PREDICTING VACATION RENTAL INTENTIONS ALONG THE

FLORIDA/ALABAMA GULF COAST USING

THE THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOR

by

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ABSTRACT

Most research predicting future behaviors have used the Theory of Reasoned Action or the Theory of Planned Behavior. A visitor's intention to return has been used as a measure of potential repeat patronage in travel and tourism research. As real estate development companies continue to saturate the tourism market, it is becoming more important for management companies to retain and build their existing client base. According to Petrick, Morais, and Norman, "with a market that appears to be getting more competitive every year, it is becoming more and more important for managers at entertainment destinations to examine the variables related to attracting and retaining entertainment travelers." Research reports that companies find it more cost efficient to focus on retaining clients rather than seeking new ones. Resorts may gain important information for accomplishing this objective by attempting to understand visitors' intentions to return. While intent does not guarantee behavior, past research has linked intentions to actual behavior. Understanding visitors' intentions and their psychosocial antecedents can thus provide useful marketing information.

This study focused on vacation rentals (nontraditional whole-ownership condominium resorts) along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast. The Theory of Planned Behavior has been used successfully in predicting and explaining visitor intentions in traditional lodging markets such as the hotel/motel market. However, the theory has not been used to understand the vacation rental market. In the downswing of the current

economy and with the increase of industry competition for gaining market share, there is

a need for better understanding the underlying variables that affect customer retention.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the relation between intention to

return to a vacation rental along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast and the antecedent

variables of attitude, social influence, and perceived behavioral control.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Within the travel and tourism industry, there are two basic categories of lodging: traditional and nontraditional. Traditional lodging is made up of hotels, motels, resorts, and conference centers. Nontraditional lodging is comprised of whole-ownership condominium resorts and interval-ownership properties (Gentry, Mandoki, & Rush, 1999). This study focused on vacation rentals, specifically, nontraditional whole-ownership condominium resorts along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast. This area is often referred to as the "Emerald Coast" or the "Florida Panhandle," and is located along the Gulf of Mexico. The term "vacation rental" was used to represent the accommodations at a tourist destination consisting of single- or multifamily condominium or single-home dwellings within a resort community in which the leisure visitor stays fewer than 30 days (Florida State Statutes, 2006).

Most research predicting future behaviors have used the Theory of Reasoned Action or the Theory of Planned Behavior (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; Petrick, Morias, & Norman, 2001). A visitor's intention to return has been used as a measure of potential repeat patronage in travel and tourism research (AGCCVB, 2008; Lee, Petrick, & Crompton, 2007; Majority Opinion Research, 2008; Petrick et al., 2001). As real estate development companies continue to saturate the tourism market, it is becoming more important for management companies to retain and build their existing client base.

According to Petrick, Morais, and Norman (2001), "with a market that appears to be getting more competitive every year, it is becoming more and more important for managers at entertainment destinations to examine the variables related to attracting and retaining entertainment travelers" (p. 46). Research reports that companies find it more cost efficient to focus on retaining clients rather than seeking new ones (Anderson & Fornell, 1994; Anderson, Fornell, & Lehmann, 1994; Best, 2004; Iwasaki & Havitz, 1998; Petrick, Tonner & Quinn, 2006; Williams & Buswell, 2003). Resorts may gain important information for accomplishing this objective by attempting to understand visitors' intentions to return. While intent does not guarantee behavior, past research has linked intentions to actual behavior (Brock, 1965; Dembroski, Lasater, & Rameriez, 1978; Mazen & Leventhal, 1972). Understanding visitors' intentions and their psychosocial antecedents can thus provide useful marketing information.

Intention to return or repurchase has been the preferred focus of measurement in the tourism literature. Intention can be thought of as the likelihood that an individual will perform a particular behavior. Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) defined intention as "…a person's location on a subjective probability dimension involving a relation between himself and some action. A behavioral intention therefore, refers to a person's subjective probability that he will perform some behavior" (p. 288). If resort companies choose to focus on increasing visitors' intentions to return, they should be able to identify the contributing factors and influences that affect visitors' decisions. The Theory of Planned Behavior has been tested successfully model in a wide range of contexts and disciplines, including tourism and hospitality, for making those determinations (Quintal, Lee, & Soutar, 2010; Sparks & Pan, 2009).

According to the Theory of Planned Behavior, there are three latent constructs that influence a person's intentions and behaviors. As Ajzen (1985) explains, these constructs are attitude, social influence (often called subjective norm), and perceived behavioral control. Ajzen and Driver (1991) state that the theory… "postulates that performance or nonperformance of a behavior is a function of salient information, or beliefs, relevant to the behavior. These salient beliefs are considered to be the prevailing determinants of a person's actions" (p. 186). The beliefs are behavioral (attitude), normative (social influences), and control (perceived behavioral control). To clarify, these beliefs are the underlying foundation of attitudes, social influences, and perceived behavioral control. These three constructs combine together to form a person's intentions, which ultimately should drive the actual behaviors.

Several studies have utilized the Theory of Planned Behavior in tourism markets, but not specifically in the vacation rental market. Some of these studies include research on future travel behaviors (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980), leisure activity intention and actual behaviors (Driver & Ajzen, 1992), choice of travel mode (Bamberg, Ajzen, & Schmidt, 2003), sports participation (Kanters, Bocarro, Casper, & Forrester, 2008), culture and leisure constraints (Walker, Jackson, & Deng, 2007), and playing the lottery (Walker, Courneya, & Deng, 2006). The Theory of Planned Behavior ultimately seeks to predict and understand behaviors through a set of mediating relations. According to the theory, the most direct predictor of behaviors is behavioral intentions. Beliefs provide the ultimate foundation of intention but the effect of select kinds of beliefs are mediated through attitude, social influence, and perceived behavioral control. According to Ajzen (2002), "They [beliefs] are assumed to provide the cognitive and affective foundations

for attitudes, subjective norms, and perceptions of behavioral control" (p. 7). The Theory of Planned Behavior has been used successfully in predicting and explaining visitor intentions in traditional lodging markets such as the hotel/motel market (Casaló, Flavián, & Guinalíu, 2010; Han, Hsu, & Sheu, 2010; Huh, Kim, & Law, 2009; Kim, Lee, & Law, 2008; Sparks, 2007). The theory has not been used to understand the vacation rental market. Among the characteristics that make the vacation rental market different than the traditional rental market are the size of the units, the full kitchen, the rental process, and housekeeping services. These differences suggest that previous research done on traditional rentals may not apply to vacation rentals. Thus, research is needed to understand intention formation in this specific area of the tourism industry.

Most people act in accordance with their intentions, but sometimes unforeseen events may alter their behavior. A person's intention can change over time as new belief structures alter attitudes, responses to social influence, and perceptions of control over one's choices. For example, a family may have a strong intention to rebook their vacation for the following year. However, unforeseen events happen during the course of the year (e.g., a child may get sick, or a father may lose his job). These events could alter belief structures, attitudes, social influence factors, and perceptions of decision control. Such cascading changes could decrease an initial intention to perform the behavior of rebooking the next year's vacation. The longer the time interval between a formed intention and the actual behavior, the greater the likelihood the intention may change due to outside factors that alter belief structures (Ajzen, 1985). Examples of variables that might alter belief structure are major downturns in the economy resulting in people being conservative with their discretionary income, the occurrence of hurricanes, terrorist

threats or acts, the dramatic increase in gas prices, or a disastrous oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

Florida receives substantial economic benefit from its visitors. In 2006, there were 84 million visitors who collectively spent $65 billion. The tourism industry employs 7.3 million people in direct travel-generated jobs with $163 billion in payroll annually. One in every eight jobs is directly or indirectly created by tourism (Haas Center of University of West Florida, 2009). Destination managers take responsibility for "manipulating specific attributes of the environment to enhance their visitors' experience" (Stewart & Carpenter, 1984, p. 4). In the downswing of the current economy and with the increase of industry competition for gaining market share, there is a need for better understanding the underlying variables that affect customer retention (Petrick, 2004b). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the relation between intention to return to a vacation rental along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast and the antecedent variables of attitude, social influence, and perceived behavioral control.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is to examine previous research and the theoretical

framework of the Theory of Planned Behavior. This literature review begins with a

thorough description of the population of interest for this study, and then discusses the

concepts regarding behavioral intentions, attitudes, social influence, and perceived

behavioral controls. These variables are all components of the theory and this dissertation

explains its application to a vacation rental setting along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast.

