How visitors of **luxury cruises** perceive a tourist destination: Internal determinants, satisfaction and intention to return

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Abstract | The cruise industry is responding to increasing demand for luxury travel by using more and larger luxurious cruise ships which are now arriving to main maritime ports and to a growing number of new terminals. So, it is important to understand if passengers are satisfied and if they intend to return. Therefore, a survey was conducted nearby the Port of Lisbon in order to capture the perception of international cruise tourists about satisfaction and intention to return. Data collected from a sample of 412 respondents was treated using multiple regression analysis. Findings highlight that it is important to assure that maritime ports as Lisbon can take advantage of these luxury supersized ships and, by consequence, tackle the tourists that arrive from any part of the world, almost every day to Portugal.

Palavras-chave | Cruise tourism, Satisfaction, Intention to return, Lisbon, Multiple regression.

Resumo | A indústria de cruzeiros está a responder ao aumento da procura por viagens de luxo, usando navios de cruzeiro maiores e com mais luxo, os quais estão agora a chegar aos principais portos marítimos e a mais terminais novos. Neste sentido, é importante perceber se os passageiros estão satisfeitos e se eles pretendem regressar. Assim, foi conduzido próximo do Porto de Lisboa um inquérito com o intuito de compreender a satisfação dos turistas internacionais de cruzeiros, bem como as suas intenções de voltar e recomendar Portugal. A informação foi recolhida a partir de uma amostra de 412 participantes foi tratada usando análise por regressão múltipla. Os resultados realçam que é importante assegurar que portos marítimos como Lisboa podem tirar vantagem destes grandes navios e, por consequência, das pessoas que chegam de toda a parte do mundo, quase todos os dias a Lisboa.

Keywords | Passageiro de cruzeiro, Satisfação, Intenção de voltar, Lisboa, Regressão múltipla.

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1. Introduction

The World Tourism Organization (WTO) identifies cruising as one of the key trends for the future. The main characteristics for that kind of choice from tourists can be defined as: 'time poor - money rich' concept, which means that tourists like the opportunity to see many things in a short period of time. Despite some barriers, as the economy and the instability of fuel costs, consumer interest on cruising continues being strong: a study says that 77% of past cruise tourists and 55% of tourists who have not taken a cruise expressed interest in doing so within the next three years (Brida & Zapata-Aguirre, 2009). There is no doubt that cruise ships bring money to local businesses and regions, but ensuring the sustainable development of a cruise destination has a very high cost for them (Brida & Zapata-Aguirre, 2008).

Focusing on the Mediterranean market, cruise tourism is among the market segments where social and economic trends more contribute to the potential of market expansion. This leads to forecast that more than twenty million people will cruise the Mediterranean and the Baltic Sea by the beginning of the next decade. This trend is supported by reasons, such as the high differentiated product provided with cruising, overnight stops and destinations choices, the consideration of Mediterranean Sea as a destination that can be visited throughout the year and the considerable improvement of European infrastructures (Lekakou & Pallis, 2004).

Concerning the economic impacts of this type of tourism, there is a common conviction that having cruise ships arriving to a destination produces a major economic impact on the local economy (Brida & Zapata-Aguirre, 2009). In this vein, due to the economic importance of this kind of tourism and due to the scarce number of articles trying to understand satisfaction and intention to return in the case of luxury cruise tourists, the current study intends to contribute to fulfill this gap proposing and testing a model of how internal determinants of tourist satisfaction can

leads to satisfaction and intention to return. Following this introduction, the article presents the background, methodology, results and conclusions.

2. Background

2.1. Determinants of cruise tourist satisfaction

Yoon and Uysal (2005) created a model which explains how motivation and satisfaction affect loyalty. In their perspective, motivation is divided into internal (push) and external (pull) forces. Chi and Qu (2008) classified in exogenous factors (pull), such as natural environment and endogenous factors (push), for instance, accommodation, the components of destination image, what can increase tourists' perceived quality and consequently their loyalty. Loureiro and Gonzalez (2008) also created a model where loyalty was a result of satisfaction that was influenced by the perceived quality of the destination image.

