

Determinants of Visitor's Overnight Stay in Local Food Festivals: An Exploration of Staycation Concept and Its Relation to the Origin of Visitors

Amanda C. Alexander
Department of Hotel and Restaurant Management
University of Missouri

Kwang-Ho Lee
Department of Hotel and Restaurant Management
University of Missouri

and

Dae-Young Kim
Department of Hotel and Restaurant Management
University of Missouri

ABSTRACT

The primary aims of this study are (1) to explain the concept of “staycation” and its relation to the origin of out-of-market visitors, (2) to explore the determinants of visitors’ overnight stay at a destination, and (3) to examine if there is interaction effect between individual characteristics and distance on length of stay hours in the destination. Data was collected in two local food festivals in the Mid-west area of the U.S in 2010. The results of this study reveal that the geographical distance (i.e., minimum of 100 miles away) is most beneficial in obtaining overnight stays. It is also found that the overnight stays varied depending on individual and trip characteristics of the destination. Furthermore, the length of stay is influenced by the interaction between individual characteristics and distance. Managerial and academia implications are suggested in this study from the significant results and findings.

Keywords: Local food festivals, Staycations, Overnight stay, Length of stay

INTRODUCTION

One of the ways to facilitate economic growth in a local area has been the implementation of festivals as a tourism strategy. Identifying the contribution of a local festival to the destination economy is crucial because the festival as a tourism event affects the local economic development and/or growth. Thus, substantial research that focuses on examining the economic impact in the local festival has pointed out the expenditure as a key element in understanding local economic growth (Felsenstein & Fleischer, 2003; Tyrell & Johnston, 2001). The primary contribution of the local festival in a destination is to increase the visitors’ expenditure for duration of the festival. In this sense, some studies have posited festivals would contribute to local economic growth in examining visitors’ expenditures in order to accurately determine if the festival has an impact on the overall economic (e.g., Hingley, Boone, & Lindgreen, 2010; Felsentein & Fleischer, 2003).

Among various types of local theme festivals in U.S., in particular, the productive festival (i.e., music, food, wine, arts & crafts, or local traditions) creates opportunities for group visitors (i.e., family) to take a productive vacation near home. Thus, the food-related theme festivals that let visitors get the product of wine, organic, and locally grown products have increased in popularity (Van Der Wagen & Carlos, 2005). Due to the popularity of the food festivals, destination management organizations (DMOs) have attempted to hold festivals for their economic growth in their areas. Consequently, determining the factors leading to an increase of visitors' expenditure in a local festival is one of the primary tourism strategies in economic growth.

It has been noted that festival visitors who stay overnight are likely to spend more money throughout all aspects (i.e., lodging, food and beverage, shopping, etc.) as compared to same-day visitors in a festival destination (Kim, Han, & Chon, 2008). This indicates that expenditure would differ by overnight stay at a festival destination. Thus, there should be a research need to examine determinants that increase the likelihood of overnight stay in local festival areas. A substantial amount of studies posited that overnight stay and length of stay varied according to individual characteristics and trip patterns (Alegre & Pou, 2006; Barros, Butler, & Correia, 2010; Gokovalia, Bahara, & Kozakb, 2007; Nicolau, 2008; Nicolau & Más, 2006). Hence, overnight stay and length of stay influencing visitors' expenditure at the destination should be examined in understanding trip patterns of tourists, while considering the concept of staycations. The primary aims of the study are to (1) understand the range from origin to destination in relation to a staycation within the context of local food festivals, to (2) explore the influential predictors of overnight stay, and (3) to examine if there is interaction effect between individual characteristics and distance on length of stay hours (LOS(h)) in the local food festival.

LITURATURE REVIEW

Staycations

As one of the neologism, a staycation refers to “the activity of making a vacation out of staying at home” (Sharma, 2009) and the new term was first used by Massey (2003). In general, the concept of a staycation refers to traveling to destinations closer to home within the context of tourism. Travelers' behaviors in a staycation can be precisely occurred at the moment when domestic travelers are confronted with their mobility and localities from their home to a destination where they have lived all their life (Kelkar, 2010). As a result domestic tourism is expected to increase dramatically with individuals visiting friends and family, revisiting a destination, and destinations with a special interest (Papatheodorou, Rosselló & Xiao, 2010). In related veins, this also means that consumers are showing a trend of traveling closer to home, while staying for shorter periods of time, and wanting money-savings values (UNWTO, 2010). Considering the current tourism trend of staycations, local destination marketing organizations (DMOs) such as Convention and Visitor Bureaus (CVBs) should focus on capturing the attention of potential visitors within a radius that maximizes revenue brought to a city, particularly overnight stays by understanding demographic, individual, and personal trip characteristics of the staycation travelers.

