraints | No religious consumption constraints. For some religions, the freedom of consumer choice applies. |
| Other professionals | Work-related constraints such for airline pilots, drivers, and other professionals like athletes | No evident constraints unless mandated by stakeholders/ employer/ government; otherwise, freedom of consumer choice applies. |

*Source.* author's representation of data gathered from various sources (Duarte, Madeira, and Barreira 2010; Balenović et al. 2021; Bruwer, Li, and Reid 2022).

*This is a work in progress.* The researchers will continue to collect data, conduct analyses, synthesize and summarize the results, and evaluate the final paper for publication.

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Portugal – An exploratory analysis of young adults' motives/attitudes and purchase

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# Do Seasonal Beverages Impact Behavioral Intention, Willingness-to-Pay, or Both?

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## Abstract

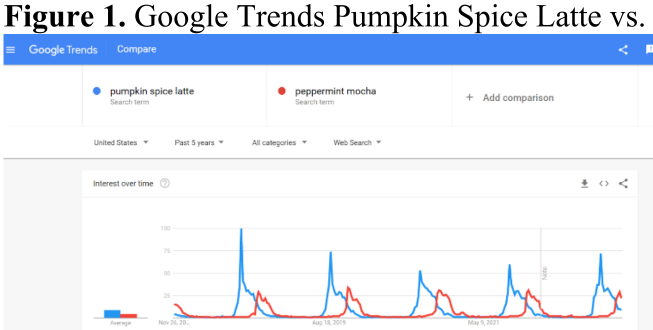
At different times of the year, restaurants provide special menu options. Seasonal coffee beverages in the fall and winter are so popular that they are a part of the cultural conversation. However, there is lack of research that investigated customer behavior toward the seasonal coffee beverage. Therefore, this study investigates customer behavior for seasonal coffee by using the social and personal identity scale and customers' willingness to pay for winter holiday beverages.

**Keywords:** social and personal identity theory, post-Keynesian choice theory, restaurants, willingness-to-pay, behavioral intentions, seasonality

## Introduction

In the U.S., restaurants typically have different offerings at different times of the year (Costa, 2018). Seasonal coffee beverages in the fall and winter are so popular that they are a part of the cultural conversation (Rosenfeld, 2022). The pumpkin spice latte has become a cultural phenomenon since its introduction in 2003 and inspired multiple pumpkin spice flavored products outside of coffee; pumpkin spice flavored products generated $511 million in 2021 (Rosenfeld, 2022). However, the interest in pumpkin spice lattes is seasonal (Figure1) and when its' season ends, the peppermint mocha season begins. While researchers have examined the concept of seasonality meaning peak and off-seasons (Shields et al., 2013), they have yet to fully understand how seasonality of menu items influences the purchase process, namely behavioral intentions and willingness-to-pay. In terms of behavioral intentions, this study will use the social and personal identity scale (SIPI) develop by Nario-Redmond et al. (2022). The purpose of this part of the study is to understand if purchasing seasonal beverages is influenced by personal taste or cultural impacts. The second part of the study will examine what influences willingness-to-pay for seasonal coffee beverages through the lens of Post-Keynesian Choice Theory which purports that emotions impact willingness-to-pay and how they maximize their personal utility.

**Figure 1.** Google Trends Pumpkin Spice Latte vs. Peppermint Mocha



## Literature Review

Hospitality and tourism researchers have previously investigated the role of seasonality in restaurants, both in terms of high and low season (Yu & Zhang, 2020) and the seasonality of ingredients (Karagiannis & Andrinos, 2021). Kreeger et al. (2017) examined the impact of seasonality on food quality and service quality in restaurants. The use of seasonal ingredients is considered a key signal that a restaurant participates in sustainable food practices (Karagiannis & Andrinos, 2021). An examination of online reviews found that consumers attitudes towards atmosphere is more likely to be positive in peak season (Yu & Zhang 2020). However, the impact of seasonality on coffee shops has not been explored, even though coffee accounted for $82 billion in revenue in 2021 (Statista, 2022). Table 1 outlines the revenue from nationwide coffee chains in the U.S. for 2021 (Statista, 2022).

**Table 1.** Revenue from Nationwide Coffee Chains (2021)

| Chain | Revenue (in millions) |
|---|---|
| Starbucks | $24,556 |
| Dunkin' Donuts | $10,416 |
| Dutch Bros. Coffee | $914 |
| Tim Hortons | $602 |
| Caribou Coffee | $318 |
| Scooter's Coffee | $263 |
| Peet's Coffee | $212 |
| Biggby Coffee | $182 |

*Source.* Statista (2022)

Seasonal coffee is a part of the cultural conversation in the U.S. (Painter, 2022). Popular press articles discuss seasonal coffee beverages all year long, with an emphasis on fall and winter drinks (Rosenfeld, 2022). This begs the question, do people purchase these beverages because of this conversation or due to personal preference? To answer this question, this study applied the SIPI, which itself is a part of social identity theory (Nario-Redmond et al., 2022). Social identity theory discusses the role of group influence on personal decision making (Hogg & Ridgeway, 2003). This theory has previously been applied to the discussion of building service brands (Underwood et al., 2015). We will apply it to examine the role of cultural influences on seasonal coffee purchases.

Classical choice theory purports that consumers make choices to maximize their personal utility by focusing on the aspects of a product or service that they value the most (Scott, 2000). However, the key to this economic concept is that the consumer acts in a rational, consistent manner (Scott, 2000). Post-Keynesian economists, however, purport that consumer rationality is bound by the circumstances of the purchase, therefore consumers make different choices in different circumstances (Lavoie, 1994). This study seeks to test this theory by seeing if different antecedents emerge as significant for different seasonal drinks.

### *Willingness-to-Pay in Restaurants*

Previous research has examined customers' willingness to pay for different aspects of the restaurant (Dutta et al., 2014; Frash et al., 2015; Shin et al., 2017; Sukhu et al., 2017). Nicolau et al. (2020) and Shin et al. (2019) stated that green consumerism affects customers' willingness to pay. Customers with higher perceptions of the "green brand image" have a higher willingness to pay (Namkung & Jang, 2017). Local and organic food also affects customers' willingness to pay

(Carpio & Isengildina-Massa, 2009; Frash et al., 2015). Customers would like to pay 20% more for local products (Carpio & Isengildina-Massa, 2009). Dutta et al. (2014) and Sukhu et al. (2017) indicated that food quality, service quality, and ambiance affect customers' willingness to pay. Lefebvre and Orlowski (2019) investigated the beverage vessel on customers' willingness to pay. They found that customers are less willing to pay for the beverage served in an aluminum can; the taste expectation is the mediator between beverage vessels and customers' willingness to pay (Lefebvre & Orlowski, 2019). However, customers' willingness to pay for coffee shops has yet to be investigated. This study will examine customers' willingness to pay for seasonal coffee beverages.

**Table 2.** Hypotheses

| |
|---|
| **$H_1$.** Social identity has a significant effect customers purchase decision of seasonal beverages. |
| **$H_2$.** Personal identity has a significant effect customers purchase decision of seasonal beverages. |
| **$H_3$.** Brand has a significant effect on customers' willingness to pay for winter holiday beverages. |
| **$H_4$.** Purchase month has a significant effect on customers' willingness to pay for winter holiday beverages. |
| **$H_5$.** Milk options have a significant effect on customers' willingness to pay for winter holiday beverages. |
| **$H_6$.** Cup types has a significant effect on customers' willingness to pay for winter holiday beverages. |

## Methods

This study involves two parts. The first part is an intervention survey, which will be distributed at a local coffee shop. The data will be analyzed by regression. The second part uses the choice-based conjoint analysis designed on Conjoint.ly and to be distributed through MTurk. Participants will choose their favorite winter holiday beverage first. Then, participants will see a scenario and follow by choice sets. Each set will include four alternatives and an "N.A." option. For both parts, participants need to be 18 or over and able to drink caffeine.

## Proposed Results

This research proposes to provide insight into consumer behavior in terms of seasonal coffee purchases. First, the results will provide valuable insights to restaurants to help them better understand what impacts behavioral intentions and willingness-to-pay for customers in terms of seasonal coffee beverages. The inclusion of brand in the willingness-to-pay study can inform independent coffee shops about their ability to set prices in relationship to major coffee chains. Second, this study will extend the work into two different theories. For the behavioral intentions section, this study will expand the work into social and personal identity theory. Additionally, there is scant research in hospitality and tourism which applies post-Keynesian economic thought to food and beverage purchases. Our results can open a new line of inquiry.

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# Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on the Academic Conferences: Differences in Perceptions of Hotel Managers, Conference Organizers, and Conference Participants

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## Abstract

This study investigates how different individuals perceive essential decision factors for hosting and attending an academic conference since the March 2022 pandemic. It is essential to explore how three different conference groups, hotel managers, conference organizers, and conference participants, make decisions on servicing, organizing, and attending the academic conferences. This study will provide various degrees of differences among the perceptions of the three groups on important attributes indicated in the survey questionnaires.

**Keywords:** academic conference, hotel managers, conference organizers, conference participants, perception

## Introduction

Over the last decade, the meetings, incentives, conventions, and exhibitions (MICE) industry has experienced enormous growth (Bevanda & Bevanda, 2022). The primary purpose of the MICE industry is to provide a gathering event for many individuals. In support of many different gathering events or activities, the MICE industry has continuously contributed to the growth of the hospitality sector (Aburumman, 2020). According to Hahn (2021), the MICE industry is considered one of the key players in the hospitality sector, and it could help generate over 50% of a hotel's revenue.

However, MICE Industry has been hardly disrupted due to the COVID-19 crisis. The widespread virus impact has caused the massive shutdown of all MICE activities (Rwigema & Celestin, 2020). After months of unprecedented disruptions, the United Nations World Tourism Organization reported that domestic and overseas tourism was revived and indicated approximately 60% of the pre-pandemic level in early 2022 (Yasyi, 2022).

One of the activities in MICE is academic conferences. Although the COVID-19 pandemic has hit the MICE industry hard, the academic conference has been moved forward in different ways, including virtual and hybrid (Donlon, 2021). The purpose of an academic conference is for conference participants to share new insights, receive feedback in their field and obtain networking opportunities with academic colleagues and industry professionals (Rowe, 2018). In addition, another unique characteristic of the academic conference can be Bleisure travel, a combination of business and leisure travel, along with an extended vacation before, during, or after the academic conference (Morgan, 2022). Within the effective development of the MICE, including the academic conference, it is crucial to understand various perceptions from different aspects of academic conference individuals, including organizers, participants, and staff (Lee, 2009). Additionally, it is not too early to determine various aspects of how COVID-19 has shifted the nature of the academic conference.

This research investigates how various groups perceive different important decision factors for hosting, holding, and attending an academic conference. Moreover, the current study aims to explore the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on how each group makes decisions on servicing, organizing, and attending academic conferences. Lastly, the result of this study will be analyzed how the differences in behavior affect the performances of conference hotels.

**Literature Review**

The current study focused on differences in perceptions of different groups of individuals on what is critical and necessary for academic conferences. There are several relevant prior studies in the literature. For example, Kuo et al. (2010) investigated the linkage between the importance of service attributes and customer satisfaction at international conferences in Taiwan. They found that critical factors, including enough elevator use and convenient internet access, increase customer satisfaction. Similarly, (Hashemi et al., 2018) studied the impacts of conference quality and perceived value on attendees' behavior in Malaysia. They concluded that the conference quality measured by venue facilities, accessibility, professional education, and social network significantly influences conference attendees' behavioral intentions and perceived value. These studies focused on finding how different service attributes affect the perceived value of conference participants. It is similar to what the authors aim to investigate in this study, but it is only limited to the perspective of conference participants.

This study is heavily inspired by Lee (2009), who compared the attributes required by conference organizers and those supplied by hotel managers for conferences. Unlike most studies found in the literature, this study focused on the perceptions of two groups of individuals, conference organizers and hotel managers. The nature of academic conferences makes the relationship between these three groups unique.

Conference organizers are customers of hotel managers, and conference participants are customers of both conference organizers and hotel managers. The authors aim to take one step further and compare perceptions of these three groups and find out what insights and practical implications we can obtain from the differences.

**Proposed Methods**

This study is targeted at the three different units of the academic conference—first, the hotel managers who have specialized in managing conference business in hotels in the US. Second, conference organizers who have overseen organizing academic conferences in the US. Third, conference participants who have attended academic conferences in the US at least once in the last two years. This study will employ a convenience sampling method. A self-administered survey has been developed in Qualtrics. Each group of 100 survey participants will be recruited via Prolific, a third-party data collection company, and emails will be sent to the survey respondents via Prolific. After the data is collected, it will be prepared for comparative analysis among the three survey respondents. Statistically, this study will be utilized quantitative research by applying empirical analysis, including AVOVA, Factor Analysis, and Regression methods.

## Contribution

The current study will provide insight that a great degree of difference indicates among the perceptions of three central conference pillars: hotel manager, conference organizer, and conference participants. Moreover, the study will reveal not only conference participants' needs and wants affecting their behaviors but also conference organizers and hotel managers that design to upgrade the quality and performance of their conference facilities or amenities for potential conference participants to provide better experiences and satisfaction. Lastly, the findings will shed light on the contributions to planning, organizing, executing, and evaluating any events or activities in the MICE industry, including the academic conference.

