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Exploring International Backpackers' Motivation,
Perceptions of the Youth Hostel, Service Quality, and
Destination Image in Taiwan

國際背包客對台灣青年旅舍服務品質及旅遊動機、旅遊
意象之探討

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摘要

根據世界旅遊組織 (Tourism, 2003)，全球 20% 的旅遊業來自青少年和學生市場。國際青年旅社是全世界最大的廉價住宿網絡，全世界有大約 3500 萬個房位連接到他們的網絡 (Chandrasekaran 和 Paterik, 2002)，2015 年國際背包客人數為 89,100 人。到 2016 年，背包客人數為 192400 人。這個急劇上升的趨勢表明，越來越多的國際背包客成為提升台灣旅遊業一個很好的管道。這項研究的目的是探討國際背包客的動機、旅遊意象和住宿的服務品質如何的相互影響。

在這項研究中，參與者的人數是 300 (男性：146；女性：154)。來自亞洲的填卷者有 204 人，美國有 58 人，歐洲有 36 人，非洲有 2 人。300 名填卷者中有 212 人來台觀光。在表 4.1 中，83 位填卷者希望擴大他們的世界觀 (平均數= 4.45)；280 名填卷者想要體驗異國文化 (平均數= 4.43)，278 名填卷者想要享受豐富的生活經驗 (平均數= 4.44)。此外，260 名填卷者想結識來自不同國家的朋友 (平均數= 4.25)。以上所有因素都說明了他們為什麼想成為國際背包客。表 4.1 和 4.1.1 顯示，國際背包客的動機和異國旅行 ($p = .000$) $< .05$ 是有統計上的顯著性。表 4.2 的結果顯示文化適應 ($\beta = .413$, $t = 16.744$, p 值 < 0.5) 和動機 ($\beta = .344$, $t = 12.262$, p 值 < 0.5) 是有統計上的顯著性。在這項研究中，旅遊意象和住宿是有統計上的顯著性。這意味著這些填卷者對「美味的食物」、「友善」和「美麗的景點」感到滿意。總之，住宿品質對旅遊意象有很大的影響，它可以反映出遊客對旅遊地點的感受 (Hu and Bai, 2013)。總而言之如圖三所示，動機、服務品質、旅遊意象、文化適應是有相互影響且具有中度相關 (因四個變項的 r 值全部大於 .50)。結果建議，在背包客的旅行生涯中，獨立性、自助旅遊、經驗性及個人社會成長為背包客旅遊生涯中之動力，此以馬斯洛的需求分析為依據。此外，本研究提供對所有背包客旅遊動機之核心價值。青年旅館可能是國際背包客被視為生活的選擇之一。茲因在旅舍中他們可以遇見新朋友，探索任何文化及獲得同儕的不同資訊。此研究顯示地點乾淨、員工、安全與設施，是背包客選擇旅舍的主要因素。

關鍵詞：國際背包客、世界觀、旅遊意象、住宿、跨文化認知

Exploring International Backpackers' Motivation Perceptions of the Youth Hostel Service Quality and Destination Image in Taiwan

Abstract

According to the World Travel Organization (Tourism, 2003), 20% of all tourism worldwide is from the youth and student market. The Hosteling International, the largest low budget accommodation network in the world, maintains that there are approximately 35 million hotel beds connected to their network worldwide (Chandresekaran and Paterik, 2002). The number of international backpackers in 2015 was 89,100. Until 2016, the number of backpackers was 192,400.

This sharp increase reveals that the growing number of international backpackers can be a good channel to enhance the tourism industry in Taiwan. This purpose of this study is to explore how international backpackers' motivation, destination image and accommodation service quality are influenced with one another. In this study, the number of participants was 300 (males:146; females: 154). There were 204 participants from Asia, 58 participants from America, 36 participants from Europe, and 2 from Africa. 212 out of 300 participants came to Taiwan for sightseeing. In Table 4.1, 83 participants would like to broaden their world views (Mean score=4.45); 280 participants experienced exotic culture (Mean score= 4.43), and 278 participant enjoyed enriching their life experience (Mean score =4.44). In addition, 260 participants would like to get to know friends from different countries (Mean score=4.25). All of the above factors show the reason why they would like to be international backpackers. Tables 4.1 and 4.1.1. show that international backpackers' motivations and traveling in exotic overseas were statistically significant because of p-value ($p=.000$) $<.05$. This result shown in Table 4.2 indicates that cultural adaptation ($\beta=.413$, $t=16.744$, $P<0.5$) and motivation ($\beta=.344$, $t=12.262$, $P<0.5$) were statistically significant. In this study, destination image and accommodation were statistically significant. This implies that those participants were satisfied