The impact of local food festivals

Festivals are a growing event within the special events sector and are being used as a tool in developing tourism in destinations that are experiencing a lack of tourism activity (Smith & Jenner, 1998). Due to the positive impact of festivals on local economic growth, many local governments in U.S are increasingly interested in attracting tourists to their festival destinations. Festivals typically focus on one or a few special interest areas (e.g., food, wine, or local

traditions) and create opportunities for individuals to take a staycation. This is because some of the retail customers concern and liking of a food product being locally sourced (Mintel, 2010). According to a Van Der Wagen and Carlos' study (2005), food-related local festivals such as wine, organic, and locally grown products have shown an increase in popularity. This means that there is significantly positive contribution of 'food tourism' to local food demand and regional development in a certain area (Hall & Sharples, 2003).

Moreover, a substantial study focuses on identifying the importance of local and regional food businesses in increasing local economy (Hingley, Boone, & Lindgreen, 2010). Thus, it is believed that festivals contribute to local economy, but expenditures that would have taken place in absence of the festival should be addressed as well in order to accurately determine the overall economic impact of the festivals (Felsentein & Fleischer, 2003). In a recent study that evaluated festival attendees expenditures, more interestingly, it has shown that attendees who stayed overnight were more likely to spend more money throughout all aspects (lodging, food and beverage, shopping, admission fees, transportation, entertainment, and others), while attendees that visit the destination for the day are less likely to purchase products in the festival or the local community (Kim, Han, & Chon, 2008). This highlights the positive impact of local food festivals in economically growing a destination.

Determinant of visitors' overnight stay in local food festivals

In a tourism destination, the term 'visitor' is made into two categories: as tourists (i.e., overnight visitors) and same-day visitors (i.e., formerly called 'excursionists') (Theobald, 2005). Tourists who stay overnight at a destination tend to spend the money for their accommodation to extend their trip duration as compared to same-day visitors (Kozak, 2004). That is, the length of stay of visitors might be increased if they stay overnights in a tourism destination (or a festival area). In the sense, it has been posited that the overall impact of tourists in a given economy depends on length of stay that increases their expenditures (de Menezes, Moniz, & Vieira, 2008; Gokovali et al, 2007). With the understanding of the significant economic impact of overnight stay and length of stay on destinations, there is a research need to examine determinants that increase the likelihood of overnight stay in local festival destinations.

In this regard, it is assumed that the probability of overnight stay varies depending on demographic and individual characteristics. As significant determinants of length of stay in a tourism destination, individual characteristics including age, budget, group size, friends, frequent traveler, etc. influence length of stay (Barros & Correia, 2007). In addition, the distance has been utilized for one of the significant factors that influence a destination choice (Fesenmaier, 1988; Nicolau & Más, 2006). This appears that visitors might be longer stay or shorter dependant on origin distance to destination. Furthermore, a substantial amount of studies have examined influential factors in relation to length of stay such as labor status, nationality, the types of accommodation, type of board, number of trips, repeat visitation rate, price as travel motive, size of trip party, daily price of holiday, and total holiday expenditure (Alegre & Pou, 2006; Gokovalia, Bahara, & Kozakb, 2007; Nicolau, 2008) as well as number of persons accompanying the responding tourist, trip purpose (i.e., meeting relatives and friends) (Barros et al. 2010).

METHODS

Out-of-market visitors

The total visitors intercepted in the festival are shown in Table 1. Surveys were collected by asking festival attendees for their voluntary participation in the survey. Visitors were

identified by asking their county and zip code. If an attendee had a zip code within the county where the festival was held, they were thanked for their time and survey was not conducted. A total of 631 festival attendees were intercepted, indicating 418 in festival A and 213 in festival B, respectively. A valid survey is deemed by those attendees that live outside of the festival county and volunteered to complete the survey; a total of 184 respondents (127 in festival A and 57 in festival B) were recruited in this study.