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# Social-Media, Healthy Sustainable Food Hack and Food Security

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study is to assess how food interventions on social media impact food security. A series of informational videos will be created to address how the version of a food purchased and cooked impacts human nutrition and planet sustainability. The information will be shared across three different social media platforms. The responses to the post will be analyzed using Thematic analysis to allow themes and categories to emerge naturally.

**Keywords:** food choices, food security, sustainability, social-media

## Introduction & Purpose

Food security, as determined by the World Food Summit (1996), "*exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.*" Important pillars critical to achieving food security include public knowledge of basic nutrition and sustainable food production (Lang & Barling, 2012). Therefore, it is essential to educate the public on how food choices impact the nutrition of food consumed and the planet's sustainability. The concept of nutrition-sensitive agriculture, described by Jaenicke and Virchow (2013), aims to "narrow the gap between available and accessible food and the food needed for a healthy and balanced diet for all people" (p.679). The research focused on nutrition-sensitive agriculture shows how sustainable agriculture supports the goal of nutrient-dense food while assuring the stability of the system (Jaenicke & Virchow, 2013; Keding, Schneider, & Jordan, 2013; Miller & Welch, 2013). Ultra-processed foods impact the natural environment and human health due to their lack of nutritional value, increases in the instances of diseases, and harmful chemicals/toxins released from food processing (Gupta, Khanal, & Khan, 2021). Research shows that meals prepared at home from sustainably grown foods increase fruit and vegetable consumption, proper portions, fewer calories, less fat, less salt, and less sugar (Erin, Susan, & Auld, 2016; Johnston, Fanzo, & Bogil, 2014; Murray, Baker, & Auld, 2017; Robinson & Kersbergen, 2018).

Fortunately, consumers' culinary habits are shifting to an increase in home cooking and the desire to eat healthily. A study of 7,753 participants during the COVID pandemic significantly found that overall scores for healthy eating and cooking at home increased (Flanagan et al., 2021). A post-pandemic study found that 71% of consumers plan to keep cooking at home, driven by the recognition of the benefits gained: cost less and healthier eating (Hunter PR, 2021). A systematic review of the impact of cooking programs (1980-2011) shows a relationship between cooking skills, cooking habits, and food choices. Consumers' shifts toward cooking at home and healthy foods are an opportunity to provide educational cooking interventions that address the knowledge dimensions of food security. Social media provides an ideal platform since there are 3.96 billion social media users. The average person uses seven different platforms per month, and the average adult spends 95 minutes daily on social media (Barnhart, 2022). Specifically, in 2022, there are over 400 million posts using "#food", suggesting an effective platform to address food security (Pancer, Philp, Poole, & Noseworthy, 2022). Most of these posts help inspire and teach consumers how to cook, addressing an important dimension of food security (Uggioni et al., 2020). To fully address the pillars of food security, consumers also need to be taught how the version of food they choose to cook impacts human nutrition and planet sustainability. How that food is raised, grown, processed, and distributed impacts the sustainability of humans and the planet (Gustin & Gray, 2018). When buying produce, dairy, eggs, or meat, what choice promotes the health of humans and the environment? Social media platforms can teach consumers how to source the healthiest version of the food. Understanding engagement characteristics can help tailor media toward viewer preferences and increase the impact of helping consumers make better food choices (Pancer et al., 2022). The purpose of this study is to assess how food interventions on social media impact food security. Specifically, a series of informational videos will be created to address how the version of a food purchased and cooked impacts human nutrition and planet sustainability. Since there is a lack of prior research on this topic, this will be a pilot study to explore consumers' initial responses to the posts. The information will be shared using three different social media platforms (TikTok, 30 seconds; Instagram, 45-60 seconds; and YouTube, 4-6 minutes). The videos will target consumers 15-35 years of age, who are the largest consumers of processed food. These consumers are avid social media users, indicate a desire to eat healthily, and are a group that can play an essential role in spreading awareness of healthy food choices.

## Research Design

A qualitative approach allows themes and categories to emerge naturally from the participant's responses to the open-ended questions and therefore an appropriate tool for this pilot study. Thematic analysis will be used to analyze the consumers response to the post. Six steps of thematic analysis, as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006), will be used to analyze the qualitative data. These steps include familiarization with data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, developing a codebook, and producing the report (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The content in the videos focuses on teaching consumers how to source and prepare nutrient-dense food so cosumer purchase habits can push for systemic change toward food security by utilizing a bottom up approach. The videos will show where and how to shop, what to purchase, and how to prepare it to utilize the most nutrients from each food type. Please see Table 1 for a list of video topics by platform.

**Table 1.** Social Media Videos

| | **PLATFORM** | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Topic** | **YouTube Video (4-6 minutes)** | **Instagram Videos (45-60 seconds)** | **Tik Tok Videos (30 seconds)** |
| Sourcing & Preparation | Food sourcing at the farmer's market & grocery store with at-home preparation | Farmers markets: Why Farmers markets: How?<br>Bone Broth or Pesticide Soup<br>Portion Distortion<br>Whole Grains & Nuts<br>Living Foods | Farmers markets: Why Farmers markets: How?<br>Bone Broth or Pesticide Soup<br>Portion Distortion<br>Whole Grains & Nuts<br>Living Foods |
| Art of recipe making | Cooking with freedom-no recipe cooking | No Recipe cooking<br>Understanding herbs & spices<br>Repurposing leftovers<br>Staple set up | No Recipe cooking<br>Understanding herbs & spices<br>Repurposing leftovers<br>Staple set up |

## Anticipated Outcomes

The response to the videos in this study will help adjust the content and delivery as needed to create an on-going educational social platform to address barriers to food security. Foods Security requires changes throughout the food system regarding agriculture, distribution, processing, and consumption. Food must be harvested, distributed, processed, and prepared in a manner that assures peak nutritional value. The long-term goal of this study is videos is to guide food consumption habits toward optimal nutrition for humans and the planet, and thus supporting food security. In turn, addressing at-home consumption habits will have a ripple effect on the food system as consumers' purchasing habits change and influence the product demand in the marketplace which impact production moving toward a sustainable food system or nutrition sensitive agriculture.

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# Gen Z Consumers' Motivations in Adapting New Forms of Luxury: An FSQCA Approach

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## Abstract

Digitalization has given rise to new forms of luxury services (i.e., access-based services). However, the motivations that drive Generation Z consumers to utilize luxury access-based services (ABSs) are unclear and fragmented. Thus, this paper aims to enrich the ABS research area by utilizing an innovative methodological approach (i.e., fuzzy set qualitative comparative analysis) to investigate motivation configurations leading to luxury purchase intentions. The findings are expected to provide both theoretical and practical insights.

**Keywords:** luxury access-based services, motivations, complexity theory, Gen Z, fsQCA

## Introduction

Luxury consumption has been characterized by uniqueness, premium pricing, and superior quality (Christodoulides et al., 2021). By acquiring ownership of luxury goods, consumers' needs such as social identity and the need for uniqueness are satisfied (Kauppinen-Räisänen et al., 2018). However, in the past decades, digitalization has shifted consumers' consumption patterns – evolving from goods to experiential consumption (Holmqvist et al., 2020). Meanwhile, the rising of new forms of access-based services (ABSs) has disrupted consumers' luxury experiences and behavior, especially for Generation Z (Gen Z) consumers (Nie et al., 2022). Gen Z is deemed true digital natives having had immediate exposure to the internet and social networks (De Witte, 2022; Francis & Hoefel, 2018). This life experience influenced Gen Z's luxury shopping as they are known to have particular inclinations (Klarna, 2022); they are open to originality and experimentation (Maguire, 2020). Therefore, members of this generation do not consider luxury as exclusive but rather something that should be available, offer variety, and authentic immersive experiences (Dalziel & Pow, 2018; Maguire, 2020).

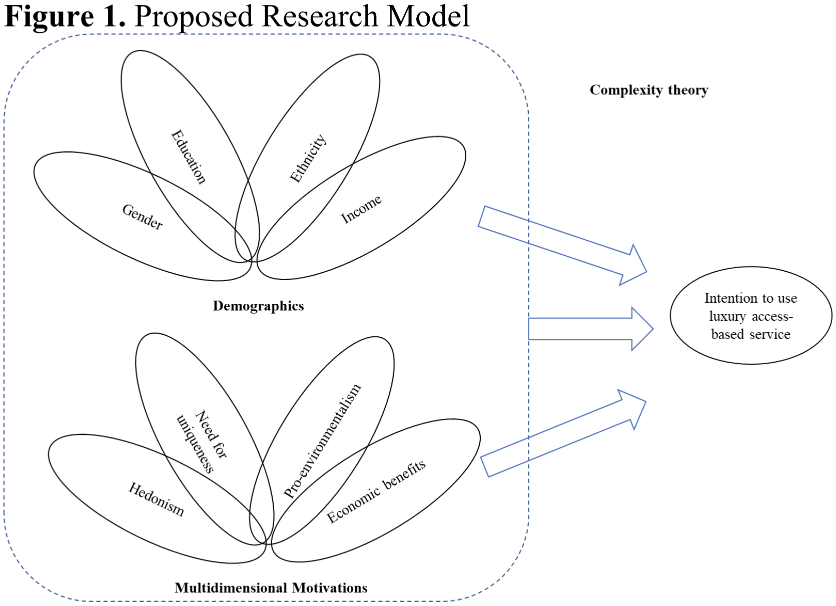
ABSs grant consumers short-term access to a good, property, physical facility, or labor for a fee while the service provider retains legal ownership (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012; Schaefers et al., 2016). ABSs cover a suite of offerings, including ride-sharing services (e.g., Uber Lux), lodging services (e.g., Airbnb Luxe), and fashion rentals (e.g., Bag Borrow or Steal, Rent the Runway) (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012; Nie et al., 2022). The rising of these new forms of consumption is significantly impacting the service industry. However, the current literature lacks a holistic view of what factors jointly determine Gen Z consumers' behavioral responses regarding ABSs. To fulfill the research gap, this study aims to identify the complexity of motivation configurations that influence ABSs behavior based on complexity theory.

## Literature Review

The current literature of ABSs has characterized consumers' willingness to engage in modern consumption experiences. For example, Pantano and Stylos (2020) studied consumers' motivations in renting luxury goods online and discovered five key reasons including: (1) the need for new clothes in special occasions, (2) gaining inspiration from products/brands, (3) the prospect of new ways of consuming luxury goods, (4) making more sustainable choices, and (5) increasing life cycle of luxury products. Relatedly, Lang (2018) explored both barriers and motivations in fashion renting and found that consumer perceived risks included financial, performance, and psychological while frugal shopping attitude and enjoyment were considered positive motives. In Schaefer et al.'s (2016) highly referenced work, the authors particularly investigated the risks (e.g., financial, performance, and social) that come with ownership and therefore created a strong case for the consumption of ABSs. Thus, based on recent literature, we identified four major motivations in adapting new forms of luxury shopping: the need for uniqueness, hedonism, pro-environmentalism, and economic benefits. In addition, while existing studies have substantially contributed to the literature, their findings were fragmented and failed to capture what motivations drive Generation Z consumers to purchase luxury ABSs, especially the complex causal relationships. To this end, complexity theory will be adopted in this study to fill the research gap.

Complexity theory reflects the interaction and combination of variables, thus has been adopted by scholars in marketing (e.g., Woodside et al., 2015), providing a deeper understanding of the causal relationships between antecedents and outcome conditions (Olya & Altinay, 2016). Symmetric modeling (i.e., SEM) has limitations as "not all the cases in the data support a negative or positive relationship between the independent and dependent variables" (Woodside, 2013, p. 2), while complexity theory is suitable to describe the nonlinear and dynamic interaction between antecedents and outcome conditions (Woodside, 2013). To get robust results, we also include demographic variables as the causal configuration in predicting intentions to use luxury ABSs. Figure 1 depicts the proposed model with the hypothesized relationships.

**Figure 1.** Proposed Research Model



## Methods

To examine the proposed model, this study will focus on U.S. Gen Z consumers. A sample size of 300 respondents who have used luxury ABSs before, will be recruited from Qualtrics. All the measurement items will be adapted from existing literature. To achieve research purposes, this study first will utilize partial least squares path modeling (PLS-PM) to test the proposed hypotheses, as PLS-PM does not require data with a normal distribution and can deal with complex structural models (Hair et al., 2021). This will be followed by fuzzy set qualitative comparative analysis (fsQCA) to investigate the combination of antecedents leading to the intention to use luxury ABSs.

