

PROFILING CULTURAL TRAVELERS ON THE BASIS OF A CONSUMER BEHAVIORAL APPROACH

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Abstract

This article identifies typical patterns of information sourcing behavior in the travel decision process of the cultural traveler. Trip characteristics, degree of packaging, choice of accommodation and sociodemographic variables are also discussed. Using data from the province of Arcadia, Greece, which serves as the research field of a longitudinal study, the present article provides some new insight into how information search affects cultural travelers. Tourists interested in learning about the local culture/history would primarily seek information on their destination place from recommendations made by friends and family and secondly by looking for information on the Internet. The findings suggest strategies for marketing management decisions and a comprehensive understanding of the cultural travel market segment from a consumer behavior perspective.

1.INTRODUCTION

Cultural attractions have become a crucial component in constituting the attractiveness of tourism destinations (Hewison, 1987; Hughes, 1987; Prentice, 2001; Richards, 2002). Statistical data on Europe, reported by Europa Nostra (2006), show that more than 50% of tourism in Europe is driven by cultural services. The present research focuses on cultural tourism and refers specifically to Arcadia, a historic land of intense and continuous presence, from antiquity to the Byzantine and modern periods — a land which in Renaissance European art and literature, symbolized a utopian pastoral world of innocence and tranquillity, and thus might even today influence Arcadia's 'destination image'.

It has been more than two decades since Van Raaij (1986) posited that consumer research on tourism should be a cornerstone of marketing strategy and while the tourism literature evidences that several factors influence travelers' behavior to consume tourism products (Lepp and Gibson, 2008; Hsu, Tsai and Wu, 2009); to date, investigations into the determinants of cultural tourism consumption remain inadequate in the literature. For example, the relative importance of the various information sources (such as ICT) used by cultural travellers is not yet systematically analyzed. Given the increasing importance of this particular market segment for destinations, additional research is needed to understand the behavior of cultural tourists in an attempt to bring further theoretical and practical contributions to this field of study. This article provides a comprehensive overview on behavior patterns of cultural travellers to Arcadia and contributes to the study of information sourcing behavior in the travel decision process of cultural travellers. It also provides a basis for channel members, especially suppliers, to assess their distribution strategies.

2. BACKGROUND LITERATURE

2.1 Cultural Tourism Defined

O'Leary and Deegan (2003) suggested culture defined a destination's tangible and intangible heritage, which includes its music, museums, historical places and traditional richness. Thus, while a destination's image includes such dimensions as local attractions, climate and scenery, it also has a cultural aspect that can influence people's choice to visit. Some researchers have also studied culture as a destination attribute (O'Leary and Deegan, 2003), or as an important reason for travelling to a destination (McKercher and Cros, 2003), indicating that cultural differences might be a driver of tourism destination choice, as people want to experience living places and cultures other than those of their own environment (Prentice, 2001). From a producer's perspective, cultural tourism is the marketing of cultural products to tourists as cultural experiences (Craik, 1995). Thus, many researchers define cultural tourism as an experiential consumption (Prentice, 2001; Edensor, 1998; Gunn, 1988; Leiper, 1990), as it is "tourism constructed, proffered and consumed explicitly or implicitly as cultural appreciation, either as experiences or schematic knowledge gaining". Cultural tourism consumption is defined as a behavioral intent to consume cultural products in the focal decision context (Ramkissoon, Uysal and Brown, 2011).

Because of the powerful symbolic benefits of cultural consumption, including social honor and prestige (Belk, 1988) the consumption of cultural products is a key factor in the stratification of social class (Lamont & Fournier, 1992; Bourdieu, 1984; Di-Maggio & Useem, 1978) as it requires a certain level of knowledge and familiarity (cultural capital) that is disproportionately accessible to different social classes (e.g. participation in arts/cultural events).

Much tourist literature describes a close linkage between tourists' socioeconomic and demographic status and their participation in cultural attractions, not only within the everyday context but also during the pleasure trip (Munt, 1994; Richards, 1996). For instance, Hall and Zeppel (1990) observed that tourists at art festivals tend to be mature professionals with high income who are willing to travel to attend major events. Moreover, mature individuals were overrepresented among tourists, particularly at some cultural attractions such as art festivals (Hall & Zeppel, 1990; Zeppel & Hall, 1991). Hughes (1987) argued that higher socioeconomic groups are overrepresented as consumers of art and culture (cultural and heritage attractions), while Craik (1997) found that people with lower socioeconomic status and lower educational level are unlikely to consume cultural tourism products. Herbert (2001) observed that tourists visiting literary heritage sites usually belong to relatively higher social class (managerial, professional, and white-collar workers) and females, in general, are known as more active consumers of cultural products than are males (Hall & Zeppel, 1990; Urry, 1995; Zeppel & Hall, 1991; Craik, 1997;).