Table 1
Total out-of-market visitors intercepted in the two festivals

Visitors	Festival A (n)	Festival B(n)*	Total
Valid Surveys	127	57	184
First Time Attendees	28 (22.0%)	57 (100%)	85 (46.2%)
Repeat Attendees	99 (88.0%)	-	99 (53.8%)
Visitors from local area	291	156	447
Total Intercepted	418	213	631
Duration	2days	2days	

Note: The valid sample only includes out of county visitors

* Festival B is the first year festival

Survey instrument

A survey of visitors to the two local food festivals in the Mid-west region of the U.S. was conducted during the period from May to June, 2010 to empirically explore the influence of individual characteristics, trip characteristics, and a festival type toward the overnight stay on the local food festivals. Based on the instrument derived from the previous studies regarding individual characteristics influencing visitors' overnight stay and length of stay in a destination (Alegre & Pou, 2006; Barros & Correia, 2007; Gokovali et al. 2007; Barros et al. 2010), the survey instrument included questions on individual characteristics such as "how many years were you an attendee to the festival", "primary reason for participation in the festival", and "having friends and relatives in the festival area". In regard with trip characteristics, "number of accompanied persons", "overnight stay (and stay duration)", "ratio of out-of-market visitors in group", "distance between origin and festival destination", and "total budget on retail" were included in the questionnaire.

Data analysis

This study conducted data analyses as follows. First of all, the frequency analysis was conducted to identify the respondent characteristics. Second, the logistic regression analysis was conducted to examine the probability of overnight stay influenced by respondents' individual, trip characteristics, and festival types. Lastly, interaction effects between trip types and distance on length of stay (LOS(h)) in local food festival area were identified in application of a 2 x 2 ANOVA analysis.

RESULTS

Respondent characteristics

The two local festivals analyzed are Food & Wine Festival and Farm to Table Festival that takes place in the city of Columbia in the Mid-west region of the U.S. The individual differences in regards to trip characteristics for the two festivals are as follows: 82.6% of attendees were first time visitors, with 17.4% being repeat attendees. In terms of the primary reason for visiting the host county, 78.8% indicated that the festival was their primary reason for visiting Boone County. 67.9% of them had a relative that resides in the area of the festival, while 64.1% indicated that their travel group stayed overnight. The mean value of accompanied people within a group is 1.73, with 86.12% of the people within the group being visitors outside of the host county. The average length of stay for visitors was 45.13 hours with an average traveled distance of 96.83 miles. Information obtained about travel budget reveals that the average visitor allocated for \$181.58 for retail items.

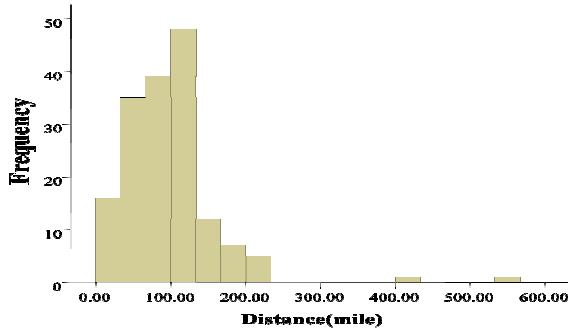
Table 2
Respondent Characteristics in the Local Food Festivals

Variable		Frequency(n)	Ratio(%)
Festival Types	First year festiva	57	31.0
	Annual festival	127	69.0
Individual and Trip characteristics			
Number of visit to the festival	First time visit	152	82.6
	Repeated visit	32	17.4
Primary reason is for festival	Yes	145	78.8
	No	39	21.2
I have relative persons in the festival area	Yes	125	67.9
	No	59	32.1
Overnight stay	Yes	118	64.1
	No	66	35.9
		Scale	Mean
		Std. D	
Number of accompanied persons	(N)	1.73	1.04
Ratio of outside visitors in group	(%)	86.12	24.28
Length of stay	(Hour)	45.13	24.90
Distance from origin to destination	(Mile)	96.83	62.97
Total budget on retail	(\$)	181.58	120.71