## Implications

Building on the motivation theory and prior literature on complexity theory (Taheri et al., 2019; Woodside et al., 2015), this study will offer academic and practical insights by testing the formation of an intention to use luxury ABSs with an innovative methodological approach. The information gleaned from this study will also have significant implications for the service industry in the U.S. and elsewhere. First, the proposed research will help advance the current knowledge base in luxury consumption, and in particular a growing trend (i.e., new forms of luxury) in the service industry that has yet to be fully considered by academic researchers. By taking an asymmetrical approach, this study will extend the current literature by offering configurations of motivation paths. Second, the results from this study have the potential to keep service markets informed about the latest trends to keep consumers in the access-based economy satisfied. We specifically attend to Gen Z consumers as they are leading the way in access-based consumption with intentions to be sustainable and impact other generations as they do so (Gen Z’s Passion, 2021). This notion gives brief insights into the social impact Gen Z’s consumer behavior holds and the implication behind ensuring businesses are knowledgeable on value-based innovation.

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# Destination Memetics Under COVID-19: The Case of China

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## Abstract

Meme maps can represent how information is stored in the unconscious mind. The purpose of this study is twofold: (1) to generate meme maps for the concepts of COVID-19 and the destination image of China, and (2) to assess the similarities and differences in the structures of the generated meme maps. Findings will provide valuable theoretical and practical implications such as recommendations for destination image recovery and testing the efficacy of Theory of Spreading Activation.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, memetics, meme maps, spreading activation, destination image recovery, text mining

## Introduction

A meme is a unit of information reserved in the mind of an individual. Every concept that a mind can think of, such as brands, attitudes, organizational culture, images, ideas, can be represented by memes (Dawkins, 1976; Henderson et al., 1998). For instance, unique and ice cold might be examples of two memes representing a polar bear image in one's mind (Atadil, 2016). Then, memetics is the study of examining how memes work, collaborate, duplicate, and evolve (Brodie, 2009). Meme maps are often used by the researchers to visually illustrate the associations between memes regarding a concept they represent such as organizational culture or destination image (e.g., Schlaile et al., 2021). Since a meme can spread as fast as a virus, it can be considered a mind virus. It just does not spread through sneezing; but, communication (Brodie, 2009).

Speaking of viruses, most readers of the present text are likely to be reminded of COVID-19 which is a novel coronavirus. This associative way of thinking is an example of how minds work, and memories are generated through spreading activation (Collins & Loftus, 1975). In this example, the stimulus meme of "virus" activated the meme of "COVID-19." Such activations lead further memes to be activated; resulting in new attitude formation, behavior changes, and decision making. Similar to viruses, memes evolve and live with individuals for a long time (Dawkins, 1976; Brodie, 2009; Atadil et al., 2017). The destination image of China regarding the COVID-19 is a critical research subject as the country being the first epicenter. While many research studies in the tourism and hospitality field were conducted with a focus on China's destination image, an approach from memetics perspective can shed better light on the unconscious and non-verbal meme associations in travelers' minds. Accordingly, based on the principles of the Theory of Spreading Activation (Collins & Loftus, 1975), this study first generates meme maps for the concepts of COVID-19 and the destination image of China. Then, it assesses the similarities and differences in the structures of the generated meme maps.

## Methods

The data for the proposed research was gathered via a Qualtrics survey instrument in October 2021. Part of this survey included items to collect memes based on the free association method (Echtner & Ritchie, 1993). Moreover, personal association with the pandemic was also investigated with multiple items in the survey, such as being tested positive for COVID-19 and concern about contracting the virus. Influence of COVID-19 on travel planning was also measured. These items were developed based on the previous related research, recent news statements and consulting with industry and academia experts (e.g., Ahmad et al., 2021, Yang et al., 2022). Prior to the pandemic in 2018, the United States was the third country with the largest number of foreign travelers in China (Statista, 2022a). However, international travel arrivals decreased from around 145 million to around 27 million for China in 2020 due to the pandemic (Statista, 2022b). As travelers from the United States can play a significant role in the recovery of the tourism industry of China, the target population of the present study is the residents of the United States. Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) was utilized for survey distribution. A purposive sampling method was employed since specific qualification criteria was employed to select Mturk workers.

## Results

IBM SPSS Modeler Text Analytics software will be utilized to analyze the text data gathered via the free association method. This software can process a large amount of text data. Then, it can distinguish and establish the key concepts from this text data. Moreover, the software can categorize these key concepts into related groups through linguistic processing (IBM SPSS Modeler, 2021). The related analyses will generate meme maps illustrating memes and associations among these memes regarding the concepts of COVID-19 and the destination image of China.

## Discussions and Implications

Regarding the practical contributions, findings will generate recommendations for China's destination image recovery. More specifically, the visualization of how China and COVID-19 concepts are perceived by travelers through meme maps will allow generating effective marketing messages. Such marketing messages can result in new attitude formation, behavior changes, and decision making regarding China's destination image. Then, when it is safe to travel again, individuals might be more likely to visit China. Moreover, theoretically, findings will enable testing the efficacy of Theory of Spreading Activation within the context of current research. The study will also contribute to the destination image recovery literature from memetics perspective.

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# Poster Presentation Track

# Predicting Cancellations in Bookings Using Machine Learning

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## Abstract

Machine learning techniques can add another tool to revenue managers, specifically in the realm of bookings. Instead of overbooking and underselling, revenue managers can utilize machine learning methods to predict cancellations in bookings. Using a variety of machine learning methods such as: random forest, classification tree, support vector machine, and logistic regression, the cancellation of a booking can be predicted with up to 85% accuracy on average.

**Keywords:** machine learning, bookings, revenue management, cancellations, hotel management

## Introduction

In the hospitality industry, there is currently a push towards the implementation of different analytics solutions, especially in the realm of revenue management and optimization. Hotel rooms are a limited commodity, and once a room on a certain date is booked in advance, the hotel must guarantee the room to that customer. The problem is that the hotel takes on risk when they book the room, because the customer could cancel with relatively short notice, which leaves the hotel either with a vacant room or with no other choice than to downsell the room last minute. The impact on the bottom-line can be significant; research has shown that cancellations impacted almost 40% of on-the-books revenue in 2018 for some hotels.

In an attempt to solve the problem of revenue loss for canceled rooms, many hotels implement strict cancellation policies or overbooking. With the new push for analytics solutions, we looked towards machine learning as a solution to the problem. This problem is essentially a binary classification problem, where the model reads in the data and tries to predict either yes or no for the cancellation status. Due to the nature of the problem, we ran the following five binary classification models: classification tree, random forest, support vector machine (SVM), k-nearest neighbors (KNN), and logistic regression. Each of these models had certain advantages and disadvantages.

In this research, we assessed the accuracy, sensitivity, and specificity of various machine learning techniques when faced with the task of predicting hotel cancellations. In doing so, we used traditional cross-validation methods to assess the accuracy, sensitivity, and specificity of each of the five models. We split the data into training and test data sets to evaluate the models' prediction accuracy, where the models will be trained and tuned using the training set and then evaluated on the test set. For this study, we used a 75/25 split, training the data on the 75% and testing the trained models on the withheld 25%. We then repeated this process over 5 folds of the data, averaging the results.

The data sets used come from two different hotels located in Southern Portugal. The first hotel is a resort hotel located along the coast and the second one is located within a city. They have 31 variables that correspond to different booking information. The first hotel has about 40,000 records, while the second has just under 80,000. Each record corresponds to a booking from the period between July 1, 2015 and August 31, 2017.

Table 1. H1 Model Results

| | Accuracy | Sensitivity | Specificity |
|---|---|---|---|
| Basic Tree | 0.6998 | 0.7600 | 0.6289 |
| Random Forest | 0.8030 | 0.8178 | 0.7857 |
| SVM | 0.7382 | 0.6919 | 0.7927 |
| KNN | 0.7470 | 0.7763 | 0.7125 |
| Logit. Reg. | 0.7022 | 0.7170 | 0.6847 |

Table 2. H2 Model Results

| | Accuracy | Sensitivity | Specificity |
|---|---|---|---|
| Basic Tree | 0.8279 | 0.9818 | 0.5305 |
| Random Forest | 0.8791 | 0.9259 | 0.7887 |
| SVM | 0.8311 | 0.9806 | 0.5423 |
| KNN | 0.8479 | 0.9077 | 0.7324 |
| Logit. Reg. | 0.8038 | 1.0000 | 0.4249 |

Looking at the results of the machine learning models on the two data sets, we can see that the Random Forest model had the highest accuracy (80% for hotel 1 and 87% for hotel 2), with the KNN and SVM models falling close behind it in the mid-70s and mid-80s, respectively. The worst performance in terms of prediction accuracy came from the logistic regression model, with an accuracy right around 70%. When considering the non-information rate of 54%, all the models were effective in at least increasing the prediction accuracy by about 20%.

The fact that the random forest so drastically outperformed the basic classification tree did not come as a surprise, since as an average of many classification trees, ensemble methods generally improve prediction accuracy and reduce overall variance. We suspect that other ensemble methods, such as bagging or boosting, may also be able to get higher prediction accuracies. One of the main disadvantages to using ensemble techniques like the random forest is the fact that they tend to be very computationally intensive. The basic classification tree, logistic regression, and KNN models took significantly less time to run than the random forest and the SVM. If we wanted to run an ensemble method on a very large data set, it would be a nightmare with the minuscule computational power of our personal computers.

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# Adoption of Dynamic Pricing in Live Music Events

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## Abstract

This study examines the behavior of live music attendees across the full event experience, to investigate the challenges of adopting dynamic pricing in the live event business. A qualitative methodology involves structured interviews to examine the relationship between dynamic pricing and customer experience. The findings indicate that customers are prepared to accept the dynamic pricing practice if pricing can be adequately managed. This study provides pricing strategies for event organizers from revenue and operation perspectives.

**Keywords:** dynamic pricing, revenue management, live events, concert

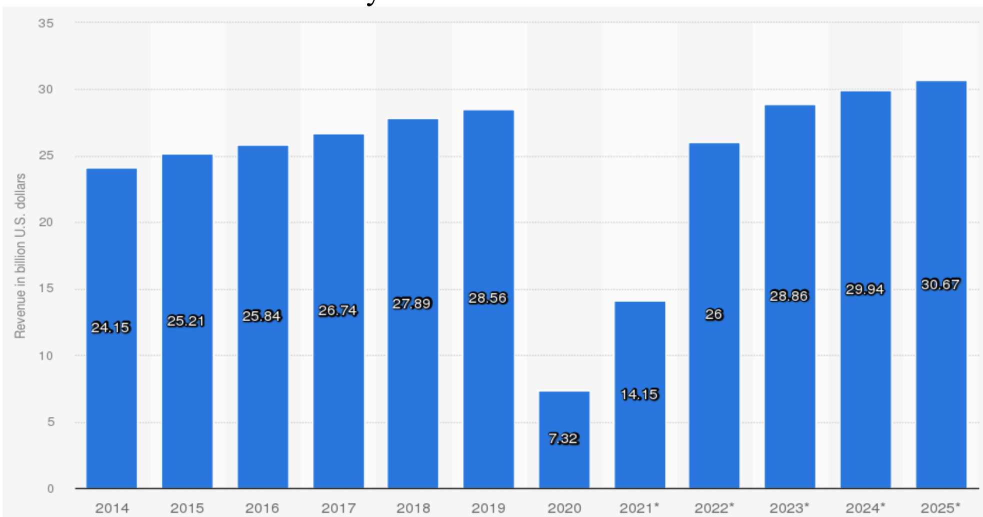
## Introduction

Dynamic pricing is widely used in many different industries, and studies in the past have shown that it increases revenue when it is used (Sweeting, 2012), but more research is still needed to understand the problems that come with using it in the live events sector. Adele, Bruce Springsteen, and Taylor Swift all made announcements about using dynamic pricing on their planned tours in 2023 as they were getting over the post-covid slump. Some of their tickets have escalated to the point where supporters are furious due to the high market demand. Therefore, by studying the relationship between consumers' overall experiences and dynamic pricing, with an emphasis on music-related events, our current study will enhance the existing stream of related industry research.

### *Live Music Market*

Because of technological advancements, online music has overtaken traditional recorded music in a world where digital distribution is pervasive. Prior to the pandemic, the music business as a whole relied more on live performances due to the drop in sales of recorded music. The coronavirus pandemic epidemic led to the closure of concert halls, the cancellation of tours, and the postponement of festivals. The live music sector awoke in 2021 as travel restrictions were eased and social distance policies were relaxed in various parts of the world. During the new normal time post-covid, from 2021 to 2022, more and more musicians revealed ambitions for a share of the growing market. According to Technavio (2022), the market's growth momentum would increase at a CAGR of 6.85% since 2021, with total revenue expected to recover in 2023 as shown in Table 1(Statista, 2022).

**Table 1.** Live Music Industry Revenue Worldwide From 2014 to 2025




*Note.* Adapted from https://www.statista.com/statistics/1096424/live-music-industry-revenue-worldwide/ Copyright 2022 by Statista.

### *Revenue Management*

In the airline, hotel, and car rental businesses, dynamic pricing methods are widely utilized. In order to maximize the revenue outcome, event organizers must adjust ticket prices depending on changes in market demand that occur in real time, according to Courty's (2015) definition of dynamic pricing. Dynamic pricing in the live entertainment sector first appeared in 2011, when ticketmaster introduced it to their operations.