The review of this literature concludes with the study's hypotheses.

Population Characteristics

This study targeted visitors at tourist destinations along the Gulf Coast in

Southern Alabama and Northwest Florida. It specifically focused on visitors at the

vacation rentals/resorts of Baldwin County (Gulf Shores and Orange Beach, Alabama),

Escambia County (Perdido Key and Pensacola, Florida), Okaloosa County (Fort Walton

Beach and Destin, Florida), Walton County (Destin, Seaside, and Rosemary Beach,

Florida), and Bay County (Panama City Beach, Florida). The population of interest for

this study were guests of resort and property management companies specializing in

vacation condominiums and rental homes. All of these vacation sites are located along a

125-mile stretch of beaches lining the Gulf of Mexico. In 2008, this area brought in $968 million in lodging rentals.

The vacation rental industry has quadrupled in size since the early 1990s. In Walton County, Florida, the bed tax collected was just above one million dollars in 1992. The bed tax was passed in 1985 as a means for generating revenue for beach improvements and cleanup for tourists and strategic marketing tactics for the area. Currently, over 1,230 hotel, motel, and vacation rental businesses contribute to this tax. In the year 2008, controlling for the rate percentage increase, over 5.5 million dollars were collected (Walton County Tax Collectors, 2009). In the other four counties of the study area, the growth was approximately four times the amount collected in 1992 (AGCCVB, 2009; Bay County Tax Collectors, 2009; Escambia County Tax Collectors, 2009; Okaloosa Tax Collectors, 2009, Santa Rosa County Tax Collectors, 2009).

For this study, guests of "vacation rentals" were leisure visitors who stayed fewer than 30 days at a tourism destination in accommodations consisting of a single or multi-family condominium or single home dwelling within a resort community (Florida State Statutes, 2006). A typical vacation rental can be comprised of a two- or three-bedroom condominium that has a full kitchen, at least two bathrooms, a balcony, living room with a sleeper sofa, and a large dining room. The homes have from three to seven bedrooms, often with luxurious amenities. These rentals are fully furnished, including a washer and dryer, all kitchen appliances and dishware, televisions, stereos, DVD players, etc. All the amenities of home are provided for each renter. These rentals are individually owned and decorated; no two rentals are the same. A property management company is typically hired by the homeowner to manage the property. This is done with families purchasing a

vacation home or condominium and choosing to use it as an investment. A percentage of the rental monies earned is paid to the management company by the individual homeowners (Gentry, Mandoki, & Rush, 1999).

Market research studies of the Florida and Alabama Gulf Coast indicate that a large percentage (50%) of the visitors is from the Southeast United States and this tourist area has been identified as a drive market destination (AGCCVB, 2009; Majority Opinion Research, 2008). The largest percentage (46.5%) of renters is families. The age range of the typical visitor is 35 to 65 years old, with the mean around 46 years old. The families usually have from one to four children, and sometimes grandparents or extended family will accompany them. With the accommodations having several bedroom options, often times several families will join in together to make larger rental homes more affordable. The typical vacation rental family is upper middle class or above, with the average household income reported at $144,879 during the summer of 2007. The average length of stay is 5.3 nights. This is a slight decrease from previous years. The spending average per party is above $3,000 per visit, or approximately $600 per day. Spending figures are based on accommodations, restaurants, shopping, groceries, gasoline, and other purchases (Majority Opinion Research, 2008). Sixty-five percent of visitors are repeat visitors, leaving 35% as first time visitors to the area (AGCCVB, 2009). The majority of tourists visiting the area come from states that neighbor or nearly neighbors the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast, including Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Missouri, Tennessee, Illinois, and Indiana. Very few tourists fly into these areas due to high costs.

Behavioral Intentions - Dependent Variable

Fishbein and Ajzen's research (1980) was aimed at understanding attitude-behavior consistency. Their research program resulted in the development of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). The theory assumes that behaviors are frequently a consequence of reasoning processes. Behaviors are a product of intentions to behave in select ways, attitudes toward performing, and social influence under conditions of volitional choice. The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is an extension of the TRA. This study used the TPB to predict and understand cognitive formation of intention to use vacation rentals along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast during the next 2 years.

According to the TPB, the importance of behavioral intention is that it is the most immediate determinant of behavior. The TPB states that people are expected to act on their intentions, if all aspects of the situation remain constant when the intention was formed. However, there are many unforeseen situations that can alter a person's intentions, such as new information or events that occur during the time between intention formation and performance of a behavior. Ajzen (1985) states, "actions are controlled by intentions, but not all intentions are carried out; some [intentions] are abandoned altogether, some are revised to fit changing circumstances" (p. 11). Given that intentions are often not carried out, it is still important to understand the cognitive structure of intention formation since such understanding has important implications for marketing, program design, and efforts to enrich visitor experiences.

Intentions Defined

Intentions are derived from a series of thoughts, beliefs, and prior experiences that help formulate an action plan for behaviors. Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) define intention as "a person's location on a subjective probability dimension involving a relation between himself and some action. A behavioral intention, therefore, refers to a person's subjective probability that he will perform some behavior" (p. 288). In order to develop a person's intentions, a series of beliefs or predictors are needed. Fishbein and Ajzen recommend that intentions relate better to a set of predictors instead of a single item.

The beliefs or predictors may be influenced by many factors and therefore change the intentions of the action plan before the behavior occurs. These changes are referred to as *cognitive changes of intention*. Some factors reported to influence these changes are environmental in nature (time constraints, complexity), reference groups, and personal skills and abilities (Tubbs & Ekeberg, 1991). By further breaking down the relation between attitude and behavior, Fishbein and Ajzen (1980) and Tubbs and Ekeberg (1991) identify the following elements associated with intentions: *target, action, context,* and *time (TACT)*. The TACT elements determine the overall specificity of the behavior in question. For example, "I intend to rebook a vacation rental along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast before next summer." This statement provides a detailed description of when and where the action is to occur. The action portion refers to what is to occur; in this example, the action is rebooking. The target refers to the object to receive the action, thus the vacation rental. Context refers to the situational aspects associated with the behavior: along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast. Finally, time influences the behavior by

answering when the behavior is to occur. In the example, "before next summer" represents the time.

The TACT elements can vary in generality or specificity to better measure the behavior; for example, the more specific the elements, the more restrictive the measurement process. However, specificity can lead a person to clearly identify their determinants to form their intention regarding the behavior. If managed correctly, the TACT elements are what can be adjusted to actually affect the direction of the intentions, therefore driving behaviors (Ajzen, 2006).

Fishbein and Ajzen's research determined that intentions are affected by two principal factors. These are *attitudes* and social influences *(subjective norms)*. Attitude is defined by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) as "a person's location on a bipolar evaluative or affective dimension with respect to some object" (p. 11), whereas a subjective norm refers to the approval or disapproval individuals perceive they will encounter from significant others (e.g., parents, family members, friends) if a behavior occurs (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). These two components vary in influence depending on the intention to be formed. Attitude represents overall favorability associated with a person's intentions, but intentions should not be assumed to determine attitudes. Social pressure and external factors can guide subjective norms, but do not necessarily direct them (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). These are two of the three factors that play an important role in the TPB, which describes why people may repeat a specific behavior under volitional circumstances.

Ajzen introduced a third predictor of intention in 1985 called *perceived behavioral control*. In an expansion of the TRA, Ajzen takes into account perceived control and actual control over the behavior, that is, volitional choice. He saw that the

two factors of attitudes and subjective norms were not enough to completely explain a person's intentions under conditions of limited volition. The attitude and subjective norm factors (motivational factors) seemed appropriate under volitional circumstances. However, under nonvolitional circumstances, prediction and understanding could be increased by examining factors that affect intention that explicitly recognize one's ability to control the behavior. Examples of such factors might be time, money, skills, and cooperation from others (Ajzen, 1985; Hrubes, Ajzen, & Daigle, 2001). Ajzen (1985) found the relationship between intentions and behaviors to be more reliable: "successful performance of the behavior is contingent on the person's control over the various factors that may prevent it" (p. 29). With the addition of perceived behavioral control to attitudes and subjective norms, the TPB can better explain the relationship between intentions and behaviors (Ajzen, 1985; Hrubes, Ajzen, & Daigle, 2001).