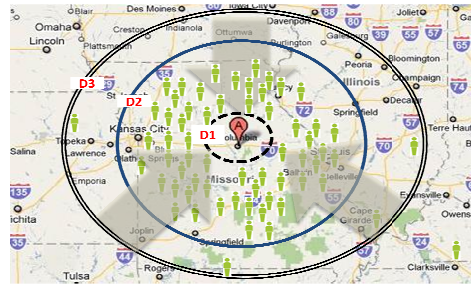
Geographical approach in local food festival promotion

Figure 1 indicates the range of distance between visitors' origin and the festival destination. The observed average distance range was 96.83 mile (SD=62.97) from origin to festival destination (n=184), minimum=21.70 mile, and maximum=539.00 mile. It is expected that the primary range of staycations in local food festival would be from D1 to D2. This shows that destination management organizers (DMOs) and Convention and Visitor Bureaus (CVB)

could designate the range of staycations as mainstream areas within geographical promotional approach.



Note: N=184, Mean=96.84, Std. Dev=62.97,



Note: A= Festival place, D= Distance; D1 (within 20mile), D2 (within 200mile), D3 (Within 400mile)

Figure 1
The Distance from Origin to Destination in Local Festival

Factors influencing the overnight stay of local food festival

In order to examine the influence of individual and trip characteristics on overnight stay in the local food festivals, “Yes” of overnight stay was coded “1” while “No” was coded “0”, and a binary logic analysis was applied. In regard with aforementioned individual and trip characteristics, the ratio of overnight stay in the festival destination was approximately 64% average, indicating higher ratio than others who do not stay overnight in the local festival area. The results of binary logic estimations for local food festival visitors are shown in Table 2. Overall, the results indicate that prediction of the probability of overnight stay can be significantly improved by knowing respondents individual, trip characteristics, and festival type. The percent correct reaches 64.1% and this improvement is statistically significant at .01 significant level (Chi-square= 99.416, and df = 8).

The results show that the probability of overnight stay varies depending on respondents’ individual, trip characteristics, and festival types (i.e., new and existing). The likelihood of overnight stay in the festival area decreases by about 77% ($1 - \exp(0.128)$) when respondents’ primary purpose is not for festival participation. The probability of overnight stay increases by about 13 times ($\exp(13.279)$) when they have relative persons near the festival area. In addition, the likelihood of overnight stay is almost 3 times when the ratio of outside visitors in group increases by one percent ($\exp(2.831)$). In terms of trip characteristics, the probability of overnight stay in a festival place decreases by about 50% ($1 - \exp(0.539)$) as one person is added to the accompanied group. The likelihood of overnight stay increases by about 5% ($\exp(1.005)$) and about 9% ($\exp(1.009)$) when the distance between origin and festival destination increases by 100 mile and total budget on retail increases by 100 dollars, respectively. Lastly, in regard with festival types, the probability of overnight stay increases by about 6 times ($\exp(6.490)$) when the first time festival is held.

Table 3
Influential Factors on Overnight Stay in the Festivals

Variables	B	Exp (B)
<i>Individual characteristics</i>		
Primary purpose was for festival (Yes) ^D	-2.055*	.128
I have relative persons in the festival area (Yes) ^D	4.636**	13.279
First visit to the festival (Yes) ^D	.852	2.343
The ratio of outside visitors in group ^a	1.041**	2.831
<i>Trip characteristics</i>		
Number of accompanied persons	-.617*	.539
Distance from origin to destination (mile)	.005**	1.005
Total budget for the festival (\$)	.009*	1.009
<i>Festival type</i>		
First time festival (Yes) ^D	1.870**	6.490
Model Chi-square (sig.)		99.416(.000)
-2 Log likelihood		140.764
% correct		64.1
Nagelkerke R2		.573

D: Discrete response

*p<.05, **p<.01

^a The ratio= Number of outside visitors/Total visitors in group

Results of interaction effects

In the next phase of data analysis, all dependent measures were submitted to a 2 x 2 analysis of variance (ANOVA) with visitors' trip characteristics (i.e., single versus group) and distance (high versus low) as the independent variables. In terms of the independent variables, trip types and distance were coded as the categorically "high (1)" and "low (0)" levels on the basis of the summated mean values of each dimension.