*"Efficient pricing is one of the most important and untapped opportunities to unlock value for fans, clients, artists and teams."* – Nathan Hubbard (Live Nation Entertainment, 2011).

Nathan Hubbard, the CEO of Ticketmaster, voiced confidence and high expectations for the rollout of dynamic pricing in terms of customer experience and economic value. The correlation between dynamic pricing and customer experience will be further explored in my research.

## Methods

Focus groups are used in the study's data collection process. My team specifically conducts an online focus group with music fans who have gone to a live performance at least once in the last 12 months. We will be able to better comprehend client perception and purchasing behavior with the help of the results we acquired.

## Interview Summary

Live music offerings, as opposed to recorded music, are more likely to give their audience a distinctive and extraordinary experience. According to Nguyen (2012), Customers who pay a premium to experience hedonic consumption rather than utilitarian consumption typically have higher expectations for the spectacular experience. The quality of the product's whole experience should always take precedence in hedonic consumption settings. The participant we chose admitted that their booking windows for the events are typically flexible, and the main variables influencing their intention to get tickets are the lineup, venues, and then pricing. Customers inspired by the brand are willing to spend a high price for an event in exchange for an unforgettable experience (Obiegbu, 2019). This potential “decay” or “nostalgia” effect would be a significant consideration when assessing emotional commitment and loyalty within the live music event sector (Wood & Moss, 2015). However, artists who act responsibly and charge fairly can generate positive online reviews and client loyalty, which can help with W-O-M marketing and customer relationship management. Finding a plan to keep those devoted fans should be a part of the artists’ obligation when performing in solo or group carnivals, along with the market’s rising trends.

## Conclusions

From a supply and demand perspective, the event promoter and planner should work to produce a valuable and successful show for patrons as well as to consistently increase the impact and profitability of each event. The devoted followers of a show, sport, or form of entertainment who are extremely enthusiastic could also be considered customers of the events organization. In contrast to the sports sector, performing artists typically have more influence over ticket prices than event producers or organizers. Additionally, while some musicians care about their fans’ financial security as much as their own, those who are more likely to sell out shows are less likely to practice pricing discrimination (Krueger, 2005; Courty & Pagliero, 2014).

On the other hand, a mannual manipulation and audit must be closely followed for the events with high market demand that had embraced the dynamic pricing practice. Due to the fact that even in the most advanced airline industry practice, when pricing and inventory are distributed from the centralized revenue management system, specific pricing decisions of flight tickets typically entail manually benchmarking or analyzing quantities of sufficient historical data(Kummara et al., 2021). In conclusion, the business owner will have a better understanding of how to deal with the difficulty of dynamic pricing with the aid of reliable technology and qualified personnel. By doing this, a solid brand reputation might be created in the marketplace, which could help the event business remain viable in the long run.

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# A Proposal to Assess Transportation Needs and Challenges of Las Vegas Integrated Resort Employees

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## Abstract

The value of Public Transit to employees begins with their workplace proximity. When transit stops are within reach, the concern becomes whether the transit provides employees with access to commute to and from work with ease. The average American spends $800 on transit passes while annual costs of driving to work are $2,152.80. Public transit commuters average over 400 hours commuting to and from work annually, 182 hours more than drivers (Ortegren, 2020).

## Introduction

Vegas is home to casinos, luxurious hotels, and integrated resorts and known as the hospitality capital of the world (Pruett, 2008). It's certainly not known for great public transportation (Ortegren, 2020). Las Vegas has some advantages other cities do not possess in terms of fostering top line hotel growth from business and casual travelers (Shriber, 2022). In spite of the pandemic, visitors to Las Vegas exceeded 32.2 million in 2021, which was 10.2 million below the peak number of visitors in 2019 (Statista, 2022). The city of Las Vegas is a bustling hospitality metropolis and home to 5,409 hospitality properties with 150,487 rooms available (Statista, 2022), and with 356,500 employees (pre-pandemic) working in the industry (Miller, 2022). Employment in the leisure and hospitality sector was 283,000 in October 2021, compared to 279,700 one year ago (Hugh, 2021). Retention has become a major problem and a possible strategy to attract and retain employees in industry is to remove or reduce perceived barriers and challenges associated with employment. One such challenge, is transportation and according to a recent study from Clever Real Estate, Las Vegas has the worst public transit system compared to 29 other major metropolitan areas in the country (Miller, 2020). Further analysis of the study indicated that locals that use public transit are disadvantaged compared to those that drive (Ortegren, 2022). Transit commuters spend nearly $5000 more on their commute each year even though they average $16,866 less in income. They average over 400 hours commuting to and from work annually, thus the average commute for public transit users, who represent about 4 percent of the valley's population, is about an hour (Miller, 2020).

The hospitality industry is labor intensive and requires long and odd working hours (employees are required to work in shifts to meet operation and service demands). The public transit system plays an integral role in ensuring that employees of integrated resorts on the strip report for duty on time, however with the hurdles associated with the use of public transportation, reporting to work on time is achieved with severe difficulty. Cardinal to this quandary is that Southern Nevada continues to attract transit innovations in tunneling, Hyperloop, and driverless vehicle delivery technologies (Nelson, 2022) which do not offer a sustainable solution to the current situation faced by integrated resort employees, as the focus is centered on tourist (Sanderson, 2022).

### *Proposed Study and Research Questions*

The proposed research study seeks to explore the transportation needs and challenges of integrated resort employees working at the properties located on the Las Vegas Strip (the Resort corridor: the area including the Las Vegas Boulevard between 215 Beltway and Sahara Avenue and surrounding areas). The focus of the study is the integrated resorts located on the Strip since these resorts represent:

a) A portion of the largest integrated hotels in the world (in terms of number of rooms available) are in Las Vegas; these include the MGM Grand with 6,852 rooms, Luxor with 4,407, the Venetian with 4,049, Aria with 4049 and Excalibur with 4032.
b) Resorts located on the Las Vegas Strip have a very large number of employees who mostly require transportation to get to work.
c) Unlike some other businesses such as banks, retail shops, etc., resorts operate 24/7, 365 days/ year: hence requiring the commute for shifts of employees at all times of the day.

The proposed research study seeks to determine the scope of the transportation challenges by use of surveys and interviews of the resort employees and management. Given the exploratory nature of the study, there are no hypotheses, but a set of research questions based on the review of related literature.

1. What is the experience of the Strip corridor employees in terms of their commute to and from work including parking?
2. What are their expectations of access to transportation when commuting to their workplace?
3. What would be the perceived impact of improvements to transportation (to and from the workplace) in terms of their work-life balance?
4. What is the level of their willingness to adopt and use innovative technologies that could contribute to reducing the challenges associated with commuting to the workplace?
5. How much of an incentive is ease of transportation in terms of their commitment to work in the hospitality industry?

## Proposed Methods

The target population of the study is the Las Vegas Strip Integrated Resort employees, management and leadership of the Wynn Resorts, MGM Resorts and Caesars Entertainment, Inc. These properties were chosen from a sample of 102 integrated resorts on the strip. Our research team will have access to the employees of these major hospitality organizations.

1. Email-based interviews with the employees, management, and leadership of the targeted integrated resorts will be conducted.
2. Using Qualtrics online survey platform and based on the feedback received from the email-based interviews with employees, a survey will be developed and sent to employees of the targeted resorts. Resorts opting to participate in the study, will send the survey link to their employees and identify the survey as a UNLV research study. Access to surveys and the data collected will be protected as per the Institutional Review Board (IRB) guidelines.

3. Thematic analysis of interview data as well as the open-ended questions included in the employee survey will be conducted using NVivo software. Descriptive analysis of online survey data will also be compiled using the demographic information questions included in the survey.

### Potential Implications

The findings from this study will provide empirical evidence on the scope of the transportation related issues of integrated resort employees in Las Vegas. The results will help determine the magnitude of work commute issues and can be used to support federal and local government initiatives and investments for solving transportation and commute needs of the community in the city of Las Vegas. Having access to the findings of this study will help hoteliers better address any work commute related issues for their employees, giving employers a potential tool to attract and retain employees.

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# Hospitality Integrated Resorts: Employee Engagement, Satisfaction and Retention

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## Abstract

This research aims to investigate how tenured employees working at integrated resorts have had their work life influenced by their career in the hospitality industry. This study hypothesizes that the following factors aid in improving retention levels of employees: organizational culture, person-environment fit, job embeddedness, work-life balance, employee engagement, and job satisfaction. This research adds to existing literature by further understanding the relationship between the aforementioned factors by applying the conservation of resource theory (COR).

**Keywords:** employee engagement, turnover intention, job satisfaction

## Introduction

Hospitality is a very emotionally demanding business characterized by high levels of stress (Lu & Gursoy, 2013) and historically low wages (Sun et al., 2022). The result is that the average annual turnover in the hospitality industry is 73.8% (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022). Many post pandemic studies of hospitality employees found 30% have no desire to return to any role within the industry (Dean, 2021) and one in 13 hospitality jobs will remain unfilled throughout 2022 (Baratti, 2021). The cost of turnover is approximately $50,000 per employee, making it an impactful determinant of whether a business will be financially successful (Thomas et al., 2016). Clearly turnover is a significant concern facing the industry.

There is a dearth of hospitality research to understand how working in hospitality impacts employee longevity. While there is an extensive amount of hospitality research examining turnover intention (Holston Okae, 2018), there is only one qualitative study of restaurant employee longevity. In addition, there is a great need to better understand the realm of integrated resorts (Thomas et al., 2016). The majority of hospitality research has focused on front line employees (Thomas et al., 2016) indicating a need to address managers. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to understand the factors that lead to employee longevity in hospitality.

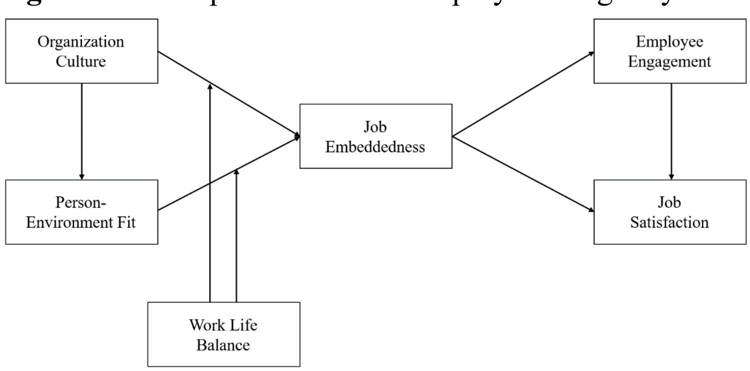
## Literature Review

The COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989) will be used as the underlying framework for the study. Hobfoll's (1989) COR theory posits that individuals strive to acquire, maintain, and replenish their resources in order to avoid stress. Therefore, this study will utilize COR to assess the employee resources versus their return relationship at integrated resorts. This will assist in understanding the attributes that have been utilized by organizations as resources for tenured employees, and how these benefits have caused employees' to have more organizational embeddedness (Mitchell & Lee, 2001).

Hospitality industry employee turnover is a common occurrence and viewed as part of doing business. This is especially troubling since employees become more valuable over time, as they are continuously learning and obtaining new skills that align with the evolving business demands (DiPietro et al., 2019). Therefore, combating this pervasive ideology is a necessity as well as a challenge for employers (Thomas et al., 2016). Employees are consistently computing a cost-benefit analysis of whether it is worth working at an organization. It has been shown that job satisfaction directly impacts an employee's intention to remain or leave a job (DiPietro et al., 2019). Therefore, the level of satisfaction is one of the greatest intangible assets an organization has, and it is up to the employer to provide the necessary environment to meet the needs of employees that ultimately results in their retention. When the needs of employees are fulfilled, their level of engagement increases (Kang & Busser, 2018). By being engaged at work, hospitality employees lowered their turnover intention, improved service delivery and job performance, increased creativity and innovativeness, enhanced overall life satisfaction, as well as customer service perceptions (Chandni & Rahman, 2020). Increasing customer satisfaction levels results in better financial company performance (Fang et al., 2019). Therefore, the retention of employees results in a more effective and consistent service experiences for guests (Fang et al., 2019).

Research revealed that a number of factors have a strong influence on employee job satisfaction and employee engagement (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2008): organizational culture, person-environment fit, work-life balance (DiPietro et al., 2019), and job embeddedness (Lu & Gursoy, 2013). Organizational culture refers to the value system a business and its employees share which is supported by the processes which guide the company (DiPietro et al., 2019). Person-organization fit refers to how in sync these two parties are regarding work values (DiPietro et al., 2019). Work-life balance concerns the amount of time an individual spends at work versus pursuing other interests (DiPietro et al., 2019). As a moderator, work-life balance has been shown to support the ideation that as this factor increases so does the employee's perceived value in the relationship with an organization and willingness to handle job demands (Chiang et al., 2010). Job embeddedness is the degree that an employee feels that working for a company is mutually beneficial (Lu & Gursoy, 2013). Job embeddedness has been found to mediate the relationship between employee organizational fit and commitment to their role (Hom et al., 2009). Person-environment fit has been found to be a crucial factor for creating embeddedness in an organization (Ma et al., 2018).