Thus, one of the major contributions of the analysis of overall satisfaction antecedents over time supports the continuous planning and redevelopment of local resources to reinforce repeat tourist visits (Bernini & Cagnone, 2014). Therefore, it is important for local destinations to know what most influence has in tourists' satisfaction that make them revisit that place. From literature review, some internal determinants of tourist' satisfaction arose as the most referred and used in research studies. And so, the conceptual model of this article will take into account the following ones (e.g., Bernini & Cagnone, 2014; Brida, Pulina, Riaño & Zapata-Aguirre, 2012):

i) Local environment: in this dimension it can be included the satisfaction with the local population, hospitality and lifestyle; the accessibility; traffic and maintenance of roads; security and tranquility of the place; cleanliness; green areas and beaches;

- ii) Onshore activities/service: this dimension is expected to measure the cruiser's satisfaction with excursions, shopping, city's attractions such as cultural and historical places and services acquired;
- iii) Overall visit experience: when evaluating cruisers' satisfaction with a destination it is also important to understand the experience they lived. This overall visit experience can depend on various factors, such as the presence of friends or family during the trip, the local cuisine, the crew support, the sympathy of tour guides, including the proper climate they found in Portugal;
- iv) Price: nowadays, spending involved in a cruiser's journey is pondered by the passenger, since a cruise holiday supposes a different place to visit every day, therefore, many additional costs out of the ship are supported. It is expected to understand the satisfaction with the price of food, monuments, transports, and other components of cruise travel.

2.2. Satisfaction as mediator

In the literature we can find many authors arguing that satisfaction can be seen as a tourist's post-purchase feeling and, consequently, if it comes into a positive assessment, it will influence the repurchase intention (e.g. Bigné, Sánchez & Sánchez, 2001; Loureiro & Gonzaléz, 2008).

Satisfaction influence loyalty, at the same time that the intention to return to a destination is considered as part of a tourist's loyalty evidence (e.g., Bernini & Cagnone, 2014; Brida et al., 2012; Loureiro & Gonzaléz, 2008; Molina, Jamilena & García, 2013). This statement supports the goals of that study. The objective is to verify what are the key variables influencing the cruise tourist's satisfaction and measure if, or not, they intend to come back to Lisbon as independent tourists. We can say that satisfaction surveys are one of the most essential tools that are used in gathering information about tourist opinions of a destination (Alegre & Garau, 2010) and so, we will give special focus to that variable satisfaction that will link its determinants to the dependent variable, intention to return.

Satisfaction is a wide concept and, with the development of the literature, authors have been studying it in two perspectives, overall satisfaction and attribute satisfaction, mainly in order to respond to the disconfirmation paradigm model (e.g., Alegre & Garau, 2009; Loureiro & Gonzaléz, 2008; Molina et al., 2013). Overall satisfaction and attribute satisfaction are considered different but related constructs, where attribute satisfaction has significant, positive and direct effects on overall satisfaction, capturing a significant amount of its variation (Bernini & Cagnone, 2014).

In tourism, post-purchase feelings may include overall satisfaction with a holiday at a certain destination and/or the satisfaction with specific elements, such as accommodation or climate. Clarifying both definitions, overall satisfaction is the result of tourists' perception of different attributes of a destination that play different roles in the overall satisfaction determination, while attribute satisfaction is the consumer's subjective satisfaction judgment resulting from observations of attribute performance (Molina et al., 2013; Bernini & Cagnone, 2014). More recently, attribute satisfaction was directly linked to the destination experience regarding specific dimensions, namely, attractions, transportation, accommodations, restaurants or entertainment, whereas overall satisfaction was treated as a unique item (Chung & Petrick, 2012).

2.3. Intention to return to a tourist destination

Loyalty is indeed a key determinant for enhancing future business and guarantees the destination's competitiveness (Brida et al., 2012) and so cultivate it shall be valued and preserved by tourism managers and entities. Repeat visit in tourism is an important phenomenon in the economy as a whole as well as from an individual perspective, representing an important business opportunity for tourist destinations. In international tourism, a current visit can induce positively the visitors' likelihood to repeat the visit in some future period (Badarneh & Som, 2010; Martínez, Garau-Vadell & Martínez-Ruiz, 2010).