It has been suggested that motivations are linked to attitudes in order to direct intentions (Manfredo, Driver & Tarrent, 1996; Milne, Orbell & Sheeran, 2002). The main idea behind motivations is that human behavior is based on cognitive forces that draw a person to an activity and the satisfaction becomes an appraisal of the degree of achievement, performance, or reward (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977). Motivations are frequently used in the leisure travel literature (Fisher & Price, 1991; Li, Cheng, Kim & Petrick, 2008; Oh, Uysal, & Weaver, 1995; Ralston, 1996), and are typically treated as an antecedent to behavior. Among the important kinds of motivation thought to influence recreation behavior are socializing with others, escape to nature, enhancing skills, enjoying wilderness, and bringing family together (Ewert, 1993; Mannell & Iso-Ahola, 1987; Manning 1999).

Motivational factors together with the TACT elements make the person aware of the details (i.e., expectations, outcomes, costs) involved in the behavior. "Intentions are assumed to capture motivational factors that will influence a behavior; they are indicators of how hard people are willing to try, of how much of an effort people are planning to exert, in order to perform the behavior" (Ajzen, 1991, p. 181). This decreases the element of risk for the participant. They are able to evaluate the outcomes of whether or not to perform the behavior and make a more informed decision (Ajzen, 2006; Ajzen, 1991).

Intentions are measured by utilizing the likelihood that an individual will perform a behavior. On a national average the Travel Industry of America (TIA, 2005) has reported as many as 60% of resort guests are repeat visitors. The Tourist Development Council of South Walton County (Florida) and the Alabama Gulf Coast Convention and Visitors Bureau conduct annual research to determine the makeup of their visitor mix. This research indicates that 65% of visitors intend to return to the destination for future visits. It was also found that 35% of all guests were first-time visitors (AGCCVB, 2009; Majority Opinion Research, 2008). Understanding that destinations cannot solely target first-time visitors, it is very important to recognize the differences between first-time and repeat visitors (Opperman, 1997; Petrick, 2004a). Many visitors make their decision to return or not during their first experience at a particular destination based on quality, not value or price (Petrick, 2004a). In the resort sector of travel and tourism, the ability of a resort to positively affect the visitor's intention to return is critical to the resort's longevity.

Theoretical Framework

Intentions can best be understood through an examination of the TPB. Ajzen (2001) depicted the TPB to capture the specific reasons why people act the way they do. The theory states "people act in accordance with their intentions and perceptions of control over the behavior, while intentions in turn are influenced by attitudes towards behavior, subjective norms, and perception of behavioral control" (p. 43). Westaby (2005) has referred to these three constructs as 'global motives,' defined as "broad substantial factors that consistently influence intentions across diverse behavioral domains" (p. 98). These determinants can be further described as follows: a favorable or unfavorable evaluation of the behavior (attitude toward the behavior), perceived social pressure to perform or not perform the behavior (subjective norm), and the perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behavior (perceived behavioral control) (Ajzen, 2002; Ajzen, Brown, & Carvajal, 2004). Bandura (1982, 1997) introduced the concept of perceived self-efficacy, which refers to beliefs about what one can do under different sets of conditions with whatever skills one possesses. These determinants are contextualized to the specific behavior under investigation and are presumed to serve as the fundamental reasons that drive intentions (Westaby, 2005). The more positive people's attitudes and subjective norms, and the greater their perceived behavioral control regarding a behavior, the more likely they are to intend to perform that behavior. Similarly, the stronger people's intentions, the more likely they are to perform the behavior. To the extent that perceptions of control accurately reflect the person's actual control over behavioral performance, perceived behavioral control can also directly affect behavior (Rivis & Sheeran, 2002). This process, however, does not guarantee the behavior will actually

occur. The TPB has been and continues to be applied successfully to a diverse range of behavioral domains for predicting behavior and behavioral intentions (Ajzen, Brown, & Carvajal, 2004; Cohen, Lindblad, Paik, & Quercia, 2009), and is considered the dominant reason for the relationship between cognitions and behaviors in social psychology (Cooke & Sheeran, 2004). A further look into these determinants of the TPB will help to identify the manner in which intentions can be guided and are explored during the independent variable portion of this study.

Attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral controls act together as the motivational determinants that affect a person's intentions. "Intentions play an important role in guiding human action, but recent research also reveals the complexities involved in translating intentions into actual behavior" (Ajzen, 2001, p. 47).

<div align="center">History of Theory of Planned Behavior</div>

The TPB is the product of many years of theory building and research. In the late 1950s, research on predicting and understanding an individual's behavior focused mainly on attitude theory and measurement (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1980). Most attitude theories originate from social psychology (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). In 1967, Martin Fishbein with Icek Ajzen introduced the model incorporating a relationship between a person's beliefs and attitudes, called "a Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)."

The TPB is built on the foundation of the TRA. The TRA is "based on the assumption that human beings are usually quite rational and make systematic use of the information made available to them" (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1980, p. 5). People evaluate the implications of their actions and in most cases do not just act automatically. There are several steps used in conducting a study based on the TRA. The first step is to identify

and measure the behavior of interest. Secondly, determinants of a person's intentions must be identified and measured. The theory states that two determinants of intention are of a personal and social nature; these are *attitude toward the behavior* and *subjective norm.* A person's attitude determines intention through an evaluation of the goodness or badness of performing a behavior. Subjective norm determines intention via the social pressures of others (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1980). These determinants are further analyzed later in this chapter and are shown in the model in Figure 1.

For the next several years, the TRA was applied and tested. These studies yielded further discovery. The TPB was proposed by Icek Ajzen in 1985 in his article "From Intentions to Actions: A Theory of Planned Behavior" in Kuhl and Beckman's book. This theory was described as an extension of the original TRA. In addition to the determinants of attitudes toward a behavior and subjective norms, there was another factor that seemed to be of key importance: the individual's judgments of control over the behavior.

According to the TRA, intentions are the antecedent to behaviors, but often intentions may change over time. When trying to accurately predict behaviors, this issue
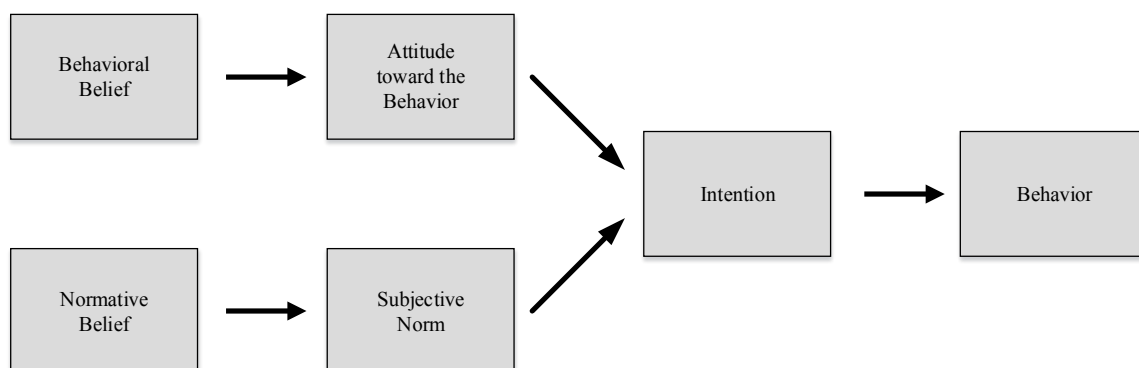
Figure 1. Theory of Reasoned Action Model

presents low validity and reduces accuracy. Therefore, Ajzen introduced a new determinant, *perceived behavioral control* (Ajzen, 1985): "A Theory of Planned Behavior differs from the Theory of Reasoned Action, in that it takes into account perceived as well as actual control over the behavior under consideration" (p. 12). A new diagram (as shown in Figure 2) was introduced with the new components of the theory.