**Figure 1.** Conceptual Model of Employee Longevity




- $H_1$: Organization culture has a direct effect on job embeddedness.
- $H_2$: Person-environment fit has a direct effect on job embeddedness.

- $H_3$: Job embeddedness mediates the relationship between a) organization culture and employee engagement and b) person-environment fit and employee engagement.
- $H_4$: Job embeddedness mediates the relationship between a) organization culture and job satisfaction and b) person-environment fit and job satisfaction.
- $H_5$: Work-life balance moderates the relationship between a) organization culture and job embeddedness and b) person-environment fit and job embeddedness.

## Methods

The sample will consist of 600 employees from three integrated resorts. Employees with 15-20 years of continuous employment at their company will be surveyed. Employees will be further stratified by front and back of house defined positions and front-line or managerial roles. The survey data will be analyzed using partial least squares structured equation modeling.

## Discussion

While Halbesleben & Wheeler (2008) reviewed the factors involving satisfaction, job embeddedness, engagement, and the overall impact these factors have on turnover intention, this study will be the first to examine these relationships on longevity employees that will make an important contribution to the existing literature and implications for the hospitality industry. The findings bring forward the important moderating role of work-life balance and mediating role of employee engagement. In addition, this study extends the COR model to better understand how organizations can utilize resources to improve longevity of their workforce.

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# Does Employees' Service Sabotage Behavior Influence Customer Experience? Comparing the Effect of Racial Identity in the Service Industry

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## Abstract

This study investigates employee service sabotage behavior and its effect on customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions in restaurants, comparing racial identity via critical race theory. To understand such phenomena, this study will employ a quantitative research method conducting an online survey to recruit 300 participants. The study's findings can extend service sabotage theory and benefits business managing service quality to maintain competitiveness in the market.

**Keywords:** service sabotage behavior, critical race theory, social justice, service quality

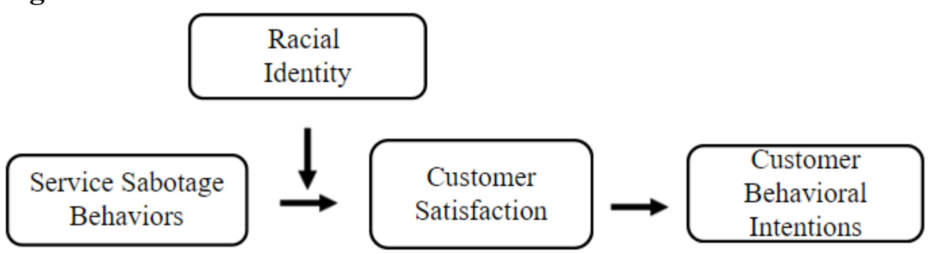
## Introduction

Service sabotage is employees' intentional provision of disruptive service, commonly detected in service-related industries (Harris & Ogbonna, 2002). More than 85% of employees confessed to acts of service sabotage during the week in the hotel and restaurant industry (Harris & Ogbonna, 2002). The study by Tao (2017) collected 225 service sabotage incidents from 26 employees at restaurants in the U.S., meaning employees still have intentionally provided negative service to customers in recent years. Although providing superior customer service is critical to the hospitality and restaurant industries, there are several cases of racial bias related to service sabotage behaviors. For instance, an employee called a Black customer a monkey during their argument or called the police because a black family was using the swimming pool (Glusac, 2018; Phillips, 2018). Aiming to respect diversity and social justice in the workplace, many industries acknowledge the importance of social justice and diverse society in the workplace (Yeung, 2004; Atweh, 2011; Hwang et al., 2021).

Critical race theory was established on racism which proposes respect for racial diversity and discusses how to resolve races issue in society (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). Numerous studies are related to CRT and social justice, concentrating justice with labor issues to discuss labor rights, employees' performance, and customers' perception of corporate image (Luo et al., 2013; Jiun-Lan & Jeng-Hwan, 2015; Zoghbi-Manrique-de-Lara, & Ting-Ding, 2017; Zheng et al., 2022; Hsu et al., 2022). Lutrario (2021) focuses on the work experience and well-being of employees of different ethnicities in the hospitality industry, including Black, Asian, and other underrepresented racial/ethnic groups. accordingly, Lutrario (2021) addressed that 42% of respondents perceived their career progression was interfered with within the workplace due to race issues. More importantly, 60% of employees indicated they were not adequately trained and educated at work, and only 28% of employees have received training and education about race and ethnicity in the workplace (Lutrario, 2021).

Due to unfair treatment (e.g., employees' intention to service sabotage because of cynicism or earning wage inequality due to improper management, different races, and genders), there is a significant negative phenomenon exists in the hospitality workplace with the social situation (Morgan Jr, 1982; Abubakar & Arasli, 2016; Shum et al., 2020). Sometimes, workplace discrimination (e.g., rarely hiring African American workers, assigning black employees to "back of houses" jobs such as dishwasher and cooking) and racial bias cause an inequality working environment leading to sabotage behaviors in the hospitality and restaurant industries. Numerous cases argued that hotel and restaurant owners prefer to hire a high rate of whites (Lutrario, 2021; Zippia the Career Expert, 2022). Consequently, this caused an unequal work environment for employees, which triggered employees' service sabotage behavior. Previous literature studied the antecedents and motivations of employees' service sabotage (e.g., employees' emotional exhaustion) and found that financial limitations, stress, customer center environment, group-related, and employee/firm leading to service sabotage behaviors among employees (Kuo & Sun, 2010; Lin, 2011; Harris & Ogbonna, 2012). As intentional and destructive behaviors, service sabotage behavior not only provides hostile customer service but also negatively results in business operations and reputation through a decline in the business's profit.

**Figure 1.** Research Model




In the hospitality industry, racism is a common issue in the workplace. To truly understand negative inequal and severe phenomena in the hospitality industry, it is vital to study how employees' sabotage behaviors through the scope of race differences can influence consumers' experiences. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the effects of employee service sabotage behaviors on customers' satisfaction and restaurant performance. The findings of the study can provide better insights that not only assists restaurant businesses in maintaining superior customer satisfaction but also increase firm performance by creating diversity, equity, and inclusive culture in the restaurant industry.

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# How Interior Layout Could Be Changed in Robot-Supported Quick Service Restaurants

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**Abstract**

Quick Service Restaurants (QSR) are discovering potential benefits of using robots to improve productivity. This study explores interior layout for robotic QSRs through a qualitative method of interviewing senior managers about effects on front and back-of-house spaces, examining the viability of layouts to improve QSRs. Alternate layouts would seek to adapt to robots, address the new challenges posed by the pandemic, and accommodate traditional issues that contribute to crowded workspaces and dining areas. (Shaw, 2017)

**Keywords:** quick service restaurant, robotic, interior design, layout, servicescape, space planning

## Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic is accelerating the adoption of robots in the hospitality industry (Arrojado, 2020). Especially in the restaurant industry since robots can effectively deal with several pandemic induced challenges, such as labor shortages (Gebbers & Adamchuk, 2010; Khan et al., 2018) and the ability to maintain hygiene standards (Siddiqi et al. 2022).

Despite all the advantages associated with using service robots, there are still areas for development and ongoing difficulties. According to Chen et al. (2022), some of the challenges for QSRs using robots, such as QSR's environments, are too complex for some robots. The placement of items like tables, chairs, wall cabinets, screens, etc., in restaurants will affect how well the robot can navigate, and also, small aisles between tables raise the challenge of robot navigation (Chen et al., 2022).

Despite the increasing popularity of robots-supported restaurants (Behr, 2022)and the recent interest of scholars on this topic  (Desai & Raghavan, 2022) (Taylor et al., 2022) (Chang & Mukherjee, 2022), no major research study has focused on the interior design. However, food service operators use service robots in their establishments to unlock new capacities and provide faster food to their guests (Rogers, 2021). Furthermore, adopting robots could reduce any excessive space in both front-of-house and back-of-house operations.

One of the important needs of customers in the QSRs is the dining experience. This multi-dimensional phenomenon has various characteristics that determine client's perceptions and feelings (Yrjölā et al., 2019). Notable features include location, interior design, menu, food taste, and service staff (Heung and Gu, 2012; Andersson and Mossberg, 2004). These service-related and interior-design attributes are generally acknowledged as the key factors determining the quality of an experience at a restaurant (Ryu et al., 2012 ).

### *Research Questions*

1. When QSR managers integrate robots into their restaurants, how to spatial proportions of their restaurant's layout change?

Adopting robots in QSRs, depending on where the robots would be adapted (back of the house or front of the house) needs changes in the interior spatial proportions for better working efficiency and customer satisfaction.

2. What elements do QSR managers think need to change in their restaurant's interior design to improve customer satisfaction and the working environment?

In order to design a practical prototype for robotic-supported QSRs, knowing the existing limitations and problems of QSR's interior layouts could be helpful and lead us to design a better prototype for the QSRs owners.

3. How do managers consider adapting robots as a solution for their existing problems in the industry?

## Literature Review

### *Growth*

The food and beverage industry is experiencing rapid growth in Quick Service Restaurant (QSR) establishments, robot usage, and customer visits. According to the USDA's Economic Research Service, the number of QSRs in the United States increased by about 20 percent between 2000 and 2015 (McLaughlin, 2018). In contrast, the quantity of full-service restaurants, where diners pay after dining and servers take orders at tables, stayed stable over the same period. McDonald's and other large restaurant chains use self-service kiosks in their lobbies, allowing customers to input their orders, pay, and print the receipt through a touch-screen interface. McDonald's also plans to employ other automation tools like robot fryers or automated drive-thru to boost production and efficiency (Kunert, 2022). As a result of the QSRs' growth and adapted new technologies, restaurant owners need to cultivate excellent consumer relationships that ultimately result in restaurant loyalty and long-term success by paying attention to every detail to maintain a solid customer-driven attitude and meet customers' needs.

### *Labor Issues*

The pandemic has caused great economic losses. Almost 3.1 million jobs in the food service sector have been lost. The leisure and hospitality sectors have experienced great unemployment rates, as high as 39.3% during the pandemic (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020). The pandemic and its economic effects have also recorded professional stress and negative mental health outcomes. High-stress workers have, on average, 46 percent higher healthcare expenses. An estimated $200 billion is lost yearly due to absenteeism, lost productivity, and health care costs as a result of workplace stress (Lippert et al., 2021). An increase in automation may become an economic legacy of the pandemic, which can improve any business's productivity, efficiency and pave the way for adopting robots in QSRs. The outbreak is subsiding in the United States, however, new momentum is being provided for automation in the QSR industry. Automation causes traditional boundaries between a service provider and a consumer to shift towards self-service and customer technology experience. Weijters et al. (2007) have found that previewed reliability, simplicity of use, and associated fun are the keys that directly influence customer satisfaction.

### *Adoption of Robots*

Griner (2022) mentioned before the pandemic, 32% of diners preferred not to see robots cook their meal, and nearly 30% of clients would get dubious if they witnessed robots preparing food or bringing it to the tables. Kelso (2021) in her study mentioned that after the pandemic customer reactions to robots, has drastically changed. According to the report, within the next two to three years, 50% of operators plan to implement automated technology (Kelso, 2022). Moreover, 87% of business owners, operators, or managers in the hospitality sector agree that embracing technology has been essential to survival amid the COVID-19 outbreak (Resendes, 2021). Hence, understanding an ideal interior design is pivotal for QSRs to enhance profitability and customer satisfaction when they deploy service robots at their stores.

### *Navigation*

One of the fundamental tasks performed by robots is navigation. Hernández et al. (2016), in their study, created a vision system for robots to recognize items while considering typical human settings and providing details on an object's size and color. Another proposed system by Foroughi et al. (2021) focuses on topological maps of the actual environment to locate itself and other objects. Determining technological solutions proposed by robotic or software engineers for robot-supported restaurants and harmoniously integrating them into the proposed architecture prototype leads us to design a useful architectural prototype that keeps both owners and consumers happy.

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# The Use of Robotic Service: Impact on Managers' Job Satisfaction and Well-Being

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## Abstract

Interruptions and technical difficulties caused by robotic services could stress managers, according to the conservation of resources theory. The purpose of the study is to determine whether the stress brought on by the use of robotic services affects managers' work satisfaction and well-being, and whether a collaborative leadership style can reduce the negative impact. A conceptual model is proposed to test the relationships.