The determining factors of loyalty have been studied in the marketing literature, and satisfaction is largely considered the main feature affecting consumer loyalty (Bigné et al., 2001; Loureiro & Gonzalez, 2008). The literature about factors that affect a cruise ship passenger's intention of returning to a destination is very recent and only a few papers have studied it. Actually, there is also the possibility of maintaining a long-term relationship with tourists in cruise activity, as thousands of people may return as independent land tourists to the destinations they have already visited. This argument is generally used by policy makers to give incentives to the cruise lines to be a port of call on their cruise routes (Brida et al., 2012).

Cruisers stay in the destination for just a few hours (six on average); cruisers are, in general, repeat cruise travelers (Petrick, 2004); the cruise experience exceeds tourists' expectations in different aspects satisfying them in a unique manner (Florida Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA), 2011). In fact, FCCA (2011) revealed that cruisers indicate they would return for land-based vacations to the following destinations: Caribbean (50%), Bahamas (21%), Hawaii (13%), Mexico (13%), Europe (12%), and Alaska (11%). Inclusively it was known there is a specific program to encourage cruise ship passengers to return to the islands for a land-based vacation. Every port gives them incentives to revisit the place, for instance, special discounts in accommodation. Despite the implementation of such program and the cruiser's intention to return, so far, Cartagena hotels have not reported any reservations as a result of the new approach. Managers' point out the possibility that the program has not been effectively advertised (Brida & Coletti, 2010; Brida et al., 2012).

Tourism entities have to make enormous efforts to catch cruisers' attention when they spend only those few hours outside the ship and incited them to return and use word-ofmouth (WOM) to promote Portugal. Actually, some studies have already been applied in this matter and got interesting results. For instance, Brida et al. (2012) analyzed the main factors of attractiveness of the Azores to cruise passengers and determined which of them influence their intention regarding repurchasing the trip. Results from 2004 with almost one thousand respondents revealed that factors such as the city's attractions and the overall visit experience are the most important determinants of a possible revisit.

3. Conceptual model and hypotheses

Based on above considerations, the conceptual model is composed by the independent and dependent variables, resuming the hypotheses to be studied (Figure 1). The hypotheses defined to develop this study are:

- H₄: Factors of the cruise scope influence positively overall cruiser's satisfaction;
- H_{1,1}: A more favorable local environment will result in higher overall satisfaction;
- H_{1,2}: Satisfaction with onshore activities/services affects positively overall satisfaction;
- H_{1,3}: A more favorable overall visit experience will result in higher overall satisfaction;
- H_{1,4}: A more favorable price will result in higher overall satisfaction;
- H₃: Satisfaction has an impact on cruiser behavioral intention;
- H_{2,1a}: A higher level of overall satisfaction will result in higher immediate intention to revisit;
- H_{2.1b}: A higher level of overall satisfaction will result in higher intention to revisit in the future.

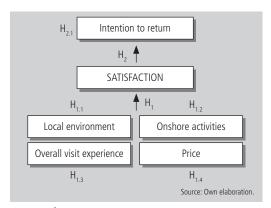


Figure 1 Proposed conceptual model.

Methodology

4.1. Questionnaire design

The questionnaire was written in English, since it is an international language used commonly in the tourism segment, also because the target of the questionnaire corresponds to cruisers from diverse nationalities, such as UK, Germany and Italy (Administração do Porto de Lisboa, 2012). The questionnaire was also available in Portuguese, principally to Brazilian and Spanish tourists, since they already have a certain presence in Portuguese ports-of-call, around 2.5% (APL, 2013). It is a short and intuitive questionnaire, containing ten main questions and 12 sub-questions (excluding the final information about cruiser's socio-demographic profile). It is divided in four parts: Group I - Past Experience; Group II – The Cruiser Experience in Lisbon; Group III – Cruiser Behavioral Intentions; and Group IV – Getting to know the passenger. As a basis, it was analyzed the guestions and respective results of a study, conducted by a Portuguese tourism entity (Observatório da Associação de Turismo de Lisboa, 2013), focused on international cruise passengers in Lisbon (the information was collected in 2012).

4.2. Measurement scales

First, a five-point Likert scale was chosen to apply in some critical questions, since this is a non-comparative scale and the most used scaling technique in this type of research. Besides, it is easy to construct, administer and understand. This scale has already been applied by many authors in the area of psychology and marketing, such as Alegre and Garau (2010) and Brida et al. (2012).