with 'delicious food', 'friendliness' and beautiful sights. In a sense, the accommodation quality can have a great influence on their destination image, which can represent how tourists feel about a destination (Hu and Bai, 2013). In summary, as shown in Figure 3, motivation, service quality, destination image, and cultural adaption are interrelated. Results suggest that motivations of independence, budget travel, experiential, and personal/social growth are dynamic throughout the backpacker's travel career, which is based on Maslow's needs analysis.

Furthermore, this study provides valuable insight into what is at the core of all backpackers' travel motivation. Hostels could be considered as a lifestyle choice for international backpackers who want to meet new friends, explore any cultures, and gain different information from their peers. This study reveals that location, cleanliness, staff, security and facilities are the major factors of choosing the hostels for backpackers even though their budgets are limited.

Keywords: international backpackers, global views, destination image, accommodation, cross-cultural awareness

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Introduction

Background

International backpackers have been increasing every year throughout the world. Due to low air ticket fares, inexpensive accommodation, easy access to public transport, low-cost and independent travelers can carry their backpackers in overseas countries. In this global market, international backpackers can go to nearby countries or remote areas to experience exotic cultures which are different from their conventional travel. The backpackers can be regarded as international nomadic people who can work or travel everywhere so that they can meet different people from different cultures. The lifestyles and work patterns have been changed to meet the travelers' different needs. Therefore, nowadays backpacker travel has been transformed to address the varying needs of participants. The globalization naturally leads to political and cultural changes (O'Reilly, 2006).

According to the World Travel Organization (Tourism, 2003), 20% of all tourism worldwide is from the youth and student market. The Hostelling International, the largest low budget accommodation network in the world, maintains that there are approximately 35 million hotel beds connected to their network worldwide (Chandresekaran and Paterik, 2002). Until now, the number of youth budget traveling has been sharply going up. It is worth noticing for youth market segment throughout the world. Undoubtedly, hotels and B& B have been popping up in the popular market that combines different products such as accommodation service and catering service.

Based upon the survey from Airbnb (2017), international backpackers who enjoyed coming to Taiwan for traveling were from China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, America, Japan, Maocau, the Philipines, and Australia in an ordinal order. They loved to stay in youth hostels where they are full of multicultural and unique characteristics. The places they stayed at were not only in big cities but also rural areas, including remote islands. The reason why they enjoyed staying at youth hostels was to experience natural beauty of Taiwan and do in-depth understanding of Taiwanese culture. The number of international backpackers in 2015 was 89,100. Until 2016, the number of backpackers was 192,400. This sharp increase reveals that the growing number of international backpackers can be a good channel to enhance the tourism industry in Taiwan.

In addition, with the increased competition for tourism investment and expenditure, product differentiation of the destination has been considered as an important part of a destination marketing strategy. Based upon the definition of destination image (DI), it has become an indispensable component in marketing efforts to differentiate a destination (Ekinci, 2003; Hosany et al., 2006). Gartner (1994) examined the formation of DI. He stated that DI is made up of cognitive, affective

and conative components. Based upon his statement, cognitive and affective variables involve “knowledge and beliefs about a destination as well as emotions, feelings and attachments towards a destination” (p. 71). McCleary (1999) also defines DI as cognitive, affective and global constructs. The latter is involved in “the global impression about an object and destination” (p. 870). Therefore, DI requires embracing of wider social-cultural understanding of the tourism phenomenon (Tribe, 2008; Tribe and Xiao, 2011).

This purpose of this study is to explore how international backpackers’ motivation, destination image and accommodation service quality are influenced with one another.

Research Questions

1. What are international backpackers’ motivations while traveling in exotic overseas countries?
2. Are cultural adaptation variable and backpackers’ motivation statistically significant?
3. Are destination image and accommodation service quality statistically significant?
4. Are backpackers’ satisfied with their destination image of Taiwan
5. What did the participants encounter while traveling in oversea countries?