Figure 2 indicates interaction effects between trip types (single vs. group) and distance (high vs. low) on length of stay (LOS(h)) in local food festival area. The results revealed that there was a no main effect for trip types, $F=.894$, $p>.05$, whereas there was a statistically significant main effect for distance (high vs. low), $F=33.239$, $p<.01$. In terms of the interaction effect, it was found that there was interaction effects for distance and trip types on LOS(h), $F=5.187$, $p<.05$, and $R^2 =.22$, indicating that the effect of trip types on LOS(h) was greater in high [Single: $M(SD)=88.00(12.28)$; Group: $M(SD)=66.00(4.02)$], rather than low [Single: $M=33.10(3.95)$; Group: $M(SD)=42.19(1.91)$] distance condition.

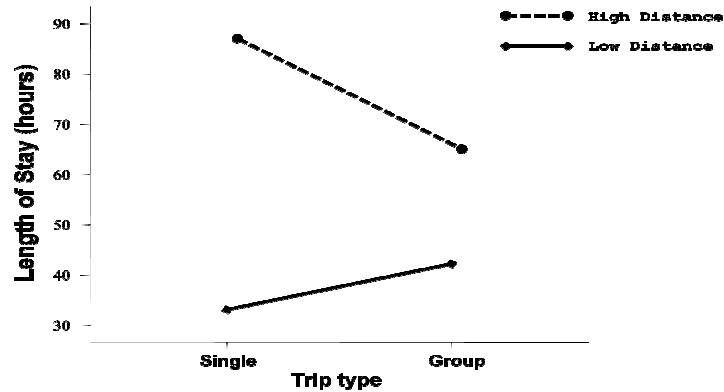


Figure 2. Interaction effect between trip type and distance on LOS(h)

CONCLUSIONS

Considering the current economic situation in U.S, destination management organizations should focus on examining new marketing strategies to develop and increase the local economy. As one of the significant tool in the local economic growth, holding a local festival leads to visitors' expenditure in a destination. Thus, this study attempted to identify the influential factors of overnight stay on an increase of visitors' expenditure. Regarding this, the primary purpose of this study was to identify the determinants of what causes an individual to be a tourist of a festival destination and to stay overnight in an exploration of a staycation concept and its relation to the origin of visitors.

As an empirical study, data was collected through a questionnaire conducted in two local food festivals in the Mid-west area of the U.S in 2010. The results of this study revealed the geographical distance (i.e., minimum of 100 miles away) that is most beneficial in obtaining overnight stays. The results also showed that probability of overnight stay varies depending on respondents' individual, trip characteristics, and festival types (i.e., new and existing). The results above are consistent with previous studies that suggests length of stay at a festival destination varies relying on individual characteristics, trip patterns, and festival type, including "number of visit to the festival", "primary reason for participation in the festival", and "having friends and relatives in the festival area", "number of accompanied persons", "ratio of out-of-market visitors in group", "distance from origin to festival destination", "total budget on retail", and "festival type" (Alegre & Pou, 2006; Barros et al, 2010; Gokovalia et al, 2007; Nicolau, 2008; Nicolau & Más, 2006). Moreover, the results indicated that there was interaction effects for distance and trip types on LOS(h), indicating that the effect of trip types on LOS(h) was greater in high, rather than low distance condition.

With the understanding of the results of empirical analyses, there are several implications raised by this research. First, the DMOs need to consider the geographical distance to promote their festivals. Thus, they should focus more on the range of distance between visitors' origin and the festival destination in promoting their festivals to potential visitors. As a result, DMOs can minimize the promotional cost in festivals. Second, the individual characteristics and trip patterns in local festivals are significant determinants of what causes the visitors to stay overnight at a festival destination. That is, the understanding of the visitors' characteristics and trip patterns would be crucial for DMOs to decide their marketing strategies in developing the local festivals. Hence, this effort might result in local economic growth. Third, the length of stay at a festival destination is influenced by the interaction between trip type (individual travelers vs. group travelers) and distance condition (high vs. low). This implies that the promotional

strategies should be considered for both individual travelers and group travelers in the range of promotional distance (i.e., minimum mile vs. maximum mile) between visitors' origin and the festival destination. With regard to the managerial implications, it would be of potential value for each DMO in U.S. to have a deeper insight into the variables that shape the decisions and actions of local festival travelers in each destination.