4.3. Data collection

The filled questionnaires were gathered between the 30th July 2013 and the 11th September 2013 in the cruise terminals of Santa Apolónia and Alcântara, in Lisbon. Once the objective was to apply the study to a universe of passengers on holiday in a cruise ship with Lisbon as a port-of-call in their cruise itinerary. The size of the sample was defined as a minimum of three hundred observations and the response time of the questionnaire was approximately five minutes. The target was expected to be equal in gender and with an average age of fifty years old, according to international (Cruise Lines International Association, 2008) and national studies (Observatório da Associação de Turismo de Lisboa, 2012) related to cruise passenger profile. After data analysis and removed missing values, we had a final valid sample of 412 questionnaires.

5. Results

5.1. Socio-demographic profile of respondents

As showed in Table 1, there were more repeat cruisers (62%) than first-time cruisers (38%), mostly because the majority of respondents were from UK (69%), lovers of cruise holidays and very well located

Table 1 | Socio-demographic profile of respondents.

		Cruiser experience						
		First-Tim	e Cruiser	Repeat Cruiser		Total		
Gender	Male	68	34%	134	66%	202	49%	
	Female	88	42%	122	58%	210	51%	
	18 to 30 years	32	51%	31	49%	63	15%	
٨٥٥	31 to 45 years	59	46%	70	54%	129	31%	
Age	46 to 60 years	56	34%	111	66%	167	41%	
	> 60 years	9	17%	44	83%	53	13%	
Travelling with	Partner	34	26%	97	74%	131	32%	
	Family	88	40%	133	60%	221	54%	
	Friends	11	73%	4	27%	15	4%	
	Partner and Friends	19	56%	15	44%	34	8%	
	Family and Friends	4	36%	7	64%	11	3%	
6 (0)	UK	97	34%	186	66%	283	69%	
	Spain	22	59%	15	41%	37	9%	
	Germany	15	48%	16	52%	31	8%	
Country of Origin	France	9	50%	9	50%	18	4%	
	USA	2	0%	7	78%	9	2%	
	Others	11	32%	23	68%	34	8%	
Ship	Adventure of the Seas	18	40%	27	60%	45	10,9%	
	Aida Vita	8	50%	8	50%	16	3,9%	
	Balmoral	10	37%	17	63%	27	6,6%	
	Costa Pacifica	21	43%	28	57%	49	11,9%	
	Independence of the Seas	17	25%	52	75%	69	16,7%	
	MSC Opera	36	36%	63	64%	99	24,0%	
	Ventura	46	43%	61	57%	107	26,0%	
Total		156	38%	256	62%	412	100%	

Source: Own elaboration.

to go on a cruise, since Southampton was the most attended Northern European port in 2012 with 1.5 million of passengers (European Cruise Council, 2013). Besides UK, Spain and Germany fill 9% and 8% of the sample, respectively.

A sample distribution by gender yielded for males and females, 49% and 51%, and the average age of the respondents is between the ranges of 31-45 and 46-60 years old. Not only have the mode, but also the median corresponded to the range '46-60'. As the age increases, the percentage of respondents as repeat cruisers increases too. Regarding the composition of the group that is travelling with the respondent, 221 respondents (54%) were accompanied by their 'family' and 131 (32%) were having holiday just with their 'partner'. The remaining 15% is distributed by 'partner and friends', 'friends'

and 'family and friends'. Looking for the cruise ships where tourists that were interviewed came from, 28% of the respondents were travelling in a Royal Caribbean ship, 26% by P&O Cruises (with Ventura), 24% by MSC Cruises and the remaining 22% by Costa (with Costa Pacifica), Aida (with Aida Vita) and Fred Olsen Cruise Lines (with Balmoral).

5.2. Factors influencing satisfaction

Factors influencing satisfaction are shown in table 2. Cruisers assessed local environment with a mean of 3.94, mainly due to lower satisfaction with the 'traffic and maintenance of roads'. On the other hand, they evaluated very well the 'accessibility between the ship (cruise terminal port) and the

Table 2 | Cruiser's satisfaction with the four factors during the visit to Lisbon.