2.2 Tourist segmentation

Market segmentation is a technique used to subdivide a heterogeneous market into homogeneous subgroups that can be distinguished by different variables, such as consumer needs, characteristics, or behaviour (Kotler, 1998; Middleton, 1994). Because people have individualized needs, tastes, and attitudes, as well as different life stages and lifestyles, no single variable can be used to segment travel markets (Andereck and Caldwell, 1994). The primary bases for segmentation include demography, geography, behaviour (Morrison 1996), lifestyle, personality, motivations and benefits sought (Cha et al., 1995; Madrigal and Kahle, 1994). However, some bases (e.g. demographic and behavioural) have been criticised for their failure to predict actual consumer behaviour (Andereck and Caldwell, 1994; Cha et al., 1995; Morrison et al., 1994; Prentice, Witt and Hamer, 1998). Employing multiple variables should yield greater explanatory power than using a single variable. In several major hospitality and tourism texts, the use of "multistage segmentation" (Middleton, 1994; Havitz and Dimanche, 1990; Morrison, 1996) or a "combination" (Kotler et al., 1998) of multiple variables rather than just one has been recommended. A review of the literature indicates that there is no one correct way to segment a market.

Market segmentation is a valuable instrument in planning appropriate marketing strategies and framing management thinking (Porter, 1985). Segmentation is justified on the grounds of achieving greater efficiency in the supply of products to meet identified demand and increased cost effectiveness in the marketing process as well as to maximise financial resources (Perdue, 1996). Numerous methods of tourist segmentation exist, including a posteriori or factor-cluster segmentation, a priori or criterion segmentation and neural network models. A priori market segmentation can be less time consuming and more effective for separating markets at less cost (Hsieh and O'Leary, 1993).

In tourism, the importance of segmentation is widely acknowledged (Cha, McCleary, & Uysal, 1995; Kastenholz, Davis and Paul, 1999). To date research has centred upon building tourist profiles for a destination using visitor data and creating bases which can be used by tourism destinations to effectively segment tourism markets (Bieger & Laesser, 2002a,b; Mo, Havitz, & Howard, 1994).

"Purpose of trip" is recognized as one of the non-traditional segmentation bases closely associated with travel motivation, and has been approached from different perspectives. Examples of such studies include the interaction of trip purposes with activities (Hsieh, O'Leary, & Morrison, 1992; Jeffrey & Xie, 1995; Morrison, Hsieh, & O'Leary, 1994; Moscardo, Morrison, Pearce, Lang, & O'Leary, 1996), interest (Sorensen, 1993; Wight, 1996), motivation (Cha, McCleary and Uysal, 1995; Wight, 1996), opinion (Cohen & Richardson, 1995), and value (Madrigal & Kahle, 1994). In using trip type as a key variable to segment the travel market, inclusion of more trip-related characteristics in the analysis is highly recommended for comprehensive understanding of the target segment from a consumer behavior perspective (Sung, Morrison, Hong and O'Leary, 2001), such as length of stay and size of the travel party (Hsieh, Lang, and O'Leary, 1997).

2.3 Information search and distribution channels' usage

Buhalis (2001, p. 8) saw the functions of distribution in these terms: "The primary distribution functions for tourism are *information*, combination and travel arrangement services. Most distribution channels therefore provide information for prospective tourists; bundle tourism products together; and also establish mechanisms that enable consumers to make, confirm and pay for reservations". These purposes and functions have received unequal attention from researchers examining the visitors' perspective, and relevant studies are often not set squarely in the literature on distribution channels. This is especially the case with questions of information search, in which a large discrete body of work has developed as "an enduring interest in consumer behaviour" (Schmidt and Spreng 1996, p. 246).

Understanding how customers acquire information is important for marketing management decisions. This is especially true for travel and tourism products, which are delivered away from home, often in unknown places, inducing functional, financial, physical, psychological, and social risks (Lovelock and Wright 1999; Teare 1992; Srinivasan 1990). Travel products mostly are intangible personal service products, involving personal interactions between customers and service providers (Lovelock and Wright 1999; Normann 1996; Teare 1992) and the consumption and production of tourism products always coincide, creating high personal involvement (Bieger, 2002a,b). According to the economics of information, these characteristics often lead to high personal investments of time, effort, and financial resources for customer decision making (Lambert 1998).