The TPB is used in many different areas of research to help predict and understand an individual's behavior. The TPB has been used to predict and explain behaviors such as smoking (Morrison, 1996; Norman et al., 1999), drinking alcohol (Conner, Warren, Close, & Sparks, 1999; Morrison, 1996; Trafimow, 1996), cannabis use (Conner & McMillian, 1999), choosing a career (Vincent et al., 1998), using dental floss (Rise et al., 1998), leisure activity choice (Driver & Ajzen, 1992), playing basketball (Arnscheida & Schonmers, 1996), buying a home, (Cohen, Lindblad, Quercia, 2009), and condom use (Albarracin et al., 1998; de Witt et al., 2000; Jamner et al., 1998)
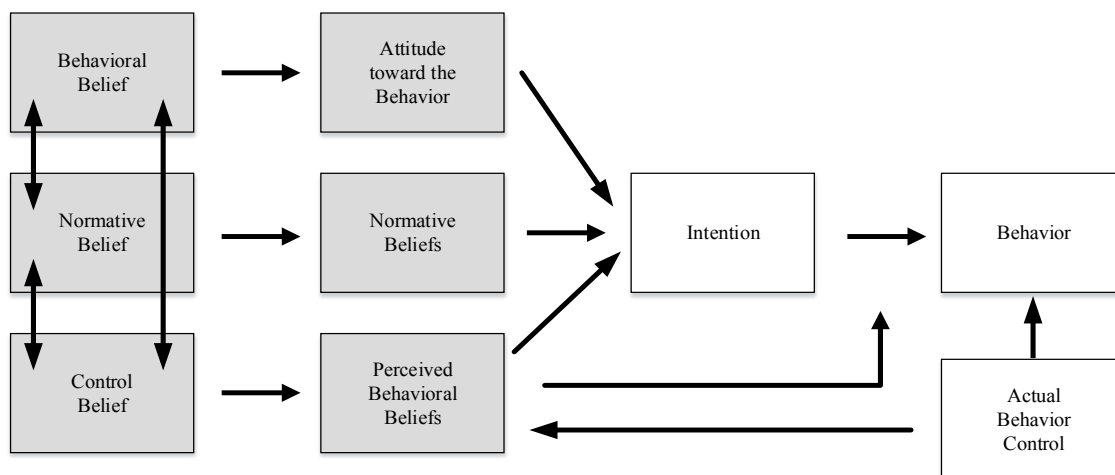
Figure 2. Theory of Planned Behavior Model

Supporting Theories

The main foundational framework of the TPB is that of the TRA. TRA was formed within social psychology. Attitude theories were typically based on the stimulus-response approach of behavior theory and the cognitive approach of field theory (Fishbein & Ajzen 1975). TRA is concerned with the relation of beliefs and attitudes and is fundamentally an expectancy-value (EV) theory. This model assumes that an object's evaluative meaning arises spontaneously, without conscious effort. Furthermore, people's evaluation of, or attitudes toward, a behavior are determined by their beliefs that the behavior will produce select outcomes (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). There are three dimensions that form the structure of attitudes: affect (value), cognitive (outcome/expectancies), and behavioral intentions (conative). Attitudes have been studied for many years and more recently service quality research has made use of expectancy-value frameworks (Ajzen, 2001; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980).

Other similar theories are Oliver's Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory and the Expectancy Theory of Satisfaction, often cited in service quality and satisfaction literature (Oliver, 1977, 1980, 1997: Petrick, 2004b; Tomas, Crompton, & Scott, 2003). The Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory suggests a customer is satisfied when their perception of the received service is met or exceeded by the service provider (Williams & Buswell, 2003). "Thus, when expectations are negatively disconfirmed, people are likely to dislike a place, but when expectations are met or when they are positively disconfirmed, i.e., the environment exceeds expectations, people are likely to have positive connotations about a place" (Tomas, Crompton, & Scott, 2003, p.108). Meeting, even exceeding, expectations is critical to increasing a customer's intent to repurchase,

thus potentially creating a higher visitor return rate. Most tourism managers strive to provide quality, satisfying, and valuable experiences to their clientele with the overall goal being that visitors will desire to repurchase the experience and to receive word-of-mouth publicity (Petrick, 2004b). The Expectancy Theory of Satisfaction supports this notion by stating "the greater the congruence between the expected experience and the actual experience, the higher the levels of satisfaction" (Holdnak, 1992, p. 15).

<div align="center">Why Intentions Are Important - Management Implications</div>

The TPB suggests that businesses have the capability to alter the described beliefs and attitudes of their guests and potential guests, and therefore, to influence intentions. Management teams can focus on specific and obtainable goals using the described TPB process to entice guests to choose to return to their place of business. In the resort industry, it may only take a few experiences to convert a guest with a high likelihood to return, into a loyal visitor or a "stayer" (Wangenheim & Bayon, 2004). Factors contributing to this goal may be service quality, unique experiences that differentiate one resort from another, and/or discounts rewarding multiple visits. According to Petrick, Morias, and Norman (2001), "the knowledge of which variables are best at predicting entertainment travelers' intentions to revisit can be quite useful for the development of entertainment destination managers' marketing plans" (p. 46).

In the travel and tourism industry, a high visitor retention rate is desirable. Visitor retention is repeat patronage among the current client base. Marketers of tourism and travel experiences address increased competition in the industry by focusing on the development of long-term relationships with their customers (Grönroos 1997; Morias, Backman, & Dorsch, 2004; Oliver, 1999). In order to get an accurate report of visitor

retention, a consistent tracking of customers would need to be in place for several years.

This concept, applied over time, is also referred to as repeat patronage, actual return rate,

or customer loyalty. With the industry continuing to grow and becoming increasingly

competitive, visitor retention becomes more critical to a resort's success and survivability

(Petrick, 2004b). Ideally, actual visitor retention over time would be the desired

dependent variable for a study. However, since resorts need to be able to quickly react to

competitive forces, research in this area relies on self-reported intentions to return as an

indicator of potential visitor retention.

<div align="center">Value of Understanding Intentions</div>

Anderson and Fornell (1994) emphasize, "…customers are more costly to acquire

than retain, and customer retention should be one of the highest priorities of any business

enterprise" (p. 241). This would indicate that the ability of an organization to guide a

person's behavioral intentions toward repurchase would provide a powerful tool in

succeeding and thriving. In order to guide a person's behavioral intentions, the ability to

recognize various factors or external variables influencing that person's behavioral

intentions is of principal importance.

A person's behavioral intention is the measure of the likelihood that a person will

engage in a particular behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). By identifying and

"understanding the relationships among the antecedents of repurchase, and their

determinants, tourism managers would be better equipped to alter their provisions and

marketing efforts to maximize their use of resources" (Petrick, 2004b, p. 397). Behavioral

intentions are based on beliefs that can be affected and influenced by outside factors,

called external variables (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). Managing these beliefs is a key

component that can be an advantage to companies when influencing a person's purchase behaviors. Some of these external variables are satisfaction, quality of experience, price and perceived value, convenience, accessibility, brand, and image (Petrick, 2002, 2004b; Petrick et al., 2001; Pizam & Milman, 1993). These external variables are related to the behavior of interest (repurchase) and may also influence the beliefs or relative importance to the attitudinal or normative considerations. There is no specific relation between the external variables and the behavior itself. Some of these variables may bear a relation to the behavior, while others may not. Many publications have relied on the external variables to explain behavior; however, the TRA provides a solution to this problem (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980).

The understanding of consumers' intentions has its advantages in that management can target specific focal points to affect consumer behavior. Some examples of targeted specific focal points are relationships with visitors and retention methods (i.e., room rates, family atmosphere, and outstanding amenities). These examples within this study are referred to as external variables. As these relationships progress in a positive direction, the customer will be more apt to repeat the patronage, and eventually become a loyal customer. Management focusing on these identified aspects of the business will develop lasting relationships with the consumer (Williams & Buswell, 2003). Loyalty and repeat patronage are seen by a business as a necessary component, especially in the hospitality and tourism industry (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996). Another advantage received from repeat patronage is strong word-of-mouth campaigning. The loyal customers will say positive things about services, property, and experiences, as well as recommend the company to others (Williams &

Buswell, 2003). These relationships also influence the customer to spend more on

additional services, and reduce concern about paying premium prices (Zeithaml, Berry, &

Parasuraman, 1996). When customers have decided to repeat the experience, they value it

more and are less likely to switch even if prices increase. Many times even when

problems occur, these relationships can be fixed quickly and easily. The literature has

reported that it is less expensive for a company to fix and prevent potential problems,

than deal with the cost of defection (Astbury, 1998; Williams & Buswell, 2003; Zeithaml,

Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996). These items, if addressed, can be utilized by management

to influence a person's beliefs. The TPB is formed on beliefs driving one's attitude

toward behaviors, social influences, and perceived behavioral controls. This influences

one's intentions (Ajzen, 2001).

<div align="center">Limitations of Using Intentions as a Dependent Variable</div>

While there are strengths in using behavioral intention as a dependent variable,

there are also limitations. One important limitation is time between recording an

intention and performing the actual behavior (Ajzen, 1985). The closer the measurement

is taken to the vacation, the more vivid the customer's memory of their experience and

the more likely they will be to accurately reflect their actual perceived experience. In

contrast, when more time has elapsed, the memories will be less vivid and therefore a

less accurate representation of their actual perceived experience.