	Mean	SD.	Very unsatisfied				Extremely satisfied
			1	2	3	4	5
Local environment	3.944	0.633					
- Local people and hospitality	4.24	0.733	0.5%	1.3%	10.7%	48.6%	38.9%
- Accessibility - Traffic/	4.33	0.755	1.0%	2.6%	9.9%	40.5%	46.1%
maintenance of roads	3.63	0.942	4.2%	9.1%	34.4%	38.6%	13.7%
- Safety	3.89	0.867	2.4%	6.8%	20.3%	49.3%	21.3%
- Cleaning	3.72	0.904	2.7%	8.8%	26.3%	44.8%	17.5%
- Green areas	3.86	0.920	3.7%	6.6%	23.0%	47.1%	19.7%
- Beaches	3.65	1.365	13.2%	10.5%	23.7%	19.7%	32.9%
Onshore activities/services	4.05	0.650					
- Excursions	3.97	.984	4.2%	3.6%	13.5%	47.9%	30.7%
- Shopping	4.00	.809	2.2%	1.5%	14.6%	57.3%	24.3%
- Cultural and historical places	4.17	.684	0.5%	1.1%	9.8%	58.2%	30.3%
Overall visit experience	4.05	0.650					
- Presence of friends/family	4.13	.784	1.3%	1.9%	11.7%	52.8%	32.3%
- Local cuisine	4.13	.839	0.8%	3.4%	14.3%	45.1%	36.3%
- Crew & Tour Guides support	4.00	.964	2.2%	5.3%	17.5%	40.8%	34.2%
- Climate	4.50	.668	0.7%	0.2%	4.6%	36.9%	57.5%
Price	4.04	0.671					
- Transports	4.02	.862	1.5%	2.9%	18.1%	46.6%	30.9%
- Food & beverage	4.02	.730	0.6%	2.1%	15.6%	58.0%	23.7%
- Touristic attractions	4.06	.766	1.0%	1.9%	15.0%	54.6%	27.5%

Source: Own elaboration.

places they visited', item that got answered by all respondents and the highest weight that summed up in the 'extremely satisfied', level five, around 46% of the answers. 'Local people and hospitality' is also an attribute very well graded. The 'beaches' attribute has a higher standard deviation because some respondents have considered grades of one or two when did not have the opportunity to go to the beach.

Achieving a mean of 4.05, cruisers give also a good feedback in relation to the on-shore activities they chose to pass the day in Lisbon (or other cities around), in particular regarding 'cultural and historical places' they saw and some of them visited. In this dimension, all three items had higher representation in the level four, 'satisfied', with more than 45% of the answers.

Concerning the overall visit experience satisfaction, the climate leads the group of items with a mean of 4.50. In fact, tourists loved the climate conditions, due to the majority of respondents coming from UK, where the climate is not as hot and sunny as in Portugal. With the exception of the climate, all the others items got more feedback in the level four, being satisfied, as the overall visit experience (4.22).

The price, last dimension included in the group of factors, is represented by a mean of 4.04 and the best item in the opinion of tourists was the price of tourist attractions as monuments and museums entrances. excursions fees or bus tour fares. The mean is very similar in the others items, the evaluation of cruisers is concentrated principally in the 'satisfied' rating.

5.3. Overall satisfaction with Lisbon visit

The cruiser's overall satisfaction with the recent visit to Lisbon is shown in table 3. The result is in the level four of the scale ('satisfied'). In fact, almost 60% of people were 'satisfied' and 35% were 'extremely satisfied' with the visit, summing a total of around 94% of positive feedback in relation to the city (Table 3).

5.4. Intentions to return

The third part of the questionnaire also referred to the intention of cruisers in coming again to Portugal. Therefore, 50% of the sample was likely to return and 40% definitely was planning to return, which makes around 90% of the respondents (see table 4). The planning is to return in a medium-term (56%) or even after three years, i.e., in a long-term (26%). Only 67 respondents stated to plan to return in less than 12 months.

Regarding type of tourism and the place, the sample would like to do 'sightseeing' (33%), 'sun & beach' (19%), or both (21%), principally in Lisbon (19%) or Algarve (22%). Madeira and the North are two regions also referenced by the respondents.

5.5. Analysis between factors and overall satisfaction

Although there are other models used to analyze the probability of return, the model used to analyze the data is the regression model, since it is a simple model, which the program SPSS is prepared to give accurate outputs from that model and it is the most appropriate to analyze the different variables that influence satisfaction.