The Significance of This Study

Most of the studies on international backpackers focus on their motivations or hostel accommodation. Little study focuses on the relationship among backpackers’ motivation, destination image, accommodation, and cultural adaptation. This study can be a signal for scholars or hospitality industry employers that can call attention to what international backpackers need, want, and their coping strategies in cultural adaptation.

Literature Review

Pearce (1990) defines backpackers as a group of young generation with a preference for budget accommodation, meeting other travelers, flexible itineraries, and informal holidays. Based upon Forbes (2013), today's young travelers would like to enrich themselves with cultural experiences, to meet new people and local people and improve their comprehensive world views. As a result, the number of young travelers going abroad has become one of the fastest emergent economic segments in the world. According to Forbes' survey in 2012, 217 billion of 1 trillion of tourism income spent worldwide emerges from the expenses of young tourists. This naturally has become a global trend for young generation in this global market.

When people turn their holidays into long life journeys, they have become a part of an important personal diary of experiences. Through travelling, young people can produce an idea that an individual sees much of the world that turns into their knowledge in culture and understanding (Cohen, 2004).

Key Social and Behavioral Criteria of International Backpackers

Pearce (1990) also points out five key social and behavioral criteria of international backpackers: (a) low budget accommodation, (b) social interactions with locals and other backpackers, (c) flexible itinerary, (d) long period of stay and (e) participation in informal travel activities at destination. This indicates that young travelers are adventurous, adaptable, independent, knowledgeable as well as flexible with their travel schedule, and eager to participation. They are also culturally involved and would like to be active participants rather than observers during social cultural events.

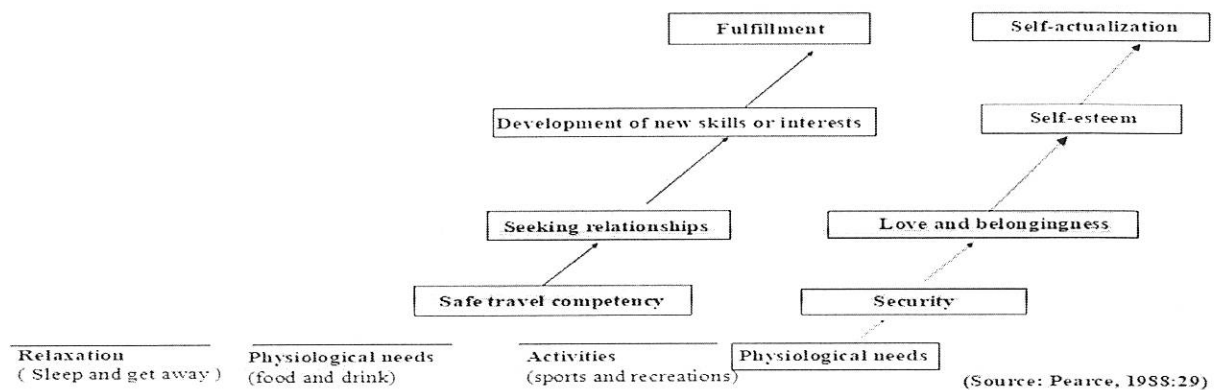


Figure 1: Pearce's Travel Career Ladder

International Backpackers' Motivation

Loker's motivation (1996) utilized Pearce's Model based upon career levels of backpackers by adopting Maslow's hierarchy of needs in Figure 1. The backpackers can be divided into categories: self-developers, social/excitement seekers, achievers and escapers/relaxers. This sheds light on varying stages of backpackers' travel career.

The travel behavior of young generation used to "set out an adventurous trip to experience the hidden, strange and exotic life of faraway countries and unknown people" (Loker-Murphy and Pearce, 1995, p. 820). This was referred to as an "educational finishing school" (Riley, 1988, p. 319). Nowadays, travel is a form of education, which is to increase one's worldliness, social awareness and sophistication (Loker-Murphy & Pearch, 1995). Thus, backpacking has become a mainstream and a popular form of tourism. Today, this is referred to as "Overseas Experience" (OE), where young adults seek to exert their independence through travel.

Self-satisfaction is an ongoing process for individuals in their daily lives, which drive their individual to face the expectations of a modern society (Ting and Kahl, 2016). Cohen (2004) also states that backpackers are seeking personal identify and personal growth during their journeys. In such circumstances, young generation seek deeper inner meanings in their lives and ask themselves who they are and what their lives mean to themselves. Obviously, self-satisfaction is one of important elements for backpackers in deciding their value of journeys.