Information source usage has also been used empirically as a segmentation variable. When employed as a descriptor to profile the behavior of tourists who have been segmented on some other basis, information search has provided valuable insights for planning marketing strategies and targeting marketing communications (Moutinho, 1987). With increasing frequency, tourists have been directly segmented based on their search behavior (Bieger and Laesser, 2000a, 2004; Fodness and Murray, 1997, 1999; Mansfeld, 1992; Um and Crompton, 1990; Baloglu, 1999;

Crotts, 1998; Beatty and Smith, 1987; Snepenger and Snepenger, 1993; Etzel and Wahlers, 1985; Perdue, 1985; Schul and Crompton, 1983; Woodside and Lysonski, 1989). With regard to information search behavior research, three major theoretical streams can be identified (Schmidt and Spreng, 1996; Srinivasan, 1990; Bieger and Laesser, 2004; Pearce and Schott, 2005):

a) The Psychological/Motivational/Individual Characteristics Approach

Traditional perspectives of information search focus on functional needs, defined as motivated efforts directed at or contributing to a purpose (Vogt and Fesenmaier, 1998). According to this approach, the search for information enables travellers to reduce the level of uncertainty and to enhance the quality of a trip (Fodness and Murray, 1997; Teare, 1992). The psychological/motivational approach can be linked to travel motivation theory, where a differentiation between a push and pull demand stimulation is stipulated (Cha, McCleary and Uysal 1995). The idea behind this dimensional approach lies in the proposition of people being pushed by their own internal forces and pulled by the external forces of the destination attributes (Yuan and McDonald 1990; Shoemaker 1994, 1989). Consequently, the individual's characteristics influence the utilization of available internal and external information sources (Bonn, Furr and Hausman, 2001; Schonland and Williams, 1996; Crompton, 1992; Snepenger et al., 1990; Leiper, 1990; Hugstad and Taylor, 1987). After identification of needs, customers may first start internal search, using existing knowledge that is also dependent on consumers' ability to access stored knowledge and information contained in memory related to past experiences with the provider and other related learning about the environment/situation, such as vicarious learning when actual experience is not available (Peter, J. P. and Olson, J. C. 1996). Examples of vicarious learning include gathering information via word of mouth about the experiences of others with service providers. (Bettman, 1979; Alba and Hutchinson, 1987; Brucks, 1985; Gursoy and McLeary, 2003; Kim and Fesenmaier, 2009; Vogt and Fesenmaier, 1998).

If internal search is not successful and consumers face uncertainty, then they continue with external search, that is information seeking from the environment (Beatty and Smith, 1987; Murray, 1991). Various typologies exist for classifying external sources of information, including service provider dominated (advocate) versus independent/objective sources, (Murray, 1991), personal versus impersonal sources (Hawkins, Best and Coney, 1998) and, from the tourism literature, professional versus non-professional sources (Opperman, 1999). Typically, the consumer will prefer one source over another based on the perceived effectiveness of a particular information source. Implicit in the concept of source effectiveness is the notion that some types of sources are more influential than others in providing useful information with which to form pre-service encounter expectations (Hawkins, Best and Coney, 1998).

Although information seeking is often coupled with a cultural (and therefore regionally different) background that results in different patterns of behavior (Dawar 1993), a number of common travel-specific factors regarding information collection have also been identified. Variables of information search behaviour, such as length of trip, previous experience and/or visits to the destination, and travel party characteristics (e.g. composition of the vacation group, the presence of family and friends at the destination) need to be examined (Fodness and Murray 1999; Woodside and McDonald 1994; Schul and Crompton 1983; Bieger and Laesser 2002a,b; Snepenger et al. 1990).

Gursoy and McLeary, (2003) proposed a model of tourist information search behavior that integrated internal and external search, cost of search, concepts of familiarity, expertise, and previous visits with involvement and learning of the individual. In addition, Zins and Teichmann, (2006) conducted a longitudinal study where they found that credibility of information channels change from the pretrip to the posttrip phase. Bieger and Laesser (2004) also investigated the differences in information channels before and after a trip decision is made. Consistent with the Zins and Teichmann (2006) study, the Bieger and Laesser (2004) study shows that the selection of the information channel differs significantly depending on type

of trip, degree of packaging, and choice of destination. They also found that friends or, in the web context, other users are very important channels, as are guide books, regional and destination information brochures, and tourist boards (Bieger and Laesser, 2004).

b) The Cost/Benefit Approach (Economics Approach)

According to the cost/benefit approach, tourists' search for information and the use of information sources depends on the expected costs and benefits of the information sourcing alternative. In that regard, most traditional perspectives of information search are embedded in processing theory and consumer behavior models (Bettman, 1979), addressing issues such as the role of product knowledge (Hirschman and Wallendorf, 1982), uncertainty (Murray, 1991) either with regard to knowledge uncertainty or choice uncertainty (Urbany, Dickson and Wilkie, 1989), utility (Bettman and Suja, 1987), and efficiency (Bettman, 1979). Costs within this framework are either generated on behalf of risk-limiting search costs or the assumption/acceptance of risk.