**Keywords:** robot, disruption, stress, job satisfaction, well-being

## Introduction

The hospitality industry is known for employees that provide quality services to customers. However, artificial intelligence (AI) and robotic service delivery has challenged this convention, with AI-driven robotics handling multiple front-line employee tasks (Li et al., 2021; Qiu et al., 2022). Increasingly, robotic services are being used in the hospitality sector with applications ranging from chatbots with AI that help with customer service to robot assistants that enhance the guest experience (Yu et al., 2022). Concerns about the adoption of smart technology are growing. Previous researchers have expressed their concern about technological disruption, challenges with application and the utilization of innovative technologies (Jabeen et al., 2021). Robots distract users' attention away from their main task (Weiss et al., 2014). The hospitality sector's services could be disrupted by smart technologies, changing customer engagement strategies and expectations (Helkkula et al., 2018). At times, robots interfere with other urgent tasks, especially in congested work situations and mostly perceived as impeding other urgent tasks (Mutlu & Forlizzi, 2008). Managers may experience stress as a result of their perception of a loss of resources due to the disruption and potential technological issues brought on by robotic service (Hobfoll et al., 2018). As a result of employee interactions with robotic services, managers may need to resolve issues. One of the impacts of robotic services on frontline employees is that robotic risk awareness could impact their quit intention, as employees fear being replaced by robots (Qiu et al., 2022). Also, the entertainment factor of robotic service barely helped employees' physical and mental fatigue (Qiu et al., 2022). Managers must always be prepared to handle a wide range of workplace problems while not alienating the employees involved (Nicolaides, 2018). Due to their increased workloads and responsibilities, managers experience greater stress (O'Neill & Davis, 2011). Managers should always be prepared for workplace issues that may cause stress and have an impact on their job satisfaction and well-being. Work-related stress is a major contributor to job satisfaction, which is the affective orientation that employees have toward their work (Hoboubi et al., 2017). Interpersonal work conflict and overload, such as malfunctioning technology, were the two most prevalent stressors (O'Neill & Davis, 2011). When stress acts as a negative factor, it causes aggression and job dissatisfaction (Hoboubi et al., 2017). Work-related stress is negatively correlated with well-being, which is defined as an individual's overall assessment of their quality of life (Tsaur & Tang, 2012). The collaborative leadership style at work is most effective for resolving disputes (Nicolaides, 2018). Aligned with this style, leaders should foster a consensus approach to resolve conflict (Ibarra & Hansen, 2015). The perception of decision quality, team participation, and satisfaction with the decision-making process all improved under collaborative management (Paul et al., 2004). Managers with collaboration leadership styles may be happier and more satisfied with their job. Numerous studies have been conducted on the impact on robotic service and front-line employees. However, research is missing on the impact of robotic services on managers. The purpose of this study is to understand how the use of robotic services results in manager's stress and subsequently affects their job satisfaction and wellbeing.

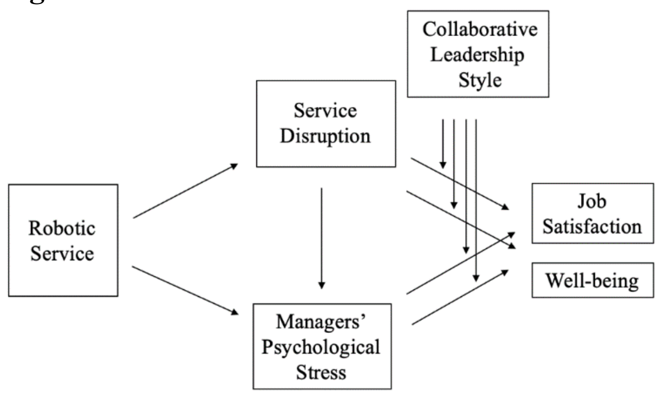
## Literature Review

In recent years, the use of robotic service has grown increasingly common in the hospitality sector (Yu et al., 2022). Previous researchers had some reservations about the difficulties that new technology brings to the workplace (Jabeen et al., 2021). The robotic service occasionally interferes with workers' work, especially during busy periods (Mutlu & Forlizzi, 2008). Managers may experience increased stress at work due to their increased responsibilities to interact with both robots and workers (O'Neill & Davis, 2011). Their stress will have a detrimental effect on their happiness and job satisfaction (Hoboubi et al., 2017). One of the tested methods for overcoming obstacles at work is the collaborative style (Nicolaides, 2018). For an organization to be successful in the market and stay alive, collaborative leadership will improve the company's performance (Maalouf, 2019).

### *Hypotheses*

- $H_1$. The use of robotic service has a positive effect on the disruption of employees' work.
- $H_2$. The use of robotic service has positive effect on managers' psychological stress.
- $H_3$. The service disruption caused by robotic service has positive effect on managers' psychological stress.
- $H_4$. The service disruption caused by robotic service has negative effect on managers' job satisfaction.
- $H_5$. The service disruption caused by robotic service has negative effect on managers' well-being.
- $H_6$. Managers' psychological stress has negative effect on managers' job satisfaction.
- $H_7$. Managers' psychological stress has negative effect on managers' well-being.
- $H_8$. Collaborative leadership style moderates the relationship between service disruption and managers' a) job satisfaction and b) well-being.
- $H_9$. Collaborative leadership style moderates the relationships between managers' psychological stress and a) job satisfaction and b) well-being.

**Figure 1.** Model




## Methods

The questionnaire will have six parts and be administered via a Qualtrics panel. Robotic service usage can be measured by the negative attitudes towards robot's subscale, with 11 items with 5-point Likert scale for ratings (Weiss et al., 2014), sample items such as "I would feel nervous operating a robot in front of other people." Robotic service disruption used 5 items from Madsen and Gregor (2000). Sample items such as "I can rely on the robot to function properly." An 8-item workplace stress scale will be used to quantify stress (Marlin Company, 2009), sample item "I feel that my job is negatively affecting my physical or emotional well-being." The general satisfaction scale, developed by Noordin & Jusoff, has 7 items that can be used to measure job satisfaction (2009), sample items such as "All in all, how satisfied are you with your job?" Well-being can be measured through the 5-item by Topp et al. (2015), sample items such as "… I have felt cheerful and in good spirits." Collaborate leadership style can be measured by-16 item scale from Maalouf (2019), sample items such as "Management in our company promotes teamwork rather than individual decision making". The data will be analyzed with PROCESS Macro 15 (Hayes, 2013).

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# Using Plant-Based Food Substitutes for Fat in Butter Cookies: An Innovative Culinary Approach

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## Abstract

Today's diners want "slightly healthier" menu. Most traditional bakery products contain high fat and cholesterol. Making bakery products healthier would be a good start to help decrease the risk of cardiovascular diseases. However, to prepare a low fat, low cholesterol, and delicious product may be a challenge to culinary professionals. This study investigated the ideal weight ratio of fat and cholesterol replacement in butter cookies by using okra gum as a fat replacer.

**Keywords:** fat substitutes, okra gum

## Introduction

Nearly 38% of US men and 40% of US women are classified as obese, and more than 70% of Americans are either overweight or obese, leading to an increase in the health problems such as cardiovascular disease (CVD), stroke, and hypertension (Flegal et al., 2016). Health concerns have led consumers worldwide to reduce consumption of food perceived as high in fat and cholesterol, which has led the demand in the international market for new food ingredients providing not only the basic nutritional value but also benefits that can contribute to improve consumer well-being.

There has been a growing trend in developing lower calorie and low-fat products to combat the obesity issue. Wiese and Duffrin (2003) replaced vegetable shortening with paw paw fruit puree in plain shortened cake. Avocado has also proven beneficial to replace fat in cookies (Wekwete & Navder, 2008). Swanson and Munsayac (1999) tested the acceptability of fruit purees replacing fat in peanut butter, oatmeal, and chocolate chip reduced-fat cookies. Adair and Gate (2001) used legume pastes as a fat replacer in peanut butter cookies. Due to diverse binding properties, plant gums such as agar, gum acacia, and carrageenan were used throughout the frozen dessert industry as emulsifiers and stabilizers in regular and lower-fat products (Bennion and Scheule, 2000; Williams, 2000). Few studies have tested plant gums as fat and cholesterol substitutes, even though several studies showed that plant gums and their derivatives can be added to food as a fat replacer due to their diverse binding properties (Williams, 2000).

Okra is a flowering plant in the mallow family. Okra gum derived from the immature pods of okra plant is widely used in several cuisines as a thickening agent (Wikimedia, 2008). Romanchik-Cerpovicz (2002) reported that okra gum is an acceptable fat replacer in chocolate bar cookies. However, the use of okra gum as fat replacers in rolled cookies has not been tested and evaluated. Since rolled cookies have different characteristics from bar cookies, okra gum might work in a different way in rolled cookies. In addition, the replacement ratio of using okra gum as a fat replacer was neither determined nor formulated in the past studies, which may cause difficulties in the applications.

Butter cookie is a typical type of rolled cookies prepared from a dense cookie dough that is rolled out flat onto a counter and cut into the desired shapes. One serving size (28.35 gram) of butter cookie contains nearly 133 calories and 36% of the calories are from fat. Unlike the chocolate bar cookies, butter cookies do not have external ingredients that contain high amounts of fat other than the butter itself. This will make it easier to reduce the overall fat content of the cookies as well as make the results of this experiment more reliable. Therefore, this study will test the acceptability of okra gum as a plant-based fat replacer in butter cookies.

## Methods

### *Preparation of Roll Batter Cookies (Butter Cookies)*

This study investigated the ideal weight ratio of fat replacement in butter cookie by using okra gum as a fat replacer. In addition, to produce a low fat and low cholesterol product, ninety-five percent of the original egg content was replaced by the okra gum in this study. The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Quantity Recipes for School Foodservice was adapted to produce butter cookies in this study. Based on the formula of the USDA Recipes and the recommendation of Brown (2014), an overall dry to moist ingredient ratio of 2:1 was developed and applied to produce a cookie dough with acceptable handling characteristics. Thus, as the quantity of okra gum increased, the amount of egg was reduced. Four cookie doughs, including one full-fat dough (control; 0 % replacement), two reduced fat doughs (50% and 75% fat replacement), and one fat-free dough (100% fat replacement), were produced by replacing fat with different quantity of okra gum. The acceptability of the reduced fat and low cholesterol butter cookies prepared with okra gum was compared to the high-fat butter cookie in this study.

### *Procedures of Multisampling Difference Test*

To test the validity and reliability of the survey questionnaire, a preliminary study was conducted to 64 participants. A self-administered sensory evaluation questionnaire was provided to each participant for evaluating each sample product for the flavor, texture, color, and moistness. In this taste evaluation, cookies were coded Dotted Sprinkle (100% fat replacement), Star (75% fat replacement), Green Sprinkle (50% fat replacement), and Plain (control; 0% fat replacement). Four different cookies were packaged with the survey bar code and given to the participants. Distilled water was provided between each tasting to refresh the palate of the participants. A 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly unacceptable) to 5 (strongly acceptable) was used to evaluate the acceptability on each attribute.

### *Data Analysis*

Data will be analyzed by compiling the results in chart form. The results will show the mean scores of each product based on the four quality attributes. ESHA Food Processing Software will be used to determine the nutritional information for each product based on total calories, calories from fat, carbohydrates, protein, saturated fat, and calcium content.

One way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) techniques (IBM SPSS version 21, 2015) will be conducted to compare the mean scores of the four batches to determine the differences of the sensory characteristics and acceptability. A probability of equal or less than .05 will be considered significant. Scheffe post hoc multiple comparisons will be conducted to test all possible pair-wise differences in a set of means if the results of ANOVA analysis indicate statistically significant differences among the sample products.

## Expected Results

Results of this study will provide a gateway into further research with okra gum as a fat replacer in bakery products. Additionally, it could provide manufacturers with an incentive to enhance their formulas so that they can be used more rigorously as a fat replacer. Further development of reduced-fat butter cookies would provide consumers with healthier options, which is one baby step in improving the American diet.

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# How Do Online Meal Delivery Platforms Impact Restaurant Employees?

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## Abstract

Although hospitality research has examined the impact of online meal delivery platforms (OMDPs) on consumers, it has not thoroughly examined their impact on restaurant employees. Drawing on the job crafting theory, this study examines the attitudes, turnover intention, job satisfaction, and exhaustion caused by OMDPs. Theoretically, this study explores the antecedent of job crafting and measures OMPDs' impacts on restaurant employees. Practically, this study provides restaurant managers insight into the impact of OMDPs on employees.

**Keywords:** online meal delivery platforms, job crafting, attitude, turnover intentions, job satisfaction, exhaustion

## Introduction

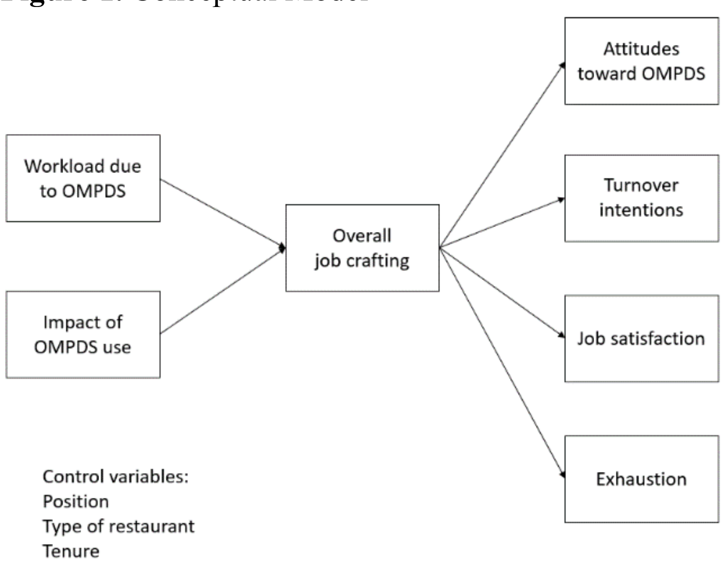
The COVID-19 pandemic led to a rapid marketplace acceptance of online meal delivery platforms (OMDPs) like UberEats (Chiappetta, 2020). These delivery services allow restaurants to increase their revenue and capacity (Niu et al., 2021), however, the cost of OMDPs often cuts into the already slim profit margin of these restaurants (Li et al., 2020). The increase in orders also increases the workload for both back-of-house and front-of-house employees (Wang et al., 2022). While hospitality researchers have examined consumer behavior in this area, including examinations of how COVID-19 impacted the use of OMDPs (Belarmino et al., 2021), they have yet to examine the impact of OMDPs on restaurant employees. This study proposes to close this research gap by examining how the impact and workload changes caused by OMDPs affect restaurant employees' attitudes towards OMDPs, turnover intentions, job satisfaction, and exhaustion via job crafting. By using the lens of conservation of resources theory (Hobfoll, 2001) and activation theory (Gardner & Cummings, 1988), this study will provide researchers with a foundation for a new line of inquiry while providing important information for restaurateurs.