Cross-cultural differences and Social Interaction

In a tourism context, cross-cultural differences may affect the perception of service quality, travel service, and holiday satisfaction (Paris and Musa, 2012). Hofstede (2001) states that culture is defined as shared social norms, common values and attitudes of a group. Culture exists as a global phenomenon, which backpackers are good examples of cultural differences because they mostly come from different countries. Naturally, backpackers can display cultural differences due to their basic ethnic culture which is unlikely to change during the course of backpacking (Hotoll, 2004).

Besides, social interaction with other backpackers and locals are a part of their daily lives. Maoz and Bekerman (2010) maintained that backpackers may talk to their fellow backpackers about their travel routes and backpacking experiences, especially for those who have the same nationality and language. Moreover, backpackers are able to maintain interaction with their personal networks virtually due to recent advances in social and mobile technologies (Germann Molz & Paris, in press).

Even though backpackers intend to learn about local culture (Paris & Teye, 2010), they often stay within their own backpacker bubble (Maoz & Bekerman, 2010). This is what backpackers have encountered in their backpacking culture.

Travel Image

Travel image refers to an individual's beliefs, thoughts and impressions about a certain area and provides tourists with a certain degree of anticipation (Fakeye & Crompton, 1991). It is the tourists' expectations of a destination. The image also influences tourists' choosing processes, the evaluation of a destination and future intentions (Bogne et al., 2001).

The backpackers have the preference for budget accommodation called Youth Hostels as the accommodation while traveling so that they can meet other backpackers and make the next plan for travel (Pearce, 1990). The characteristics of youth hostels are low-budget place, offering temporary accommodation, place that accommodates guests at both lower and higher standard of living, and being different from a hotel. Based upon Pietrasz's (2013) statement, youth hostels can be integrated as more homely, easygoing atmosphere, having common room for the guests where they can meet new friends and share their experiences, hospitality, events and friendly and helpful staff. These components can be a part of a youth traveler's experience.

Methodology

Participants

As shown in Table 3.1, the sample consisted of 51%(154)female participants and 49%(146)male participants. Most respondents were aged 21 years old to 25 years old (42%). Over 31% of respondents were 26 years old to 30 years old, and 35% (107) is student. Almost 60% of the respondents holding a bachelor's degree.

Regarding respondents' characteristics in Table 3.1, most respondents come to Taiwan including Asia (68%), America (19%) and Europe (12%) and so on. Additionally, the sources of international backpackers included the publicity from the university and communication media. As for the travel duration, nearly 80% of the respondents stay 1 week, almost 14% of the respondents stay 1-3 months. During visited Taiwan period, nearly 71% of respondents do tourism and 12% of respondents visit relatives of friend.

Table 3.1 Summary Table of Demographic Variables

Demographic variables	<i>n</i>	%
Gender		
Male	146	49%
Female	154	51%
Nationalities		
Asia	204	68%
Europe	36	12%
America	58	19%
Africa	2	1%
Ages		
Under 20	40	13%
21~25	122	42%
26~30	94	31%
31~40	34	11%
41~50	6	2%
Above 50	4	1%
Careers		
Agriculture, forestry, fishery and animal husbandry	19	6%
Transportation industry	10	3%
Hospitality and Tourism	32	11%
Engineers	18	6%
Manufacturing industry	11	4%
Journalism	18	6%
The Hygienic Health Care	7	2%
Entertainment industry	8	3%
Information industry	8	3%
Ordinary commercial	30	10%

Service industry	24	8%
Soldiers	8	3%
Students	107	35%
Educational history		
High school	63	21%
University	180	60%
Graduate school	47	16%
Doctor of Philosophy	10	3%
Salary		
Under 3000US	108	36%
3001US~4000US	98	33%
4001US~5000US	54	18%
Above 5001US	40	13%
Total duration of trip		
1 week	238	80%
1~3 months	43	14%
4~6 months	19	6%
What's the purpose of your visit?		
Tourism	212	71%
Business	29	9%
Visit relatives or friends	36	12%
Study	23	8%

Instrumentation

Questionnaire was administered to 300 international backpackers from different parts of Asia and any other country. The questionnaire used 5-point Likert Scale. There were 43 closed-ended questions in the questionnaire.