The assessment of risk is perceptual; the information search strategy with the greatest possible efficiency reduces risk and uncertainty (Murray 1991; Urbany, Dickson and Wilkie 1989; Bettman, 1973; Schiffmann, 1972). According to Mitra, Reiss and Capella (1999), perceived risk derives from a cognitive conflict between customer expectations and the anticipated outcome of the purchase decision, with information sourcing as a reaction to this conflict in order to re-establish cognitive balance. Murray (1991) and Lutz and Reilly (1973) further suggested that perceived risk and information search are positively correlated. Risk encountered in service purchase can be reduced by seeking additional information about the service (Lutz and Reilly, 1973; Hugstad and Taylor, 1987). This implies that the higher the perceived risk (associated with the purchase of services), the more likely a heightened information search effort on the part of the tourist. However, consumers' information behavior is also likely to be influenced by the perceived costs of information search. When the perceived costs of acquiring additional information is high, information search declines. The economics of information perspective implies a consumer trade-off between the perceived benefits and costs of acquiring additional information.

c) The Process Approach

Recent studies have recognized that travel decision making is complex, involving multiple decisions including length of trip, primary destinations, companions, activities, attractions, accommodations, trip routes, food stops, and shopping places (Fesenmaier and Jeng, 2000; Mountinho, 1987; Woodside and MacDonald, 1994). For multiple product decisions, travellers search for information and move back and forth between search and decision-making stages (Woodside and MacDonald 1994). In addition, actual travel behaviors do not always follow plans (March and Woodside 2005; Stewart and Vogt 1999). Accordingly, in studying travel behaviors, researchers should consider interactions or intersections of multiple goals and decisions, information search as an ongoing process, and differences in planned and actual behaviors. The process approach focuses on the process of information search rather than on the action itself.

A number of authors have reported that the choice process adapted by consumers with regard to non-routinized, high involvement purchases are phased (Correia, 2002; Vogt and Fesenmaier, 1998; Hsieh and O'Leary, 1993; Crompton, 1992; Um and Crompton, 1990; Woodside and Lysonski, 1989; Bettman and Suja, 1987). A number of concepts are proposed to describe the process of decision making. Basically, they include a number of input variables and a phased process that includes an information acquisition phase, a procession phase, a purchase phase, and last but not least, a consumption phase (Vogt and Fesenmaier, 1998; Correia, 2002). Crompton (1992) proposed three stages of this process, including an initial consideration set, a late consideration set, and an action and interaction set. Leiper (1990) puts forward a model in which a generating information marker (i.e., information received before setting out) creates a reaction on the needs/wants of a potential traveler, leading to positive expectations/motivations

and to a travel decision. Vogt and Fesenmaier, (1988) propose a five-stage model, focusing on the heuristics of information finding and decision making. In this model, purchase and consumption

coincide. Correia, (2002) examined and expanded the decision-making process of travellers and classified the act of purchasing a trip into three distinctive stages: the pre-decision stage, the decision stage, and the post-decision stage.

A few researchers have suggested that travel-planning theories are more suitable to explain or predict complex travel behaviors compared to single goal-oriented decision-making theories, because a planning process includes multiple decisions and interactions among decisions (Fesenmaier and Jeng, 2000; Pan and Fesenmaier, 2003; Stewart and Vogt, 1999). A plan is a traveller's reasoned attempt to recognize and define goals, consider alternative actions that might achieve the goals, judge which actions are most likely to succeed, and act on the basis of those decisions (Hoc, 1988; Stewart and Vogt, 1999). This definition of planning includes all information search behaviors, information uses or applications, purchase behaviors, actual trip behaviors, and the learning from all these experiences (Vogt and Fesenmaier, 1998).

The Internet has also intensified the complexity of the travel decision-making process, as it has become an important channel for travelers' information search (Gretzel, Fesenmaier and O'Leary, 2006; Gursoy and McLeary, 2003; Pan and Fesenmaier, 2006; Xiang, Weber and Fesenmaier, 2008 Jun, Vogt Mackay, 2007), creating an environment whereby online information providers such as tourist boards, hotel and resort websites, travel agents, bloggers and magazines actively compete for attention to attract searchers and ultimately, bookers. Many travel decision-making models present information search and assessment as processed before decision making (Um and Crompton, 1990; Woodside and Lysonski, 1989); however, the Internet has made it easier for travellers to collect information, purchase travel products, and change their decisions at any stage of the decision-making process.

Many destinations have also invested in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), in their effort for more efficient and effective ways of managing tourism demand and facing domestic and global competition (Zins, 2009). The Internet provides an opportunity for travel and tourism service providers to intermix traditional marketing channels (i.e., distribution, transaction, and communication) that were previously considered independent processes (Peterson, 2003; Zins, 2007). A single interaction on the Internet can provide product information, a means for payment and product exchange, and distribution, whereas more traditional interaction approaches frequently separate these functions (Jun, Vogt and Mackay, 2007). Particularly interesting studies have considered the use of online information sources relative to more conventional ones.