## Literature Review

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the food delivery market has more than doubled in the U.S. (Ahuja et al., 2021). The rise of OMDPs (e.g. UberEats) has significantly impacted how restaurants operate and increased the toll on restaurant employees. Cooks have more orders; managers and front-of-the-house employees must now deal with food delivery drivers while accommodating their dine-in customers (Ahuja et al., 2021). According to the conservation of resources theory (Hobfoll, 2001), individuals are motivated to protect, sustain, and create resources in order to achieve desired outcomes. Workload and use of different systems can deplete employees' energy, leading to serious work-related stress and burnout, which can influence the need to balance resources; this is how job crafting takes place (Wang et al., 2016). Job crafting can be understood as proactive changes that employees make to balance demands and job resources to accommodate their abilities and needs (Tims et al., 2012). Rudolph et al. (2017) found workload and job satisfaction to be significantly and positively correlated with job crafting. Job crafting has been found to be a coping mechanism for gig workers to enhance their task identity, task significance, and meaningful work (Verelst et al., 2022). Although some studies explored the impact of OMDPs on food delivery drivers (Lee et al., 2022), researchers have yet to examine the impact of OMDPs on restaurant employee's job crafting and related outcomes. Therefore, it is critical to explore antecedents and outcomes of job crafting to understand how employees proactively make changes to balance OMDPs demands with the available resources at work to accommodate their abilities and needs. As employees engage in job crafting, their attitudes toward may OMDPs change. For example, frontline employees are the central decision-makers, managing and evolving the ever-changing nature of innovative technology, like OMDPs, with little to no acquired skills (Yadav, 2020). Employees may feel empowered to foster job crafting through problem-solving and creativity due to their dynamic capabilities and innovative behaviors (Yadav, 2020). Additionally, as employees change their job characteristics to achieve an outcome, they may experience significant impacts on job satisfaction, positive or negative (Warr & Inceoglu, 2012). Adversely, with OMDPs increasing restaurant sales by 20% (Ahuja et al., 2021), employees may not be able to efficiently job craft, increasing turnover intention (Vermooten et al., 2019) and exhaustion (Petrou et al., 2015). According to the activation theory (Gardner & Cummings, 1988), when employees experience an abnormal activation level compared to their normal level of activation, job stress occurs. Petrou et al. (2015) found the impact of organizational change to be significantly associated with police officers' exhaustion. Figure 1 shows the proposed conceptual model. Therefore:

- **$H_1$:** Job crafting mediates the relationship between workload due to OMDPs and (a)attitudes toward OMDPs, (b)turnover intentions, (c)job satisfaction, and (d)exhaustion.
- **$H_2$:** Job crafting mediates the relationship between the impact of OMDPs use and (a)attitudes toward OMDPs, (b)turnover intentions, (c)job satisfaction, and (d)exhaustion.

**Figure 1.** Conceptual Model




## Methods

Survey with 400 employees that work for restaurants offering OMDPs will be conducted via Mturk. Being a restaurant employee will be used as a qualifier to select U.S. respondents employed in the food and beverage industry. Participants will also be screened based on current/recent employer OMDPs availability, and will be asked to answer the survey with this employer in mind. Participants will be asked to answer questions related to these research variables (Table 1) as well as basic demographics. Also, position (front vs. back of the house), type of restaurant, and tenure will be asked and used as control variables, as the positive or negative effect of job crafting on the outcome variables (e.g., job crafting→attitudes toward OMDPs) may change based on such aspects. Attention checks will be asked to ensure data quality. A pilot test will be conducted to test measures' validity and reliability. Data will be analyzed using PLS-SEM due to this study's complex and predictor nature.

**Table 1.** Research Measures

| Antecedent | Scale Items (number) | Source |
|---|---|---|
| Workload | 5 items | Caplan et al. (1975) |
| Impact of use and attitudes towards OMDPs | Impact of use – 1 item<br>Attitudes – 4 items | Wanberg & Banas (2000) -Impact of use<br>Wang et al. 2020 - Attitudes |
| Job crafting | Seeking resources – 4 items<br>Seeking challenges – 3 items<br>Reducing demands – 4 items | Petrou et al. (2012) |
| Exhaustion | 6 items | Demerouti et al. (2003) |
| Turnover intentions | 3 items | Mobbely et al. (1978) |
| Job Satisfaction | 5 items | Johlke & Duhan (2000) |
| Job position | 1 item | New to this study |

## Proposed Outcomes/Implications

This study adds to the previous literature on the use of OMDPs (Chiappetta, 2020; Belarmino et al., 2021), which only examined customer and food delivery drivers' perceptions in this area. This research pioneers measuring the impact of OMPDs on restaurant employees. It further provides information on employee engagement in job crafting in the OMDPs context and establishes consequences of employees' attitudes towards OMPDs, their job attitudes, and exhaustion levels caused by OMPDs. Additionally, this study will add to resources theory (Hobfoll, 2001) and activation theory (Gardner & Cummings, 1988). It will provide researchers with a base for a new line of investigation. This study further affords information to restaurant managers about how workload changes and the alteration in the nature of restaurant work caused by OMPDs affects restaurant employees' attitudes towards OMPDs, turnover intentions, job satisfaction, and exhaustion via job crafting. This permits managers to adjust H.R. approaches, which allow employees to balance OMDPs demands and available resources to accommodate their abilities and needs. Employees will be able to better serve customers and society as a whole.

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# Roundtable Discussion Track

# Redesigning Higher Education for Inclusivity: A Hospitality and Tourism Discussion

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## Abstract

This 50-minute roundtable will begin with a brief discussion examining inclusivity within the industry. The discussion will then be applied to higher education with an example provided from a university and their department-wide Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access (DEIA) policies and Indigenous Content inventories. The duration of the session will be a guided discussion and application on how these inclusivity concepts should be applied to higher education, both now and in the future.

**Keywords:** inclusivity, diversity, higher education, pedagogy

## Main Body

"Inclusivity" – a strategic workplace buzzword or essential concept? If you were to look up the definition of "inclusivity", the definitions are broad and varied, often differing by source. "The quality of state of being inclusive" (Merriam-Webster), "including all types of people, things, or ideas and treating them all fairly and equally" (Cambridge Dictionary), "the fact or policy of not excluding members or participants on the grounds of gender, race, class, sexuality, or disability" (Dictionary.com), "welcoming, developing, and advancing a diverse mix of individuals" (northwestern.edu), and "deliberate attempts to involve everyone" (Macmillan Dictionary), are just a few definitions. The real question we need to ask is…what is the essential root of this word? Is it a feeling of belonginess, it is focused on inclusion, or maybe the concept of not excluding, or none of the above and the focus is on motivation? The answer as it currently stands is that there is no defined answer it would depend on what research article or google search you completed, what your search analytics decided to present in your personalized search results, and what your confirmation bias told you internally to choose.

The global hospitality and tourism industry has recognized the importance of this essential concept and international hospitality and tourism research has followed suit. Although very few of these academic research articles have been based in a United States setting, there are several international articles that tie this important concept to the United Nations 16 Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs). Goals 5 and 10 aim to reduce inequality experienced by minority groups and within countries, goal 8 aims to promote inclusive economic growth by providing decent work for all, and goal 16 promotes peaceful societies where people feel safe regardless of their differences. Due to the rise of this critical concept, hospitality and tourism inclusivity research is vast. Just within the last two years alone, this research spans topics to include gender representation and equality (Hon & Gamor, 2022; Appiah-Adjei, et al., 2022), the queer community (Ong, et al., 2021), race (Poitevien, 2021), culture (Codina & Colombo, 2022; Grubisic, et al., 2022), mobility (Mubaiwa, 2022), and disability (Niebla, 2021; Upson, et al., 2021).

In terms of academia, the university systems in the United States have been found to struggle in many areas surrounding inclusivity. This includes the concept of even discussing racism (Gonazales, et al., 2021), having homogenous boards and leadership demographics (Martinez-Acosta, 2018; Rall, et al., 2019), not adequately addressing socioeconomic inclusion during COVID and the shift to online education (Fung, et al., 2022), poor faculty training and awareness that has led to poor accommodations (Bunbury, 2020), amongst others.

Specific to hospitality and tourism education, there was only one article found in this sample set that discusses inclusivity specific to higher education in these industries (Liasidou, 2019). However, hospitality and tourism programs within higher education have been incorporating inclusivity in diverse ways that have simply not been academically published. This guided discussion will cover how some universities are including these concepts in course objectives for students, others within research initiatives, and even some department wide initiatives. We will share how DEIA and Indigenous Content inventories are being incorporated, how it is being taught in a wide variety of classes, and how it is being assessed on all levels. Some examples of this include role-playing activities, reflective exercises, case studies, debates, discussions, papers, journals, and custom-assignments per topic area. After these examples are shared, the discussion will open up to all attendees in the room to share what their universities are doing to add to a wider inventory to share on a broader scale for the benefit of all.

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# Roundtable Discussion: Hospitality Internship Learning: Do Assessment Methods Match Learning Objectives, Activities and Outcomes?

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## Abstract

This purpose of this interactive roundtable session is to stimulate discussion and provide information on current assessment practices of hospitality internship educational activities. Internship responses from an in-progress survey on internship experiential learning in hospitality will be shared. Participants will discuss questions relating to internship learning objectives, activities, outcomes, assessment methods and how they are linked to accreditation. It is hoped the session will contribute to better student outcomes and experiences in hospitality internship education.

**Keywords:** hospitality internship, learning objectives, assessment, accreditation.

## Overview

This multi-faceted roundtable seeks input on the assessment of internship learning in Hospitality. Internships are by their very nature, experiential. One definition of experiential learning posits it is a learning process of engagement where the student completes a task or does some type of work. The key is that they then must reflect on the experience (Kolb, 1984). Prior to the learning activity students learn concepts, then do a classroom activity to better understand the job, actually perform the job in industry and reflect on the task they performed. This is a version of an established educational, theoretical format. (Kolb and Kolb, 2005). Hospitality educators usually have great Bloom's taxonomy objectives for the first and second parts of the theory, but not so much for the concrete experience or the reflection. The roundtable will cover all facets of internships but also focuses on the reflection part or the assessment.

One definition of assessment is how specific information is obtained that is part of some type of objective, learning outcome, or goal (Gareis & Grant, 2008). Another discusses how outcomes are part of curriculum development and classes are designed to provide students the opportunity to learn. Established competencies must be mastered and document the specific context attainment in a leveled step form (Bisset, Cheng, & Brannan, 2009).

The Accreditation Commission for Programs in Hospitality Administration requires each student complete a relevant field experience (internship). Internships play major role in the development of management skills and they are utilized to measure what if any deficiencies students might have (Kristen, Stansbie and Sciarini, 2017). Programs are required to detail methods of assessment, learning outcomes and current assessment plans with formative and summative metrics which evaluate achievements of learning outcomes. It is important to compare learning outcomes with industry partners perceptions of needed professional competencies (Muller, VanLeeuwen, Mandabach, and Harrignton, 2009).

There are very few studies focused on the assessment process in hospitality internships. One study found, formal or informal communication strategies between educators, employers about the learning outcomes and the assessment process is complicated but facilitates the learning process during internship experiences. A structured internship assessment plan improves student success by guiding students to focus on building valuable competencies and provides an opportunity for reflection on the internship experience (Nyanjom, Goh & Chang, 2020). Another study found students value detailed employer evaluation of their internship performance over grades and prioritized the need for more effective collaboration between universities and workplace supervisors. It also posited that student internship experiences are negatively impacted by the lack of industry input and feedback into the design of learning outcomes and assessment processes (Ha &Dakich, 2022). A final study asserts that student internships are an essential component to graduate success in industry but that the internship experience vary greatly from property to property. The educator and the employers should formalize the components of the internship workplace experience (Pusrian, Janin, Ismail and Dalinting, 2020).