Validity and Reliability

In a pilot study of 40 copies for a questionnaire, the Internal reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) of 5-point Likert scale items in the questionnaire was $0.969 > 0.75$. In the quantitative study of 300 copies, the internal reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) of 5-point Likert scale items in the questionnaire was $0.939 > 0.75$. The nearer the result was above 0.75; the more internally reliable was the scale. In addition, construct validity of all variables = $KMO > .50$ was essential to the perceived overall validity of the whole questionnaire. This view stated that it was essential to define exactly what we want to be looking for when we are testing something Factor Analysis was one of a set of theoretical concepts and their interrelations.

Data Collection Procedures

After the design of this questionnaire was completed, the research group members asked for help from our instructor to examine whether the contents of questionnaire were consistent with this topic. In order to check if the questionnaire was highly reliable, the members collected more than 40

surveys for our questionnaire such as "Google". Finally, we collected the data up to 40 copies as a pilot study. Due to a pilot study was highly reliable, we kept collecting the data by using website for our questionnaire such as "Google". During the members asked for help to fill out the questionnaire, we promoted to several international backpackers' groups by using Facebook. In early May the number of usable copies was 300 through different channels of collection.

Data Analysis

The data from the questionnaire was utilized Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Apart from this, check the relationship between two or more variables. Canonical correlation stepwise regression model, Pearson correlation, and descriptive statistics were utilized in this study.

Results

Research question 1: What are international backpackers' motivations while traveling in exotic overseas countries?

Table 4.1 International backpackers' motivations vs. traveling in exotic overseas

Root	Eigenvalue	Pct.	Cum. Pct.	Canon Cor.	Sq. Cor.	Wilks L	F	P
1	1.091	98.194	97.199	0.722	0.522	0.469	68.169	0
2	0.02	1.806	100.0	0.140	0.02	0.98	5.962	0.015

Table 4.1.1 International backpackers' motivations and traveling in exotic overseas countries

Control variable	Canon.	Cor.	Criterion variable	Canon.	Cor.
(X Variable)	χ^1	χ^2	(Y Variable)	η^1	η^2
Self-recognition	.586	0.536	Self-achievement	.929	.153
Self-fulfillment	-1.090	1.115	Self-adaptation	.174	-1.024
			P^2	.276	.141
			P	.526***	.376***
				(Canon Cor.)	

*** $p < .001$

The above tables show that international backpackers' motivations and traveling in exotic overseas were statistically significant because of p-value ($p = .000$) $< .05$. Please refer to Figure 2.

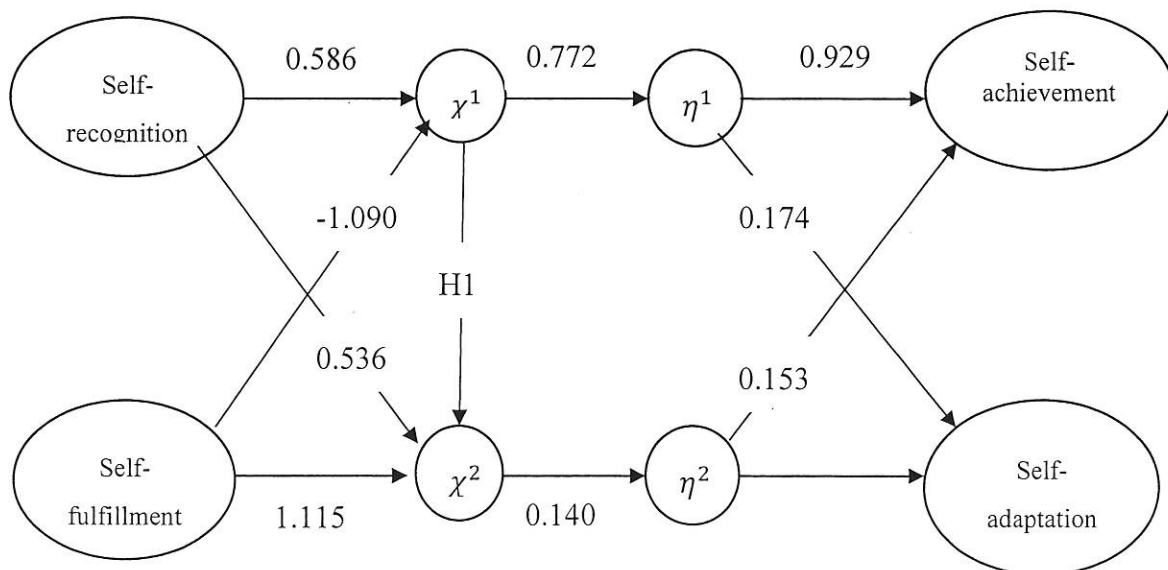


Figure 2 Canonical correlations of international backpackers' motivations and traveling in exotic overseas countries