While behavioral intentions may be malleable, manipulating the intentions

themselves may not lead to the desired behavior. Actual return rates can be accurately

measured, but can only be used to create predictions for the effect that specific

programming approaches have on the return rate and other behaviors of the consumer. It

is not possible to measure future behaviors. The behavior itself can only be measured once it has occurred (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1980).

<div align="center">How Intentions Have Been Measured</div>

Intentions have been measured in past research using a variety of instruments. In Ajzen and Fishbein's (1980) TRA, the authors describe a method for measurement of intentions. Their measurement procedure was introduced in 1975 (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975), and has been successful in predicting behaviors for more than 35 years. Both the TRA and the TPB have successfully been used in a variety of settings for a variety of topics (Driver & Ajzen, 1992; Norman et al., 1999; Vincent et al., 1998).

The most common response format is that of a semantic differential, or a bipolar evaluative scale. The respondents are asked to evaluate each of the outcomes and indicate their subjective probabilities of the bipolar adjective at each end of the belief item. The scale item has seven options ranking toward the bipolar scale positively or negatively, with a neutral area in the middle. An example of a typical question used to measure intention would be: "I intend to visit this vacation destination next year," with the response format as follows:

Unlikely ____:____:____:____:____:____:____Likely

      (-3)   (-2)   (-1) (0) (+1) (+2) (+3)

Since intentions are not directly observable, they often have to be self-reported by the respondent. Most times this method is fairly accurate, and it has been the process accepted by numerous researchers (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Driver & Ajzen, 1992; Kim, Scott & Crompton, 1997; Norman et al., 1999; Vincent et al., 1998).

Attitude, Social Influence, and Perceived Behavioral Control

Independent Variables

The TPB is one of the most influential and well-supported social psychological theories for predicting human behavior (Smith et al., 2008). "The ability to predict behavioral intentions and overt behavior continues to be a major focus on research" (Ajzen, 2001, p. 42). In order to understand all of the components of this theory, a deeper look into attitudes, social influences, and perceived behavioral control is helpful. Each of these components is comprised of a set of outcome expectancy beliefs, normative beliefs, and control beliefs, respectively. This section describes these components and reviews how each of them has been researched in the past.

Attitudes

Attitudes have been the subject of many researchers' interests. A person's attitude is a leading determinant that drives a person's intentions, and behaviors. It has recently (2001) been generally agreed that attitudes represent a summary evaluation of a psychological object captured in such attribute dimensions as good-bad, harmful-beneficial, pleasant-unpleasant, and likeable-dislikeable (Ajzen, 2001, Ajzen & Fishbein, 2000, Eagly & Chaiken, 1993, Petty et al., 1997). Specific occurrences during an experience (i.e., vacation, dinner, event) are compiled in a person's mind to aid in the formation of the attitude; hence, perception drives the attitude.

History of Attitude Research- Definitions

Research on attitudes can be traced back to the late 1800s within the history of social psychology. In Ajzen and Fishbein (1980), the extensive history of attitudes has played a major role. Attitude has long been constructed as multifaceted. In 1901, Baldwin

defined attitude as "readiness for attention or action of a definite sort" (p. 13). Leonard

Dobb (1947) defined attitude as a learned, implicit, anticipatory response; an

unobservable response to an object that occurs prior to, or in the absence of, any overt

response; hence, the *implicit mediating response* (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). This response

style tends to vary in intensity and tends to guide the individual's more overt evaluative

responses to an object or concept (Fishbein, 1967). It was hypothesized that "man's

social actions are directed by his attitude" and this premise was accepted until the late

1960s (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980, p. 13). L. L. Thurstone thought attitudes had another

component. His definition in 1931 describes attitude as "the affect for or against a

psychological object" (p. 16). Thurston's definition suggested there was no necessary

relation between attitude and behavior; it emphasized the effect of favorability toward a

psychological object (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). His assessment was accepted by other

researchers (Ajzen, 2001). In 1957, another dimension was added by Osgood, Suci, and

Tannenbaum and accepted by other theorists; they argued that attitude referred to the

evaluative part of the total meaning as the *mediating evaluative response* (Ajzen &

Fishbein, 1980). One advantage to this definition is it treats attitude as a unidimensional

construct. Another advantage is the evaluative placement in the semantic space; a person

either has a positive, negative, or neutral attitude.

The construction of attitude has evolved in the research of Fishbein and Ajzen

(1975). Their definition of attitude is "a person's location on a bipolar evaluative or

affective dimension with respect to some object" (p. 11). Attitude can be a determinant of

the overall favorability of a person's intentions, but intentions should not be assumed to

determine attitudes (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Ajzen (1991) defines attitude as the degree

to which a person has a favorable or unfavorable evaluation or appraisal of the behavior in question. The attitude is still only a partial contribution to a person's intentions. When combined with the additional determinants, attitude can be intentionally manipulated.

Ajzen (2001) discusses the formations of (or structure of) attitudes by using the framework of the Expectancy- Value Model. This model is described as the most popular conceptualization of attitudes. The model describes attitudes as comprised of affect (values attached to the expectancy), cognitive (expectancies), and behavioral intentions (conative). Attitudes are a function of the strength of association among these three components plus the object related to the subjective values. There are two concerns with this construction: 1) it assigns equal weight to all belief-value products and 2) the interaction between beliefs and evaluation misrepresents cognitive processes. Thus, as expectancies increase, one's goal commitment increases. Many researchers have argued that there is a single attitude toward an object; however, more recently, Ajzen (2001) uses more than one attitude toward an object. If attitude changes, the new attitude will override the old, but not replace it (Wilson et al., 2000); this is known as Dual Attitude. Dual Attitude occurs when a person can hold two different attitudes toward an object at the same time. This type of attitude is composed of implicit (habitual) and explicit (motivation and capacity) components (Ajzen, 2001).

Previous Studies Utilizing Attitudes to Predict Behavior

Several studies in widely varying contexts show that attitudes, when properly measured, can predict behavior. More specifically, within travel and tourism research, attitudes have been shown to predict behaviors in the following areas: leisure activity choice (Driver & Ajzen, 1992), destination choice (Haider & Ewing, 1990, Klenosky,

Gengler & Malvey, 1993, Um & Crompton, 1990), travel mode (Bamberg, Ajzen, & Schmidt, 2003), travel and recreation choice (Fakeye & Crompton, 1991, Hu & Ritchie, 1993), and destination image (Gartner & Shen, 1992, Pizam & Milman, 1993). Other studies within tourism highlighting attitudes and intentions include list of values (LOV) and personality types as they relate to travel styles (Madrigal, 1995), price and education (Dellaert & Lindberg, 2003), perceived value (Petrick, 2002, 2004a, 2004b), and expectations and quality (Anderson, Fornell, & Lehmann, 1994).

Modal Salient Beliefs

People face many decisions. Some decisions are consumer-related (e.g., what food to eat, where to go on vacation) and some are life direction decisions (i.e., using birth control, smoking, choosing a career). The TPB can work as a tool to help understand the process a person's mind may go through to reach some of these decisions. A person makes decisions based upon their personal set of beliefs toward an object (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). "Beliefs are thus viewed as underlying a person's attitudes and subjective norms, and they ultimately determine intentions and behavior" (p. 62).

A person forms beliefs about various objects, actions, and events based upon life experiences, or direct observation, or self-generated through inferential processes. Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) defined beliefs in terms of the probability that a given object is related to some attribute, to some other object, concept, or goal. According to the behavior theory approach, the formation of beliefs should follow the laws of learning:

> When a belief is formed, the implicit evaluation (IE) associated with the response (RES) becomes conditioned to the stimulus object. The IE + RES constitute an attitude; this may have been formed through prior conditioning. This implies that an attitude toward an object is related to beliefs about the object. (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975)

A person's salient beliefs are understood to be the immediate determinants of their attitudes. Salient means prominent or important and these beliefs are typically a set of five to nine ideas or principles that a person holds to be their most important. These salient beliefs can change. They can weaken or strengthen, be replaced, or forgotten. These beliefs are located in the person's mind and can be ascertained by asking about characteristics, qualities, or attributes of the object in question. A person's attitude is determined by their salient beliefs about the object (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980).

Social Influences or Subjective Norms Defined

Within the TPB model, *subjective norm* refers to the social influence brought to bear on intention by others (Ajzen, 1991; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Global subjective norm is a product of referents that influence one's intention, weighted by one's motivation to comply with those referents concerning a particular behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Ajzen and Driver (1991) describe subjective norm as "the perceived expectations of important others" (p. 186). Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) describe subjective norms as "the person's perception that most people who are important to him think he should or should nor perform the behavior in question" (p. 302).