The purpose of this roundtable is to provide information on the assessment processes used for experiential learning and to gain insight from participants about their internship programs. The roundtable session stresses the importance of assessment to student success in industry. Results from an initial survey in progress will be shared. The questions from the survey will serve as a starting point for the discussion.

After a brief overview of the survey responses to the questions below are shared, participants in the roundtable will reflect and share their knowledge. The conversation will be guided by but not limited to the following questions:

*General Structure of Internships:* What types of internship learning activities or classes, credits are required? How many hours are required for the internships? Are the students paid or volunteers? Is the internship optional or required? How are internship employers approved by the program? How do students find the internships?

*Outcomes and Assessments:* Does your program have standardized experiences and outcomes for the internships? Are they shared with employers or students? Are the outcomes integrated into university or college outcomes? Do you have standardized assessment methods for internships? Is a rubric used for grading? Are students graded by the university, the employer or a mix of both? Are the students required to evaluate their employer? How do you measure student satisfaction with the internship process and employers?

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# Can F&B Training Facilities Survive the Shifts of Hospitality Education Into the Coming Years?

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**Abstract**

The purpose of this roundtable discussion is to converse on how issues of the declining students, increased costs of having a F&B training facility, and students demanding more flexibility in higher education, may lead to alter F&B training facilities and operations in general. The discussion is to be built around what that could look like going forward at different universities. This roundtable is intended for F&B based faculty, department heads, and/or deans with F&B facilities that are embedded in the curriculum.

**Keywords:** food and beverage, practical training, funding, FTE issues

**Main Body**

In university level education the most common practical training conducted by the department or college within hospitality and tourism is food and beverage (F&B). For simplicity, this paper will refer to hospitality education which may encompass tourism, sports management, or parks and recreation. Research suggests that additional practical training can accelerate career advancement and opportunities through gaining experience (Harkison, et al 2011). These operations courses contain many frontline skills such as, supervisory and delegation skills, which are a requirement for higher-level supervisor/management training. F&B training within the classroom take on many forms at universities, for example student-run pop-ups, full-service dining, catering for the entire university. Some universities such as University of Houston have shifted their F&B training over the years to cater to newer F&B models.

Smith and MacKenzie (2021) wrote a book chapter titled *Food and Beverage Training Facilities within Hospitality Education: Operational and Managerial Nightmares.* As the title suggests, operating F&B within education is an operational nightmare and it is important to determine if the F&B is a lab or a restaurant. Running F&B training courses requires a significant amount of funding and depending on the model adopted, may operate at a profit or loss. A lab puts education first, the issue with a lab is funding for equipment upkeep and general oversight (someone needs to be compensated). If the F&B is a restaurant, profits come first, but keeps the facility in good working order. Smith and MacKenzie (2021) concluded with that these practical training courses and facilities help develop soft skills such as, working in teams, problem-solving, motivation, and communication skills.

Hospitality education has been in decline since 2012 and in 2020 due to the COVID-19, the industry saw a mass exodus of workers leaving hospitality for new opportunities, hospitality education has seen a sharp drop off as well (Ricci, 2022). Prior to COVID-19 there had already begun a shift of hospitality programs going into the business school, in fact, Cornell the oldest and arguably the most prestigious moved the Hotel School into the SC Johnson College of Business after the Board of Trustees voted in 2016 to aid in shift (Foderaro, 2016). Practical facilities require a big investment and maintenance. However, with the drastic decline of students and shifting away of schools of colleges of hospitality into colleges of business, more pressure is being felt on these practical training investments. It is important to note that traditional business colleges do not typically have practical training facilities which may make it difficult to see the value in having one. For example, at San Francisco State University, the dean of the business college asked the training restaurant to be self-sustaining including lecturer pay which changed the landscape of their facility.

Now in 2022, students are now more than ever demanding more flexibility to education and wanting more courses and programs online. This again puts another shift away from practical training conducted on-site at the university as it is difficult to offer flexibility and online while trying to conduct any kind of F&B operation. Going forward hospitality education needs to shift. F&B practical courses have and still are being heavily utilized in general hospitality education. However, with the declining students, increased costs of having a F&B training facility, and students demanding more flexibility in higher education, hospitality education may need to reshape F&B training facilities. This roundtable discussion is to discuss how practical F&B training is shifting at different universities.

## Roundtable Discussion

This roundtable is intended for F&B based faculty, department heads, and/or deans with F&B facilities that are embedded in the curriculum. The conversation will start with general introductions. Participants will be asked to introduce how F&B is taught in their curriculum and if there is a practical component, who oversees the facilities and where does the money come from to maintain the facilities? Then the facilitator will discuss the changing modality styles of teaching and the declining enrollment of students, concluding with potential loss of revenue flow for the department/college. From there, the conversation will discuss how F&B training is shifting at different universities and why. The goal of this conversation is to discuss best practices and potential strategies to handle managing these expensive facilities into the future.

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# The Aesthetics of Music and Wine

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**Abstract**

The Aesthetics of Music and Wine, a well-supported and innovative experiential course. This workshop will open your palette to a special experience. Participants will not only lean about different wine styles, additionally how to make an event distinctive and memorable through choosing the appropriate music, pairing the correct wine that enriches the overall atmosphere and experience. Therefore, this workshop will highlight nuances the dining experience as experienced by local and international diners which has an important significance in today's global hospitality and event industry.

**Keywords:** cross-modality, music, wine

## Introduction

Olfactory sensations are not only a question of taste but depend on the interaction between the five classical senses, sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch (Stillman, 2002), which do not work in isolation but often work simultaneously (cross-modality) to evoke a sense of reliving a memory or nostalgic thought. A single sound or melody can remind you of an event or special time in your life. In the same way, a good wine experience can take you back to a nostalgic memory, our hearing can also play an important role in the taste perception and enjoyment of the occasion. A soft, light sparkling composition can make a wine taste soft, light and sparkling, mellow music, the wine actually tastes mellow, whereas a big bold wine will seem out of place unless paired with a lively soundtrack or live bold courageous music.

There have been a number of researchers who have discussed the influence of auditory stimuli on the tasting experience and used musical metaphors when describing wines, such as Crisinel et al. 2012, Spence & Wang, 2015 and Wang, Mesz, & Spence, (2017). Crisinel et al. (2012), also suggested the mapping of specific notes (or soundscapes) onto particular tastes, flavor and aroma. The effects that music genres have on wine styles although in its infancy has been research by Spence, & Deroy. (2013) Spence, & Wang. (2015). Wang, & Mesz, & Spence. (2017) also further identified and discussed by De Luca, Campo, & Lee, R. (2019) and Rightsify Group LLC (2020). These studies reflected, that people typically pick lower-pitched tones as matching (or corresponding with) bitter tastes while reporting that higher-pitched sounds provide a better match for sweet tastes. Thus, it is very meaningful and significant to explore this expanding interest and area of music and wine that combines to enhance a more memorable dining experience. From classic rock to classical, you can pair music's biggest genres with a wine style that results in perfect harmony.

The diverse cultural heritage and climatic variations have given rise to a country's unique history, heritage and traditions reflected in their wines and indigenous folk music. Through gaining further knowledge from different wine producing countries and identified regions, specific history, heritage and cultural music can be woven into the continued research that will orchestrate from this development. Combining entertainment and hospitality will further enrich this area of study while reinforcing innovative ways to enhance the overall dining experience. The value of this experimental and important theme to be undertaken will only improve the opportunity for future industry leaders and experts in areas such as event management, restaurant managers hotel and resort managers.

The opportunity to attend this workshop will heighten your overall experiences and the connection between playing the appropriate music, pairing the correct wine applicable to special occasions, such as family gatherings, dining, and at large indoor/outdoor venues. Attendees will not only identify different music genres and different wine styles, additionally how to make an occasion distinctive and memorable through choosing the correct music, pairing the correct wine that enriches the overall atmosphere and experience.

This structured workshop delves into the bond wine and music have shared for centuries. You will discover the art of "pairings" exploring questions like: why a good Pinot Noir might become more vibrant while listening to Mozart's "Eine Kleine Nachtmusik"; why an oaked Chardonnay dances on the palette to Ella Fitzgerald's "St. Louis Blues"; and how a big California Cabernet Sauvignon is boldly complemented by Jimi Hendrix's "All Along the Watchtower." From classic rock to classical, you can pair music's biggest genres with a wine style that results in perfect harmony.

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# Undergraduate Research Track

# Tourism Planning and Strategic Placemaking: First Impressions Program

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## Abstract

The overarching goal of this research was to develop and validate a tool for communities to facilitate First Impressions programming that would lead to actionable placemaking and tourism plans for rural areas. This community and economic development tool consisted of an exploratory phase and confirmative phase which included a search for dimensions and items, a pilot test, and two field studies within communities.

**Keywords:** tourism, tool development, strategic planning, economic development

## Introduction

When it comes to marketing and tourism, rural towns and counties can market effectively and capture their share of tourists. However, if the towns and counties are willing to work with nearby communities to create themed multi-day stay packages – this results in a much larger share of tourists (and often from further distances) for all involved. This requires an important shift in mindset under this strategy away from the historical marketing strategy of being location focused (i.e., advertising anything and everything a location has to offer) to being user persona focused. This is accomplished by focusing on themes that a particular visitor would be interested in and will travel for, even if it transcends across town or county lines.

Unfortunately, not all towns believe this or are sold on the concept of combining efforts with nearby towns. We have found a metaphor that seems to resonate with most towns as we begin talking about this tourism approach: if you (rural town) worked hard to make your pie and you want to keep your pie all to yourself, then you are reluctant to let go of it. If you work with nearby communities, then you only get a piece of the pie, but that single piece of pie is significantly larger than the entire pie you started with. This equates to larger and more diversified tourism possibilities. This visual metaphor helps the community realize that they want a piece of the larger tourism pie and not just a smaller tourism pie for themselves.

The purpose of this research was to create a validated tool to measure First Impressions of a community from a tourist perspective. This idea is similar to secret shopping within a hotel or restaurant – the town has undercover tourists who visit the town, go to the tourism office and ask questions, visit the shops and downtown area, eat at restaurants, and do activities. Additionally, they do pre-visit work online by searching for the destination, looking at reviews and social media, and planning their trip. This research project created, piloted, and implemented this tool.

## Methods

The methods utilized in this research were modeled after Pijls, et al. in their article "Measuring the experience of hospitality: Scale development and validation". This research does an excellent job of taking an abstract concept, ie. “experience of hospitality” and defining and measuring it. This is similar to the concept of the “experience of tourism” and this article helped to model the structure of the methodology. While the former article was creating a solitary scale and this research is developing an entire screening tool, the methods were transferable.

Phase one included exploring the concept, content validity, and item generation. This item generation came from existing research studies (Folgado-Fernandez, et al, 2019; Fytopoulou, et al, 2021; Hsu, et al., 2020; Kadar, et al, 2022; Kaplanidou, et al., 2012; Lopez-Sanz, et al., 2021; Peters, et al, 2011; Qu & Cheer, 2021) and existing tourism scales used within extension programming at Michigan State University. The written tool was checked and feedback was provided from seven faculty members and five community members for consistency and flow before being implemented in the pilot study.

The pilot study was conducted by six professionals from a wide variety of industries (marketing, hotel, food and beverage, entrepreneurship, agriculture, retail), age ranges (19-63), demographics (male, female, non-binary) and marital statuses. They all completed the pre-trip evaluations (ie researching and planning their trip), traveling to the destination (all were within two hours of the location), experiencing the destination, and leaving. Feedback was given on the tool itself from all participants and then the tool was modified based on preliminary analyses and this feedback.

Feedback included putting the pre-work research in an online format instead of written, making the tool a half page size book instead of full page for ease of carrying around, and adjusting spacing for written feedback onsite. Several questions were moved around for flow. Three questions were eliminated as not necessary, five open-ended questions were reworded as the results received were not what was anticipated, and one section (quality of life) had additional questions added based on the preliminary exploratory factor analysis.

This revised document was then implemented into two communities in field studies. Analysis on the first community was conducted before the second community and no additional changes were made to the tool. The tool, including the pre-work and written space for notes, is approximately thirty half-pages long and is provided to assessors in a book format. The tool will be shared during this conference session.

**Conclusion**

The implementation of this extensive in-depth tool assists a destination in realizing their existing strengths, opportunities for growth, and weaknesses as seen through the eyes of the first-time visitor. This program includes a full analysis of a community’s online presence by potential visitors before they choose to visit a location, an onsite evaluation, and post-visit reflections. The program is focused on tourism and marketing aspects of the destination/host community and leads to location-based narratives for storytelling, tourism strategy, and strategic placemaking.

Building from these efforts, community training, co-creation of programming and community visioning, tourism strategies and marketing frameworks are developed within the community. Drawing together these strategies and frameworks, a placemaking plan will be developed. Based on final outcomes and drawing from ongoing evaluation, a comprehensive evaluation of the community is completed and presented back to the community.

Key to this project is the establishment of a baseline of tourism and quality of life assets. The anticipated impact of this project will be a significantly improved quality of life across all measures, citizens passionate about investing their time and resources into their community, and diversified tourism and economic offerings that can help the community thrive.

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