The above Table 4.1 and 4.1.1 indicate that there was positively mild root (P^2) between International backpackers' motivations and traveling in exotic overseas. From the analysis of root for the two sets of variables, the first set of root coefficient and the second set of root coefficient were statistically significant. The first set of Wilk's L was .469; root coefficient was .722. The percent of eigenvalues was 98.194%. In addition, the second set of Wilk's L was .980; root coefficient was 140. Also the percent of eigenvalues for the second set was 1.806%. Therefore, International backpackers' motivations and traveling in exotic overseas were mildly correlated.

Table 4.1.2 Description of Participants' Motivation

Items	N	Mean	SD
to broaden the horizon	300	4.45	0.675
to enrich my life	300	4.44	0.689
to experience exotic culture	300	4.43	0.688
to make physical and mental happiness	300	4.35	0.690
to achieve my dream	300	4.34	0.715
to liberate yourself	300	4.27	0.757
to be able to meet foreign friends	300	4.25	0.786
to enjoy solitude	300	4.21	0.904
to pursuit global tourism trends	300	4.18	0.805

Table 4.1.2 shows what the most participants' motivations is, such as 'to broaden the horizon' (mean score=4.45), 'to enrich my life' (mean score=4.44). This implies that those participants want to be a backpacker because of 'to broaden the horizon' and 'to enrich their lives'.

Research question 2: Are cultural adaptation variable and backpackers' motivation statistically significant?

Table 4.2 Cultural Adaptation and Backpackers' Motivation

Models	R	R ²	Adjusted square	F(sig.)	β constant (.564)	t(Sig.) 11.787(.000)
1	.564 ^a	.318	.316	138.923(.000 ^a)	.413 (cultural adaptation)	16.744(.000)
2	.643 ^b	.413	.409	48.26(.000 ^b)	.344 (motivation)	12.262(.000)

Regression Model $Y=4.304+.413* \text{cultural adaptation} +.344* \text{motivation}$. This result shown in Table 4.2 indicates that cultural adaptation ($\beta=.413$, $t=16.744$, $p<0.5$) and motivation ($\beta=.344$, $t=12.262$, $p<0.5$) were statistically significant.

Research question 3: Are destination image and accommodation service quality statistically significant?

Table 4.3 Descriptive Statistics of Destination Image and Accommodation Service Quality

Items	N	Mean	SD
free Wi-Fi	300	4.34	0.765
cleanliness	300	4.33	0.668
easy access to the hostel	300	4.33	0.772
reasonable price	300	4.31	0.709
comfort	300	4.28	0.709
good guide map	300	4.28	0.774
good staff quality	300	4.23	0.749

Table 4.3 shows what the most participants are satisfied with destination image and accommodation service quality, such as 'cleanliness' (mean score=4.34), 'free Wi-Fi' (mean score=4.34), 'easy access to the hostel' (mean score= 4.33), 'reasonable price' (mean score=4.31), 'comfort' (mean score=4.31), 'comfort' (mean score=4. 28, 'good guide map' (mean score=4.28) and 'good staff quality' (mean score=4.23). This implies that those participants supposed that destination image and accommodation were statistically significant.

Research question 4: Are backpackers' satisfied with their destination image of Taiwan?

Table 4.4 Backpackers' Destination Image towards Taiwan

Items	N	Mean	SD
delicious food	300	4.48	0.641
friendliness	300	4.35	0.703
beautiful sights	300	4.34	0.687
good service quality	300	4.29	0.736
convenient transportation	300	4.29	0.727
good quality and low price	300	4.26	0.766
reasonable travel costs	300	4.22	0.759
enjoying 24 hours of life	300	4.21	0.846
good public security	300	4.18	0.814

Table 4.4 shows what the most participants are satisfied with destination image, such as 'delicious food ' (mean score=4.48) which was the highest and next item 'friendliness' (mean score=4.35) which was the second. The third one was ' beautiful sights' (mean score =4.34'). This implies that those participants are satisfied with 'delicious food', 'friendliness' and beautiful sights.