Relevant Reference Groups

The social influence on intention is frequently comprised of expectations of individuals such as friends, family, supervisors, work colleagues, and others. These groups are referred to as *relevant reference groups* (Ajzen, 2001; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Individual intenders determine who constitutes a salient referent in the context of the behavior in question. Thus, a spouse may be a salient

referent for one person but not for another. Similarly, a spouse may be a salient referent for an individual for one behavioral intention, but that same spouse may not be a salient referent for the same intender in a different behavior. The normative beliefs are composed of only the person's belief about what the referent thinks about the behavior in question; in many cases, this could be a misconception (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). A person may or may not have a high motivation to comply with these expectations of others. This may be dependent on how influential the referent is to the person considering the behavior and how relevant that referent is to the behavior in question. People may not be aware of how much weight these referents can carry, especially in different cultures. Social influences can vary across cultures as well as behaviors. Different countries place a different value system on specific behaviors and a person can place more or less weight on this factor accordingly. For example, influences in Japan come from more of a collectivist culture, whereas in Britain they come from more of an individualistic culture (Ajzen, 2001).

A person's subjective norm is measured by the product of the normative belief strength multiplied by a person's motivation to comply (Ajzen, 1985; 1991; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). For example, a person may be trying to determine where to go on vacation, and may ask his or her spouse, children, and neighbors who have gone to the preferred destination previously. If the spouse and children are really excited about a particular destination and the neighbors give it a poor report, the outcomes may vary based upon the strength of their belief in all of the referents, multiplied by the motivation to comply.

In tourism, a common contingency in consumer behavior and consumption plans is based upon the composition of the travel group. Each of the group members is directly or indirectly affected by the decisions made, so normative beliefs are formed to try and accommodate all members of the group. This is particularly true when children are part of the group (March & Woodside, 2005; McIntosh & Goeldner, 1990; Morrison, 1996). A marketing firm in Orlando, Florida, Yesawich, Pepperdine and Brown (2000), reported that 57% of destination decisions are determined by the children's preferences. Taking children to a destination requires greater planning and forethought than that of couples or tourists without children (March & Woodside, 2005).

Previous Studies Utilizing Social Influences to Predict Behavior

Research on social influence as a single predictor of behavior is not extensive. In travel and tourism research, social influence has been reported to add to the prediction of behaviors in circumstances such as leisure activity choices (Driver & Ajzen, 1992), group behavior in leisure tourism (March & Woodside, 2005), and group composition and groups involving children (Chadwick, 1987; McIntosh & Goeldner, 1990; Stemerding, Oppewel, & Timmermans 1999). Other studies have analyzed influences and information-seeking behaviors (Etzel & Wahlers, 1985; Gitelson & Crompton, 1983) in travel planning research.

Smith et al. (2008) note the lack of empirical support for the role of normative factors in forming intention. They studied additional elements of the subjective norm (i.e., injunction norms, descriptive norms), all in the context of consumer purchase choice. Many other studies have adopted these in other behavior domains. Some examples are cannabis use among students (Conner & McMillan, 1999), alcohol and

tobacco consumption (Conner, Warren, Close, & Sparks, 1999; McMillan & Conner, 2003), healthy eating behaviors (Povey, Conner, Sparks, James, & Shepherd, 2000), and volunteer decision making by the elderly (Warburton & Terry, 2000). Rivis and Sheeran (2003) also found that the addition of descriptive norms explained an additional 5% variance in intentions.

Perceived Behavioral Control

A person's perception of their control over the behavior is another important determinant, many times referred to in the literature as *perceived behavioral control* (PBC). Perceived behavioral control "refers to the perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behavior and it is assumed to reflect past experience as well as anticipated impediments and obstacles" (Ajzen, 1991, p. 188). A person can have a desire to achieve a behavior, but the opportunity may not be within the power of that person. An example would be getting hired for a specific job. The person's intent is to get hired, but the decision requires the actions of one or more people (Ajzen, 2002). Trost, Saunders, and Ward (2002) refer to perceived behavioral control as an overall assessment of factors internal to the individual such as skills, ability, willpower, knowledge, and adequate planning as well as external factors such as social support, opportunity, and time. Some specific problems with perceived behavioral control are its nature and measurement.

The PBC construct was added to the TRA model in order to deal with situations where people may lack the volitional control over a specific behavior and to accommodate the nonvolitional elements inherent in performing the behavior (Ajzen, 2002). Ajzen and Driver (1991) describe perceived behavioral control as a set of beliefs that deal with the presence or absence of requisite resources and opportunities. These

beliefs are known as control beliefs and are usually more affective than behavioral beliefs (Ajzen, 1991).These beliefs are obtained and based on a person's past experience, information obtained from a second or third party, the experiences of friends or acquaintances, and other factors which may increase or decrease the perceived difficulty in performing the behavior (Ajzen & Driver, 1991). If all else is considered equal, a high level of perceived control should strengthen a person's intention to perform the behavior, and increase effort and perseverance (Ajzen, 2002).

Perceived Behavioral Control vs. Self-Efficacy

While PBC and self-efficacy are each very distinct, there are similarities. PBC denotes subjective degree of control over the *performance* of the behavior itself, with the focus being on one's ability *to perform* a particular behavior. Ajzen (2002) noted that it should be called "perceived control over performance of a behavior" (p. 4). People will attempt to perform a behavior to the extent they have confidence in their ability to successfully achieve the behavior (Ajzen, 2005). Ajzen (1985) explained another aspect of PBC as "successful performance of the intended behavior is contingent on a person's control over the various factors that may prevent it" (p. 29). Some of these factors may be time and opportunity, or dependence on other people (Ajzen, 1985).

Bandura (1991) defined self-efficacy as "people's beliefs about their capabilities to exercise control over their own level of functioning and over events that affect their lives" (p. 257). The main focus of self-efficacy is on the control over the *behavior* itself, not with the control over outcomes or events (Ajzen, 2002). People tend to avoid activities and situations that are beyond their skill level and perform the activities that they can achieve successfully; this is a function of efficacy judgments (Bandura, 1986).

While PBC may have efficacy traits, the distinction remains with PBC being about the performance and all of the other factors that go along with that; self-efficacy refers to a person's personal capabilities of achieving the behavior itself.

Previous Studies Utilizing Perceived Behavioral

Control to Predict Behavior

Within the travel and tourism industry, PBC is increasingly being related to the prediction of a person's intentions. Many times PBC, alongside attitudes and social influences, will increase the explained variance in behavioral intention. This scenario is the case in Driver and Ajzen's (1992) prediction of leisure choice. Each of the constructs of attitude, subjective norm (social influence), and perceived behavioral control contributed to the prediction but the combination of all had a stronger impact on the overall prediction. Some of the topics with which PBC factors help in behavior prediction are travel destination choice (Dalen, 1989; Klenosky, Genglera, & Mulvey, 1993; Lam & Hsu, 2006; Madrigal, 1995; Muller, 1991; Pitts & Woodside, 1986; Shih, 1986), activity selection while on vacation (Allen, 1982, Driver & Knopf, 1977; Howard, 1976; Madrigal, 1995; Martin & Myrick, 1976), group behavior on vacation (Chadwick, 1987; Madrigal, 1995; March & Woodside, 2005; Simonson, 1993), and general tourism behavior (Belk, 1974; 1975; Filiatrault & Ritchie, 1988; March & Woodside, 2005).

Summary and Conclusion

Attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control act together as the motivational factors that have an effect on a person's intentions. Each of these can be measured by asking direct questions about evaluations of performing the behavior, social influence, and capability of performing a behavior. Efforts made at understanding the

underlying belief structure of each of these elements can be made by asking about salient outcome expectancies, referents, and control beliefs (Ajzen, 2002). "Intentions play an important role in guiding human action, but recent research also reveals the complexities involved in translating intentions into actual behavior" (Ajzen, 2001, p. 47). The theory of planned behavior indicates that businesses have the capability to work within visitors' cognitive structures to help direct intentions.

<u>The Present Research – Hypotheses</u>

Based on this literature review, this study employed the TPB to predict visitor intentions to repurchase vacation rentals on the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast sometime in the coming 2 years. Specifically, the study examined the relationship between intention to return to a vacation rental along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast and the antecedent variables of attitude, social influence, and perceived behavioral control. Consistent with TPB, the following hypotheses were proposed.