2.4 Implications of the Literature Review

The literature review offers a number of options to analyze the profile of cultural travellers: firstly, an analysis of the sociodemographic characteristics. Secondly, an analysis of their trip characteristics: trip organization (package holiday/self guided holiday), time used to make the trip decision, type of accommodation, travel companion and booking. Thirdly, an analysis of their information sourcing behaviour, based on internal and external information sources, and ICT use in particular: the Internet, the use of Global Positioning System (GPS) and the Personal Digital assistant (PDA).

3. METHOD

3.1. Data collection

This investigation was designed to further understand the tourism market in the province of Arcadia, Greece, over a period of 12 months, between July 2007 and July 2008 to eliminate seasonality. The survey, included Greek and foreign tourists in the region. Hotel owners or managers had agreed to collect the data for the study and the survey questionnaires were distributed to the survey sites. Respondents freely participated in answering the survey questionnaire after they had stayed in the hotel for at least one night and finally, researchers visited and collected the survey questionnaires from each hotel accommodation.

Data were collected by using a four-page self-administered questionnaire, in Greek and English, primarily designed to gather information on the subjects' general motivations for travel. A total of 3500 questionnaires were distributed to the sites and 820 usable questionnaires were collected, which leads to the response rate of 23.43%. Their participation in cultural attractions

was identified through the question: “As part of your vacation how likely are you to be interested in learning about local culture/history (i.e. visiting historic sites, museums, cultural exhibitions, going to the theater, concerts, ballet, etc.)

3.2. Analysis

The survey data were coded and analyzed using R, an open-source statistical package. Descriptive statistical analysis was applied to the collected data to explore the overall sample profile. In order to identify special characteristics of the sub-population of tourists that had replied positively to the question on how likely they were to be interested in learning about local culture/history on their vacation, the cultural travellers' group was separated from the rest of respondents and the following sub-groups for subsequent analysis were constructed:

- Group A or ‘Cultural travellers’ (N = 593): ‘Very likely’ or ‘Likely’ to be interested in learning about the local culture/history
- Group B (N = 200): ‘Very unlikely’ or ‘Unlikely’ or ‘Neither likely nor unlikely’ to be interested in learning about the local culture/history

Then, the special characteristics of the two sub-groups were analysed. Chi-square tests were conducted to verify whether differences between the two sub-groups, as regards particular characteristics of the population of tourists, were due to chance variation or revealed some statistically significant trend. Chi-squared tests were chosen for use in this exploratory investigation to aid in making inference about the uniform distribution (or not) of the two sub-groups in relation to demographic, trip characteristics, selection of information sources for their journey and degree of satisfaction from the use of these information sources.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Sociodemographic characteristics

The initial chi-square analyses were conducted to determine differences among the Group A and Group B tourists in terms of gender, age, education, occupation and nationality. Results in Table 1 reveal a significant chi-square for the following variables: Gender ($\chi^2_{1df} = 12.4, p < 0.0004$), Age ($\chi^2_{5df} = 32.97, p < 0.0001$), Education ($\chi^2_{4df} = 24.0, p < 0.0001$) and Occupation ($\chi^2_{9df} = 86.7, p < 0.0001$), suggesting that gender, age, education and occupation are not independent of the tourists' reported preference/interest in learning about the local culture/history.

Table 1. Chi-Square Analysis of Demographic Characteristics of Tourists who find interest in learning about the local culture/history

		<i>Very likely/likely to be interested (Group A)</i>		<i>Unlikely/very unlikely or neither likely nor unlikely to be interested opinion (Group B)</i>		
		n	%	n	%	
		593		200		
Gender						<i>X-squared = 12.3693, df = 1, p-value = 0.0004364</i>
	Male	227	38.3	106	53	
	Female	350	59	90	45	
Age						<i>X-squared = 32.9792, df = 5, p-value = 3.799e-06</i>
	15-25	62	10.5	50	25	
	25-35	174	29.3	65	32.5	
	35-45	151	25.5	35	17.5	
	45-55	112	18.9	27	13.5	
	55-65	59	9.9	11	5.5	
	over 65	21	3.5	9	4.5	
Higher level of education						<i>X-squared = 24.0048, df = 4, p-value = 7.97e-05</i>
	Primary	21	3.5	9	4.5	
	Secondary/high school	131	22.1	65	32.5	
	Tertiary	255	43	65	32.5	
	Postgraduate Studies	138	23.3	30	15	
	Other	32	5.4	23	11.5	
Occupation						<i>X-squared = 86.651, df = 9, p-value = 7.631e-15</i>
	Scientific, free professional, technical and related worker	189	31.9	32	16	
	Administrative and managerial worker	100	16.9	14	7	
	Clerical worker	107	18	38	19	
	Trade and sales worker	37	6.2	17	8.5	
	Farmer, fisherman and related worker	3	0.5	13	6.5	
	Craftsman, worker, operator	22	3.7	18	9	
	Pensioner	34	5.7	11	5.5	
	Housework	23	3.9	15	7.5	
	Unemployed, looking for job	33	5.6	3	1.5	
	Student	42	7.1	35	17.5	
Nationality/origin						<i>X-squared = 0.3244, df = 1, p-value = 0.569</i>
	Foreign tourists	86	14.5	33	16.5	
	Native (Greek) tourists	507	85.5	167	83.5	