Research question 5 : What did the participants encounter while traveling in overseas countries?

Table 4.5 The Problems Participants Encountered While Traveling

Items	N	Mean	SD
can open one's global vision	300	4.39	0.648
can deal with things independently	300	4.36	0.668
can build self-confidence	300	4.32	0.688
can deal with the stress of a new environment	300	4.32	0.688
can learn interpersonal skills	300	4.31	0.724
can tolerate someone else from different cultures	300	4.25	0.773
can talk to people in English as much as possible during my travel	300	3.98	0.966
can't overcome the impact of exotic culture	300	3.04	1.275

Table 4.5 shows what kind of problems participants encounter in traveling overseas countries, such as 'I can tolerate someone else from different cultures' (mean score=4.25), which was the highest and next problem 'I can build my self-confidence' (mean score=4.32), which was the second one. This implies that those who were engaged in backpacker travel did not encounter any trouble in cultural adaptation.

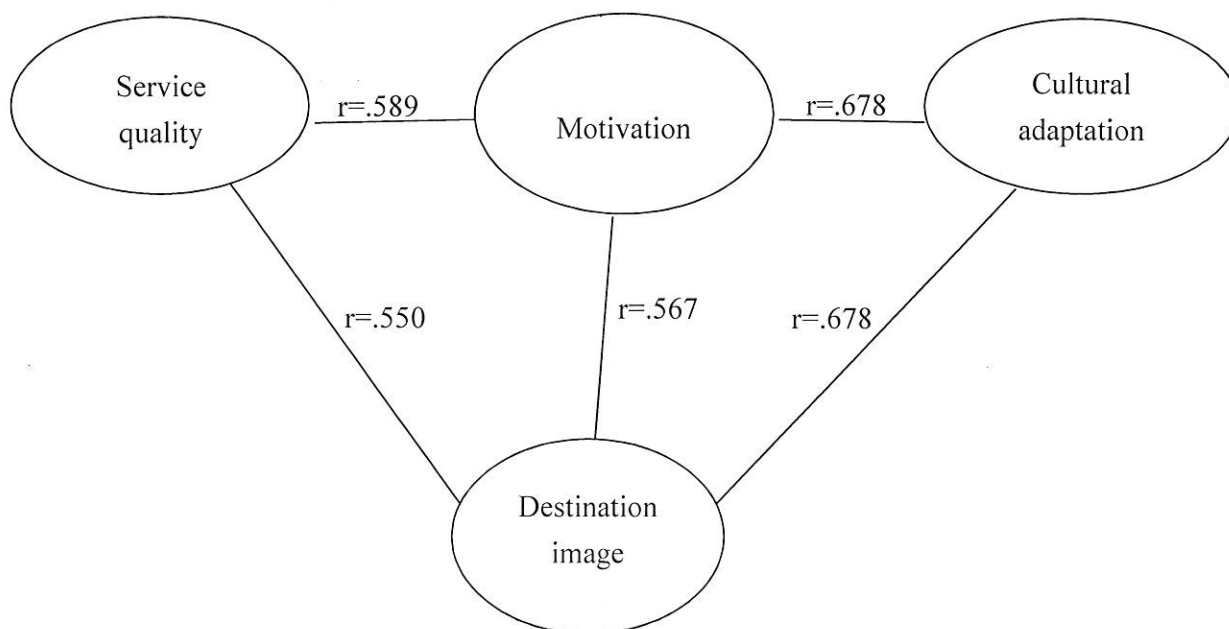


Figure 3 The Inter-relationship of Motivation, Service Quality, Destination Image, Cultural Adaptation

In summary, motivation, service quality, destination image, and cultural adaptation are interrelated.