This paper has two main limitations. First, the sample procedure adopted was restricted to a single destination, thus the conclusions and implications are limited. Second, in order to draw more generalized conclusions, a larger data set involving multiple local festivals would be necessary, but the heterogeneity issue would presumably still remain.

REFERENCES

- Alegre, J., & Pou, L. (2006). The length of stay in the demand for tourism. *Tourism Management*, 27 (6), 1343–1355.
- Barrosa, C. P., & Correia, A. (2007). *Survival analysis in tourism demand: The length of stay in Latin American destinations*, Working papers. Portugal: University of the Algarve.
- Barros, C. P., Butler, R. & Correia, A. (2010). The length of stay of golf tourism: A survival analysis. *Tourism Management*, 31 (1), 13–21.
- de Menzes, G., Moniz, A & Vieira, C. (2008). The determinants of length of stay of tourists in the Azores. *Tourism Economics*, 14 (1), 205–222.
- Felsentein, D. & Fleischer, A. (2003). Local festivals and tourism promotion: the role of public assistance and visitor expenditure. *Journal of Travel Research*, 41 (4), 385-392.
- Fesenmaier, D. R. (1988). Integrating activity patterns into destination choice models. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 20 (3), 175–191.
- Gokovalia, U., Bahara, O., & Kozakb. M. (2007). Determinants of length of stay: A practical use of survival analysis. *Tourism Management*, 28 (3), 736–746.
- Hall, C. M. & Sharples, L. (2003), Consuming places: the role of food, wine and tourism in regional development, in C.M. Hall, L. Sharples, R. Mitchell, N. Macionis and B. Cambourne, *Food Tourism Around the World: Development, management and markets*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 25-59.
- Hingley, M., Boone, J., & Lindgreen, A. (2010). *Development of local and regional food networks: Cases from the UK*, Competitive Paper, Special track on cluster initiatives, networks and regional development, 1-21.
- Kelkar, K. (2010). The great American staycation and the risk of stillness summer time fun: Staycations, big trips and sending kids off examiner staff writer, May 23. <<http://www.sfexaminer.com/local/Summertime-fun-Staycations-big-trips-and-sending-kids-off-94600299.html>>.
- Kim, S. S., Han, H., & Chone, K. (2008). Estimation of the determinants of expenditures by festival visitors, *Tourism Analysis*, 13 (4), 387-400.
- Kozak, M. (2004). *Destination benchmarking: Concepts, practices and operations*. Oxon: CAB International.
- Mak, J., Moncur, J., & Yonamine, D. (1977). Determinants of visitor expenditures and visitor length of stay: A cross-section analysis of US visitors to Hawaii. *Journal of Travel Research*, 15 (3), 5–8.

- Mak, J., & Nishimura, E. (1979). The economics of a hotel room tax. *Journal of Travel Research*, 17 (4), 2–6.
- Massey, T. (2003). Sports world doesn't stop for vacation. *The Myrtle Beach Sun-News*, July 11.
- Mintel. (2010). *Consumer Food Labelling - UK - January 2010*. London: Mintel.
- Nicolau, J. L. (2008). Characterizing tourist sensitivity to distance. *Journal of Travel Research*, 47 (1), 43-52.
- Nicolau, J. L. & Más, F. J. (2006). The influence of distance and prices on the choice of tourist destinations: The moderating role of motivations, *Tourism Management*, 27(5), 982–996.
- Papatheodorou, A., Rosello, J., & Xiao, H. (2010). Global economic crisis and tourism: consequences and perspectives. *Journal of Travel Research*, 49 (1), 39-45.
- Sharma, S. (2009). The great American staycation and the risk of stillness, *M/C Journal*, 12(1).
- Smith, C., & Jenner. P. (1998). The impact of festivals and special events on tourism, occasional studies. *In Travel and Tourism Analyst*, 4. London: Economist Publications.
- Theobald, W. F. (2005). *The meaning, scope, and measurement of travel and tourism*. *Global Tourism*. Burlington, MA: Elsevier Inc.
- Tyrell, T. & Johnston, R. (2001). A framework for assessing direct economic impacts of tourism events: distinguishing origins, destinations, and causes of expenditures. *Journal of Travel Research*, 40 (1), 94-100.
- Van Der Wagen, L. & Carlos, B. (2005). *Event management for tourism, cultural, business, & sporting events*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.