Note : 27 respondents have not replied this question

Statistical differences in the patterns for international and domestic visitors were tested using chi-square, and no statistically significant differences occurred between the two groups' demographics. Amongst cultural travellers (Group A) the number of female participants was greater than the number of male participants: with females at 59% and males at 38.3%. The overall distribution of different age groups is not evenly represented. A young age group (between 15 and 25 years old) was under-represented (10.5%) in the study sample, as well as among the age group between 55 and 65 years old with representation of only 9.9% and the lowest representation occurs in of the age group of above 65 years old tourists (3,5%).

The level of education indicates that only 22% of the respondents were high-school graduates while 43% had a college degree and 23% held advanced degrees. In general, the figures on Table 1 reveal that it is more likely for females, for age categories from 25 to 55 years of age, for graduates of tertiary education and holders of postgraduate degrees to be interested in learning about the local culture/history of the place that they visit. The same interest is manifested amongst the occupational groups: scientific, free professional, technical and related worker or administrative and managerial workers.

4.2. Trip characteristics

Trip characteristics were analysed according to trip organization (package holiday/self guided holiday), time used to make the trip decision, type of accommodation, travel companion and booking.

Table 2. Chi-Square Analysis of Trip Characteristics of Tourists who find interest in learning about the local culture/history

	Very likely/likely to be interested (Group A)		Unlikely/very unlikely or neither likely nor unlikely to be interested opinion (Group B)		
	n	%	n	%	
	593		200		
Trip organization					
Package tour/holiday	35	5.9	10	5	<i>X-squared = 1.7297, df = 2, p-value = 0.4211</i>
Partial package tour/holiday	63	10.6	28	14	
Self-guided tour/holiday	484	81.6	160	80	
Final decision for the trip was taken					
Less than 1 month before departure	377	63.6	129	64.5	<i>X-squared = 22.3043, df = 2, p-value = 1.434e-05</i>
1 to 6 months before the departure	176	29.7	38	19	
More than 6 months before the departure	34	5.7	30	15	
Type of accommodation					
Hotel/club (4*/5*)	169	28.5	50	25	<i>X-squared = 18.3724, df = 6, p-value = 0.005366</i>
B&B	102	17.2	39	19.5	
Friends & Relatives	38	6.4	15	7.5	
Hotel/club (2*/3*)	144	24.3	46	23	
Holiday Home	43	7.3	22	11	
Camping (including tent, trainer, mobile home)	18	3	18	9	
Combination of the above	47	7.9	8	4	
Travel with					
On your own	34	5.7	16	8	<i>X-squared = 1.6774, df = 2, p-value = 0.4323</i>
With one or more friends	291	49.1	100	50	
With your family	258	43.5	80	40	
Book accommodation through					
Travel agent	66	11.1	15	7.5	<i>X-squared = 20.7713, df = 3, p-value = 0.0001174</i>
By yourself directly from the producer via the telephone	363	61.2	114	57	
By yourself directly from the producer via the Internet	50	8.4	40	20	
By other person	101	17	28	14	

The majority of culture travelers (81.6%) organize their holidays on their own and take the final decision of their trip in a period of less than one month before their departure. They prefer to stay in upgraded hotels: first choice (28,5%) is hotel/club of 4 and 5 star categories. Only 3% prefer camping facilities. Bookings are made by phone, directly from the producer (61.2%).

The tests on the trip characteristics of the tourists, as displayed in Table 2, reveal that it is more likely for cultural tourists (Group A) as compared to other tourists (Group B) to take their decision for the trip no later than 6 months in advance ($\chi^2_{2df} = 22.3, p < 0.0001$), to stay in a hotel/club ($\chi^2_{6df} = 18.4, p < 0.005$) and to make the reservation either via an agency or through the telephone ($\chi^2_{4df} = 20.8, p < 0.0001$).

4.3. Selection of information sources

The aim in this part of the analysis is to explore the tourists' habits as regards the preference they show in the selection of information sources for their journey. Information sources are displayed in Table 3 in descending order of preference for cultural tourists (Group A). Thus, cultural tourists would primarily seek information on the place that they visit from recommendations made by friends and family (55.8%) and secondly by looking up information on the Internet (51.4%). Third in their preference are travel guidebooks and travel magazines, while personal experience/knowledge, radio & TV broadcasts, and advertisements and information brochures are also high in their choices. The two last ranked are video/cd-rom/dvd/videotext and oral information provided by tourist information at destination or from local tourist offices.