Conclusion

Discussion

In this study, the number of participants was 300 (males: 146; females: 154). There were 204 participants from Asia, 58 participants from America, 36 participants from Europe, and 2 from Africa. Two hundred and twelve out of three hundred participants came to Taiwan for sightseeing. 36 participants were visiting their friends or relatives. Only 29 participants came to Taiwan for a business trip. The rest of them came to Taiwan for studying. The majority of participants (238) stayed in Taiwan for one week. The next one was staying in Taiwan from 1 month to 3 months. Only 19 participants stay in Taiwan for 4 to 6 months. Obviously, this interprets a fact that most international backpackers were staying in Taiwan for sightseeing.

In Table 4.1 concerning the participants' motivation, 283 participants would like to broaden their world views (Mean score=4.45); 280 participants experienced exotic culture (Mean score=4.43), and 278 participant enjoyed enriching their life experience (Mean score =4.44). In addition, 260 participants would like to get to know friends from different countries (Mean score=4.25). All of the above factors show the reason why they would like to be international backpackers. This is consistent with Forbe's study (2013) in the literature review.

The destination image plays a key role in an individual's travel purchase, depending on his/her expectation about a specific destination or his or her perceived performance of the destination (Hsieh, 2016). Surely, image can refer to an individual's beliefs, thoughts and impressions about a location, and provides tourists with a certain feeling of anticipation (Fakeye & Crompton, 1991). Based upon this factor, in Table 4.3 the result indicates that destination image and accommodation service for the backpackers were mildly correlated owing to $r=0.40$ up. Therefore, the backpackers did care about the accommodation quality such as good internet service (mean score=4.34), easy access to the hostel (mean score=4.33), reasonable price (mean score=4.31), good guide map (mean score=4.28), and good staff quality (mean score=4.23). In a sense, the accommodation quality can have a great influence on their destination image, which can represent how tourists feel about a destination (Hu and Bai, 2013). Naturally, the destination image can also influence tourists' choice processes and evaluation of the destination and future intentions (Hsieh, 2013).

According to Table 4.4, the backpackers enjoyed beautiful sights (mean score=4.26), good bargain (mean score=4.26), enjoyed 24 hours of life in Taiwan (mean score=4.21), and good security in Taiwan (mean score=4.18). This illustrates that the above factors appealed to their coming to

Taiwan. In conclusion, international backpackers are eager to do sightseeing to explore their new adventures in Taiwan, where they have been dreaming of.

Conclusions

Backpacking has evolved over time from drifting (Cohen, 1973) to today's mainstream version in travel industry (O'Reilly, 2006). The backpacking market has been rapidly expanded. The results indicate that international backpackers' travel motivation was influenced by age and previous travel experience. In terms of motivation items, broadening comprehensive views (mean score= 4.45), enriching one's life (means score=4.44), and experiencing exotic cultures (mean score=4.43) are central to the backpackers' motivation. For backpackers, relaxation (mean score=4.27) is related to escaping from reality and the real world. This could also include getting away from school, work, family, and their homes to a new world to get freedom and do what they want to do.

This study has developed a conceptual understanding of international backpackers' motivation. Results suggest that motivations of independence, budget travel, experiential, and personal/social growth are dynamic throughout the backpacker's travel career, which is based on Maslow's needs analysis.

Furthermore, this study provides valuable insight into what is at the core of all backpackers' travel motivation. Hostels could be considered as a lifestyle choice for international backpackers who want to meet new friends, explore any cultures, and gain different information from their peers. It is suggested that hostel managers focus the investment in common areas and activities instead of offering bed products.

This study reveals that location, cleanliness, staff, security and facilities are the major factors of choosing the hostels for backpackers even though their budgets are limited. Therefore, hotel managers could rely on guests' service quality perception to identify their strengths and weaknesses, and reformulate their marketing strategies in today's competitive hostel market.

Since backpacking is growing up increasingly, the backpackers' choices of hostels are also changing. Hostels are no longer offering the affordable beds. By contrast, it is likely that they could take backpackers' online reviews about accommodation and what the backpackers really need into account so as to enhance their future marketing strategies and directions to address different guests' needs.

Recommendations and future research

This study can provide contributions to hostel managers; however, there is a limitation of this study. Three hundred participants in the study cannot generalize the whole population. The data were collected from a few hotels located in a few areas. Those who visited Taiwan perceived it as a good place for backpacker hostels. They might have different expectations to a destination image which may attract its own specific tourists. Therefore, it is suggested that a large number of hostels and different locations be recommended to explore backpackers' expectations about their accommodations and perceptions of service quality.

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