In order to find the best model that explains the overall satisfaction of cruisers (H₄), four regression models were generated, two with the 'Enter' method and the other two with the 'Stepwise' method. The difference between the models with the same method exists in the introduction, or not, of outliers. From the analysis of the outliers, 25 cases were selected with the aim of studying their effect in the respective model. Therefore, the models two and four have as sample 151 cases and not 163. It is important to highlight that the original number of cases is 163 and not 412, due to the 'exclude cases listwise' option because of missing values. Then, when computing the model without the 25 outliers,

Table 3 | Cruiser's overall satisfaction.

	Mean	SD.	Very unsatisfied				Extremely satisfied
			1	2	3	4	5
Overall satisfaction	4.27	0.674	1.2%	0.5%	4.1%	58.7%	35.4%

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 4 | Cruiser's return intention.

	Mean	SD.	Definitely no				Definitely yes
			1	2	3	4	5
Intention to Return	4.26	0.763	0.2%	4.4%	4.9%	50.2%	40.3%

Source: Own elaboration.

some of the cases were previously eliminated by that option, not resulting in a difference of 25 cases between the samples, but only 12 cases. This situation happens with all the models hereby represented.

From the outputs, it was possible to identify the most important indexes to explain overall satisfaction: 'overall visit experience' (H13) and 'price' (H_{1.4}), with model one being the model with the highest percentage of variance explained (27.7%).

5.6. Overall satisfaction and its relationship with intention to return

After considering what kind of variables best fit the relationship with the cruiser's overall satisfaction, it was proposed to analyze the connection between overall satisfaction and intention to return $(H_{2,1})$. Two models were found, one with the entire sample (N=412) and another without the selected outliers (N=406).

The model with the entire sample (model one) presented a higher value. Around 13.6% of the variance of cruiser's return intention to Portugal is explained by the overall satisfaction with the most recent visit to Lisbon.

This result is not as high as wished, namely when the literature gives so intensive focus on that relationship and the feedback resulting from the questionnaire application is so positive. This result is discussed in the next chapter, when conclusions are made.

6. Conclusions and implications

The findings demonstrate that satisfaction in tourism cannot be generalized, since the motivation of a 'sightseeing' tourist is not necessarily the same than the motivation of a cruiser, as well as a repeat traveler can have a different level of motivation than a new one. Therefore, the cost factor continues to be important in the decision-making process and, consequently, for the cruiser's satisfaction.

According to Badarneh and Som (2010, 2011) and Molina et al. (2013), the visit of international tourists in Lisbon can influence their future behavioral intentions in 're-purchasing' the experience. Cruise tourist can indeed establish a long-term relationship with Portugal, returning to Lisbon or other places in Portugal (Brida et al., 2012). However, the efforts to create that relation have to be much bigger than when treating a land tourist, since the loyalty of cruisers is higher, once they are mainly repeat cruisers (Petrick, 2004).

To management, tourism entities should act in the cruise tourism throughout the year, since it is more and more a non-seasonal activity. Moreover, one of the features that more satisfy cruisers is the climate and that is an important advantage of Portugal in comparison to many other countries. Other important factor is age: management should not only focus in older people, but also in catching young people or families that are used to travel by cruise and potentially could return to Portugal in another kind of holiday. Managerial decision should take into account the major nationalities that visit Lisbon by cruise, for instance, English people, and study deeply their profile and interests. Furthermore, the price of food, beverages, transports and tourist attractions showed considerable impact on cruiser's satisfaction and it is important that it continues to be optimized by good offers and agreeable services. To improve, especially the traffic and maintenance of roads and the graffiti evidenced in the Lisbon streets, two points frequently referenced by tourists.

Future studies should collect a larger sample, preferably in different cruise ships sizes, nationalities and adding other demographic characteristics, as the income average or the education background. It could also be interesting to apply the developed model directly to other populations, for instance, in Funchal and compare the outcomes. Would overall satisfaction be the same for different Portuguese ports, especially in Funchal, first in the total of received passengers? Moreover, could this modified model fit other tourism sectors? Could we add more variables to measure the overall satisfaction? These extensions would be important to show generalizability and validity of the proposed model. Other relevant aspect that can be dealt with is the study of the relative importance of each attribute for a tourist, using that outcome to compare with the satisfaction of each attribute. The four dimensions were evaluated according to the satisfaction of each attribute. However, getting to know the importance of each attribute in the overall satisfaction of the tourist could also contribute to the development and improvement of local tourism.

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