Table 3. Chi-Square Analysis of Booking Characteristics of Tourists who find interest in learning about the local culture/history

	<i>Very likely/likely to be interested (Group A)</i>		<i>Unlikely/very unlikely or neither likely nor unlikely to be interested opinion (Group B)</i>		
	n	%	n	%	
Total	616		173		
Recommendations from friends and relatives	331	55.8	100	50	$X\text{-squared} = 1.8126, df = 1, p\text{-value} = 0.1782$
INTERNET	305	51.4	112	56	$X\text{-squared} = 1.0744, df = 1, p\text{-value} = 0.2999$
Travel guidebooks and travel magazines	214	36.1	60	30	$X\text{-squared} = 2.1892, df = 1, p\text{-value} = 0.1390$
Personal experience / knowledge	138	23.3	40	20	$X\text{-squared} = 0.7412, df = 1, p\text{-value} = 0.3893$
Radio and TV broadcasts (documentary and news)	123	20.7	47	23.5	$X\text{-squared} = 0.5216, df = 1, p\text{-value} = 0.4701$
Information brochures	103	17.4	26	13	$X\text{-squared} = 1.7877, df = 1, p\text{-value} = 0.1812$
Advertisements and articles in newspapers/magazines	98	16.5	28	14	$X\text{-squared} = 0.5376, df = 1, p\text{-value} = 0.4634$
Hotel listings	39	6.6	10	5	$X\text{-squared} = 0.3982, df = 1, p\text{-value} = 0.528$
Oral information provided by retailer/agency	31	5.2	11	5.5	$X\text{-squared} = 0.0011, df = 1, p\text{-value} = 0.973$
Information from using a Global Positioning System (GPS)	29	4.9	10	5	$X\text{-squared} = 0.0161, df = 1, p\text{-value} = 0.8989$
Information from using a P.D.A (Personal Digital assistant)	17	2.9	21	10.5	$X\text{-squared} = 17.464, df = 1, p\text{-value} = 2.928e-05$
video/cd-rom/dvd/videotext	12	2	31	15.5	$X\text{-squared} = 50.3681, df = 1, p\text{-value} = 1.274e-12$
Oral information provided by tourist information at destination or from local tourist offices	10	1.7	4	2	$X\text{-squared} = 4e-04, df = 1, p\text{-value} = 0.9847$

Comparisons between the two sub-groups (Group A and Group B) were conducted using the chi-squared test (Table 3) and a significant chi-square was derived only for video/cd-rom/dvd/videotext ($\chi^2_{1df} = 50.4, p < 0.001$) and PDA ($\chi^2_{1df} = 17.4, p < 0.001$) showing that cultural tourists (Group A) are not very keen on the use of these particular information channels examined.

4.4. Satisfaction from the use of information sources

Overall tourists interested in learning about the local culture/history (Group A) are satisfied with the information sources that they have used to a greater extent than the rest of the tourists (Group B). This is evident in the significant chi-square ($\chi^2_{2df} = 34.5, p < 0.0001$) in Table 4.

Table 4. Chi-Square Analysis of the Degree of satisfaction with information sources for Tourists who find interest in learning about the local culture/history

	<i>Very likely/likely to be interested (Group A)</i>		<i>Unlikely/very unlikely or neither likely nor unlikely to be interested opinion (Group B)</i>		
	n	%	n	%	
	593		200		
Satisfied	435	73.4	120	60	<i>X-squared = 34.5236, df = 2, p-value = 3.186e-08</i>
Somewhat satisfied	148	25	61	30.5	
Not satisfied	6	1	17	8.5	

5. CONCLUSION

The preceding analysis has revealed significant differences between cultural travellers and other travellers not interested in the consumption of cultural products. Consequently, several practical implications for destination managers have emerged, as it is a marketing truism that the promotion of a product should be tailored to the characteristics of a target market. The results of the present study can help managers carry out this task in a more informed and strategic manner. Firstly as regards the important effects of demographic traits on the consumption of cultural attractions, the present findings agree with other research. In particular, cultural products may require a certain level of cultural capital (cultural/aesthetic knowledge or taste) in order to be enjoyed and thus they appeal more to the individuals of higher socioeconomic status (and specifically high level of education) who are considered to have more cultural capital than individuals of lower socioeconomic status (Hall and Zeppel, 1990; Herbert, 2001; Squire, 1994; Zeppel and Hall, 1991; Kim, Cheng and O'Leary, 2007). It is important to note that other research has shown that education may be a better determinant of cultural tastes than the level of income (DiMaggio and Mukhtar, 2004). Additionally, the greater presence of female tourists in all attractions supports the widely accepted view that females are major participants in arts and cultural tourism (Hall and Zeppel, 1990; Urry, 1990; Zeppel and Hall, 1991; Craik, 1997).