<u>Hypothesis 1 (H1):</u>   *As attitude toward renting a vacation rental along the Florida/Alabama Gulf coast during the next 2 years becomes increasingly more positive, corresponding intention will increase.*

<u>Hypothesis 2 (H2):</u>   *As social influence regarding renting a vacation rental along the Florida/Alabama Gulf coast during the next 2 years increases, corresponding intention will increase.*

<u>Hypothesis 3 (H3):</u>   *As perceived behavioral control over renting a vacation rental along the Florida/Alabama Gulf coast during the*

next 2 years increases, corresponding intention will

increase.

Each of these hypotheses will be tested in the context of a simultaneous entry regression

model.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

The purpose of this study was to examine the relation between intention to return
to a vacation rental along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast and the variables of attitude,
social influence, and perceived behavioral control. The study also examined the belief
structures that comprise attitude, social influence, and perceived behavioral control.
These relations are organized and examined in the context of the Theory of Planned
Behavior (Ajzen, 1988). This chapter describes the methods used to gather and measure
data on these variables. The methods section begins with a description of the research
setting and participants, and how research participants were selected. It also includes a
description of the research design, measurement tools, and the data analysis and
screening process.

<u>Setting</u>

Research sites for this study included various resorts located along the
Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast. The specific resort properties were *The Beach Club*, located
in Gulf Shores, Alabama; *Sterling Resorts*, located in Destin, Florida and Panama City
Beach, Florida; *Cottage Rental Agency*, located within Rosemary Beach and Seaside,
Florida; *TOPS'L Beach and Racquet Resort* in Destin, Florida; and *Shores of Panama* in
Panama City Beach, Florida. All of these properties are luxurious condominiums or
single house dwellings on the Gulf of Mexico and its beaches. These properties are filled

each summer with rental guests, homeowners, and club members. Research participants were limited to vacation rental visitors.

These resort companies are typically the on-site property management company of a large condominium development. *The Beach Club* was established in 2003 and is made up of four high-rise condominiums, which share a common area fitness club, several restaurants, and an indoor and outdoor pool. *Sterling Resorts* has multiple properties located in Destin, Florida and Panama City Beach, Florida. Sterling's Destin properties are *Sterling Sands* and *Sterling Shores*; Sterling's Panama City Beach properties are named *Splash, Breeze, Beach,* and *Reef*. All of these properties are high-rise condominiums made up of two- and three-bedroom vacation rentals and were developed within the last 5 years. *Shores of Panama* is a new development (under 4 years old). It is comprised of two- and three-bedroom high-rise condominiums. This property was developed in the middle of the falling economy and many units are still in foreclosure, so their recent rates have come down drastically to remain competitive.

Two classic beach towns, Seaside and Rosemary Beach, are mostly comprised of multimillion dollar homes. Robert Davis developed Seaside, Florida in 1981 and it was one of the original towns built upon the principles of New Urbanism and Traditional Neighborhood Development. New Urbanism is an urban design movement, which promotes walkable neighborhoods that contain a range of housing and job types. Seaside, Florida, the first fully new urbanism town, began development in 1981 on 80 acres of Florida Panhandle coastline. It was featured on the cover of the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1988, when only a few streets were completed, and has become internationally famous for its architecture and the quality of its streets and public spaces. Seaside is now a tourist

destination and appeared in the movie *The Truman Show*. Lots sold for $15,000 in the early 1980s, and slightly over a decade later, the price had escalated to about $200,000. Today, most lots sell for more than $1 million dollars and some houses top $5 million. In 1995, the same developers of Seaside shifted to the eastern end of scenic Route 30-A and developed *Rosemary Beach*, on the same unique principles of new urbanism. Within these towns, the rental management company is called *Cottage Rental Agency*.

TOPS'L Beach and Racquet Resort is managed by ResortQuest and is situated on 52 acres in the Sandestin area of Destin, Florida. This resort is bordered by the Gulf of Mexico as well as the tranquility of a nature preserve. TOPS'L offers vacationers a myriad of luxury vacation rentals and every on-site amenity imaginable, including top-rated tennis**,** multiple pools and hot tubs, a fitness center, beachside grill and tiki bar, and a seasonal children's program**.**

<div align="center">Participants</div>

The participants in this study consisted of resort guests on each of the properties mentioned above. All guests surveyed were adults above the age of 25. Those surveyed included male and female participants, and a variety of ages were targeted. Most of the resort guests who were surveyed were repeat guests to the area (i.e., Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast), not necessarily to the particular resort they were visiting. However, first-time guests were welcomed to be a part of the survey process and an indicator was incorporated as part of the measurement tool for identification of first-time guests. These surveys were administered throughout the summer of 2010 from June 7 through September 5. This time period is considered the peak season for all of the resort properties included in this study. The summer season reports a high and consistent

occupancy level (typically 80 – 100%) for approximately 12 weeks between the Memorial Day and Labor Day holidays.

<u>Eliciting Questionnaire</u>

According to the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1985, 2006), it is necessary to first elicit the behavioral, normative, and control beliefs from a representative sample in order to construct the main research questionnaire. Belief and referent items are comprised of modal salient beliefs and referents. The Theory of Planned Behavior assumes that immediate responses to an open-ended question such as "what are the advantages of renting a vacation rental along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast" represent the most important beliefs associated with a behavior. The most frequent beliefs (usually five to nine) in an eliciting sample are taken to be modal. Modal salient beliefs associated with attitude and perceived behavioral control along with modal salient referents are used to generate items on the main study questionnaire. Reliabilities associated with these items are not assessed as they are not intended to be indicators of an underlying latent construct.

The eliciting questionnaire was given to Florida/Alabama vacation rental visitors during the summer of 2008. Five resort properties played host to this preliminary part of the study: *The Beach Club*, located in Gulf Shores, Alabama; *Indigo* and *Palacio Resorts* in Perdido Key, Florida; *Waterscape Resort* in Fort Walton Beach, Florida; and *Shores of Panama*, situated in Panama City Beach, Florida. Three questionnaires were completed in Gulf Shores, Alabama; ten in Destin, Florida; and five in Ft. Walton Beach, Florida. Five were collected from both areas of Perdido Key and Panama City Beach, Florida. In total,

28 questionnaires were completed. These questionnaires were completed in an interview style on a one-to-one basis on the properties.

The eliciting questionnaire was designed to obtain the salient beliefs and referents from the desired population (see Appendix A). The term "vacation rental" was defined for each respondent as:

> *"vacation rental" accommodates the leisure visitor as compared to that of business travelers and implies the accommodation type is in the single or multi-family condominiums or single home dwellings as compared to hotels rooms.*

The eliciting questionnaire included nine open-ended questions; three each for behavioral, normative, and control beliefs. Upon reviewing responses collected from the eliciting questionnaire, six to eight of the most frequent beliefs were selected for the main study questionnaire.

To elicit salient behavioral beliefs, guests were asked to list the advantages, disadvantages, and anything else that came to mind when considering renting a "vacation rental" for a vacation along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast within the next 5 years. The modal salient beliefs that emerged were as follows: 1) characteristics of the beaches (beautiful beach, nice beach), 2) spaciousness of the room (vacation rental), 3) proximity of the vacation rental to home, 4) family atmosphere, 5) quality of the amenities, 6) crowded beaches, and 7) cost (price).

Salient referents were determined by having participants list persons who would either approve or disapprove of them choosing a vacation rental for a vacation along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast within the next 5 years. Six modal salient beliefs emerged. The referents were as follows: 1) spouse, 2) children, 3) friends, 4) family, 5) employees/management of the property, and 6) extended family (in-laws, parents).

To elicit modal salient control beliefs, participants were asked to list factors or circumstances that might enable or make it difficult or impossible to rent a "vacation rental" for a vacation along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast within the next 5 years. The modal salient control beliefs were as follows: 1) money and finances, 2) job/work schedule, 3) distance from home, 4) gas prices/fuel cost, 5) hurricanes or lack of hurricanes, 6) health, and 7) economy.

Procedures

The main study questionnaire was administered to resort guests in 11 resort areas located between Gulf Shores, Alabama and Panama City Beach, Florida. A detailed description of each resort is described in the "Settings" section of this Methods chapter. Two data collectors assisted the principal investigator at *The Beach Club* in Gulf Shores, Alabama. Two data collectors assisted at *Sterling Resort Properties*. The principal investigator was the primary data collector for Panama City Beach, Florida, including *Shores of Panama*, *Seaside,* and *Rosemary Beach,* along with two data collectors (see Appendix E).