The research implies that a segmentation based on the information search behavior is an appropriate way to develop marketing strategies and to target marketing communications. It also supports the position that trip-related (situational) descriptors have a strong influence on travel information search behavior. Culture travellers in Arcadia are independent visitors as 81.6% organize their holidays on their own. Consequently it is surprising that oral information provided by tourist information at destination or from local tourist offices is their lowest choice in information seeking behaviour. One logical explanation of this preference is that the present forms and methods used by local tourism destination marketers to provide information are ineffective. As many of the attraction providers, especially the smaller ones, depend on generating local awareness through the information center, the dissemination of brochures, and fostering links with other providers (Pearce and Tan, 2004) the finding of this research should have an important substantive impact.

As Craik, 1997 asserts, the promotion of cultural attractions should be based on the understanding of culture travellers behaviour for the long term success of tourism and providers of cultural products need to acknowledge and support the efforts of regional and national tourism organizations. In addition, accuracy of the information is an important quality factor for building and maintaining trust in a specific source (Bieger and Laesser, 2004). Information from professional sources like tour operators or travel agencies only plays a significant role before a definite trip decision is made and mainly for nonstandardized tours (Bieger and Laesser, 2004). Professional distribution channels should therefore seek to cooperate with local independent "direct information providers" (cf. "infomediaries") to provide comprehensive

information solutions (Bieger and Laesser, 2004). Thus, the role of direct information providers as well as the need to fund them properly should not be underestimated (Bieger and Laesser, 2004).

The present study agrees with other research which finds that travellers usually rely on multiple information channels depending on their travel planning process (Bieger and Laesser, 2004; Zins, 2007). After evaluating internal and external sources of information and developing subsequent perceptions, the consumer has to decide whether they are going to buy or not. A consumer's behavioural intention is a reflection of predicted future purchase behaviour and can be used as an appropriate indicator or representation of that behaviour (Murray, 1991). An important finding of this research indicates that cultural travel consumers tend to strongly prefer internal sources; recommendations from friends and relatives account for 55.8% of the respondents' choices. After a definite trip decision, the information from friends and relatives is even more important and discriminates travel behavior. Since most of this information stems from a person's travel experience (and possibly word of mouth), quality management and customer loyalty management are therefore crucially important for all tourist service providers (Bieger and Laesser, 2004). This is very important for the future success of the tourism marketing strategy of this area. Recommendation of the product to others and positive word-of-mouth are specific indicators of future positive behavioral intent (Reichheld and Sasser, 1990; Williams and Soutar 2009), such that that tourists who have revisit intentions are more likely to recommend the destination to others (Hutchinson, Lai and Wang, 2009). Overall, one recommendation that can be extracted from this study is to increase the use of external information from an effective promotional campaign in order to improve the perception of its value and its availability. Tourism boards can have a significant impact on these processes.

Many destinations have also invested in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), in their effort for more efficient and effective ways of managing tourism demand and facing domestic and global competition. The second source of information is the Internet (51.4%). This increased use of the internet shows its enormous importance, as a single interaction on the Internet can provide product information, a means for payment and product exchange, and distribution, whereas a more traditional interaction frequently separates these functions (Jun, Vogt and Mackay, 2007). It is noteworthy though, that the use of the internet was quite limited for booking purposes in Arcadia (8%), a fact than needs to be investigated in future studies.

Information from a Global Positioning System (GPS) and Information from a P.D.A (Personal Digital assistant) is still a very low percentage of cultural travellers use (4.9% and 2.9% respectively), but there is no doubt that in the future, mobile technology will increasingly provide opportunities for real-time travel information. Even today mobile technology can bring the latest up-to-date information anytime and anywhere to customers. Tomorrow developments such as select cell phones and personal digital assistants (PDAs) provide real-time Web links (Jun, Vogt and Mackay, 2007). Select automobiles offer telematics (Web access in a vehicle). A new generation of mobile broadband networks provides wireless communication spurring development of location based services using global positioning systems (GPS) (Jun, Vogt and Mackay, 2007). In addition, travellers have begun to use other so called Web 2.0 websites which enable them to share their views and opinions about products and services (Pan, MacLaurin and Crotts, 2007; Xiang and Gretzel, 2009) All these developments will influence both information search and provision (Berger, Lehmann and Lehner, 2003; O'Brien and Burmeister, 2003). Future studies should be conducted to understand how to connect customers' Internet use to mobile use for cultural products.

A limitation of the present study was that it did not reflect the nature of specific diversified cultural attractions (e.g. art galleries, opera, amusement parks, history museums, music concerts, etc.) in Arcadia. Future study might focus on these individual attractions such that destination marketers can categorize their cultural attractions and promote each type of attraction to the most receptive segments (Benton, 2011).

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