Each of these resorts had supervisors who were assigned to the data collection team. This team was comprised of college graduates with degrees in Recreation Management, 7 people in total. Each member went through a training orientation to better understand the process to be followed when administering the surveys to their guests. This training took place June 7, 2010. A 2-hour session was conducted to discuss the approved selection process, administering techniques and scripts, and potential threats, which might affect reliability and validity of the data collection process (see Appendix C). This training session was conducted by the principal investigator, and

attended by all data collectors. The administration script was written and approved by a member of the dissertation supervisory committee, and she was in attendance during the session to ensure the instruction was thorough and accurately delivered to the collection team. Upon completion of the session, all data team members signed a code of conduct agreement (see Appendix D).

Beginning June 7, 2010, the primary investigator began to administer questionnaires. The data collection team joined in after the training session according to the data collection schedule (see Appendix F). The supervisors were assigned to specific areas of collections in order to ensure accuracy in administering and numbering the surveys collected. The supervisors turned in the completed surveys to the Principal Investigator on a weekly basis. Ninety-two (92) questionnaires were collected during week 1, 92 were collected during week 2, and 87 questionnaires were collected during week 3, totaling 271 questionnaires. An additional 79 questionnaires were collected during the remainder of July and early August. The final 27 questionnaires were collected during the Labor Day weekend (September 3-5, 2010), yielding a total of 377 useable questionnaires.

The selection process was preselected and scheduled based upon random sampling procedures (see Appendix F). Various collection times and areas within each resort were used to assure randomness throughout the collection process. The assigned time periods used during the first 3 weeks were 10:00am – 12:00pm, 1:00pm - 3:00pm, 3:00pm – 5:00pm, and 5:00pm – 7:00pm. The collection areas varied from resort to resort since they all have different popular gathering areas. Some of the areas were the check-in lobby, poolside, restaurant and bar waiting areas, Internet café, and ice cream areas. All

supervisors ensured the surveys were collected within this framework of times and areas based upon the sampling schedule. The collection team was instructed to adhere to the schedule as closely as possible during the first 3 weeks. If there was no one gathered in the assigned collection area at the assigned times, they were to go to the area where the guests were gathered. After the initial 3 weeks, data were collected where it could be obtained within the identified gathering areas.

The questionnaire was personally handed to recipients in a one-to-one interview style, distributed by a team member who had been trained to collect data. Wearing a University of Utah t-shirt, the data collectors introduced themselves and briefly stated the purpose of the study, making it clear that they represented a University of Utah doctoral student, and not the specific resort. The team member then handed out questionnaires on clipboards, often passing out several at a time to different individuals. The team members remained in the area so they could be called over when needed.

<center>Questionnaire Design and Measurement</center>

Modal salient beliefs and referents were turned into questionnaire items according to procedures outlined in Ajzen and Fishbein (1980). In addition, items measuring intention to rent a vacation rental during the next 2 years, attitudes toward renting such a rental, social influences regarding renting such a rental, and perceived controls over renting a vacation rental were developed. A semantic differential format was used for each of the above items. The questionnaire began with some basic demographic information (Q1 – Q10). The purpose of these items was to describe the sample. The next section (Q11 – Q14) was designed to obtain the global measures of

behavioral intention (Q11), attitude toward behavior (Q12), subjective norm (social influence) (Q13), and perceived behavioral control (Q14).

Sections three and four were comprised of six sections, seven attitudinal beliefs, six normative beliefs, and five control beliefs. The two sections that represented attitude toward behavior were the outcome expectancies and outcome evaluations. Social influence was comprised of two sections referred to as the salient referents and motivation to comply. Finally, perceived behavioral control had two sections that represented efficacy beliefs and control beliefs. All of these sections are further described below.

General Attitude Beliefs

Questions 15 - 21 were designed to elicit the attitudinal beliefs [outcome expectancies]. In this section, an example of an item is "How likely is it that you would experience beautiful beaches if you vacationed in a vacation rental along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast within the next two years?" Each belief listed in Questions 15 - 21 was measured using a 7-point (+3 = "extremely likely" to -3 = "extremely unlikely") scale.

Normative Beliefs

The normative beliefs [salient referents] are identified in Question 22 - 27. Each belief listed in these questions was measured using a 7-point (+3 = "should" to -3 = "should not") scale. An example of a salient referent item used in this study is "My children think I [should or should not] use a vacation rental along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast during the next two years."

<u>Control Beliefs</u>

The perceived behavioral control beliefs [efficacy beliefs] were established in Questions 28 – 32. Each belief listed in these questions was measured using a 7-point (+3 = "easy" to -3 = "difficult") scale. An example of a control belief item used in this study is "The current state of the economy would make it [easy or difficult] to vacation in a vacation rental along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast during the next two years."

Section four solicited the second half of the belief scores. The scores from section three were multiplied with the subsequent scores of section four to provide an overall quantitative score for each determinant.

<u>Corresponding Evaluations of Attitude Beliefs</u>

Questions 33 – 39 were the corresponding evaluative portion of the attitudinal beliefs and their outcomes [outcome evaluations]. In this section, an example of an item is "Close proximity of the resort from home is [bad or good]?" Each belief listed in (Q33 – Q39) was measured using a 7-point (+3 = "good" to -3 = "bad") scale.

<u>Corresponding Motivation to Comply</u>

The corresponding motivation to comply represents the degree to which individuals feel motivated to comply [motivation to comply] with the identified salient referents. In Questions 40 – 45, each referent listed was measured using a 7-point (+3 = "very much" to -3 = "not at all") scale. The questions asked the respondent to rank how strongly they were motivated to comply with the identified referents.

Perceived Power of Control Beliefs

In the final section of the questionnaire, the perceived powers of the control beliefs [control beliefs] were represented in Questions 46 – 50. These items were measured using a 7-point (+3 = "extremely important" to -3 = "extremely unimportant") scale. An example of the items asked of the respondent is: "How important it is for you to be in control of the current economy?"

Method of Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to describe the sample and examine the distributional properties of the study's key variables. Ordinary Least Squares regression and Pearson's Product Moment correlations were used to analyze the structure of relations according to the Theory of Planned Behavior framework. Intention was regressed on global attitude, social influence, and perceived behavioral control. In turn, global attitude, social influence, and perceived behavioral control were correlated with corresponding composite measures of each of these constructs. Composite scores were created by taking scores on each belief or referent item and multiplying by its corresponding valence score and summing across the items. To complete the analysis of the Theory of Planned Behavior model structure, composite measures of attitude, social influence, and perceived behavioral control were regressed on their corresponding belief or referent items. These latter analyses identified the underlying belief structure of global attitude, social influence, and perceived behavioral control. Data were analyzed using version 18 of the Predictive Analytics Software portfolio (PASW), formerly called Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSSPC, 18).

Data Screening Process

Data were cleaned, and then screened to examine their correspondence with regression assumptions of normality, lack of outliers, and linearity. Examination of residual plots showed no departures from linearity. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (KS-test) for normality was significant indicating departures from normality. In addition, histograms and Q-plots also indicated severe departures from normality. Examination of Z-scores and Mahalanobis distance scores identified outliers and tested for illogical interpretation. Mertler and Vannatta (2005) suggest that outliers may be identified when distributions are strongly skewed. To assess this possibility and to correct for normalization problems, reflect and inverse transformations were performed on the data. Although, transformed data remained nonnormal according to the K-S test Q-plots improved and outliers were no longer problematic. Thus, analyses were based on transformed Intention, Attitude, Social Influence, and Perceived Behavioral Control variables.

To prepare for Stage 2 of the data analyses, variables were created to follow through with the TPB design of Fishbein and Ajzen (1980). Each variable within the three sections specific to each independent variable were multiplied by the two sections. For instance, of the six sections of questions, each independent variable had two sections; general attitude had the scores of the outcome expectancies and the outcome evaluations. The scores were multiplied together to create a combined variable on each different topic, which added another variable for each independent variable: general attitude, social influence, and perceived behavior control. An example of the combined variable is as follows:

BiEi1 (ATTLIK1 * ATTEVAL1), was composed of "beautiful beaches" score of

the outcome expectancies multiplied by the "beautiful beaches" score of the

outcome evaluation score.

This formula was carried out for each of the variables within all sections, yielding a total

of 18 new variables. This procedure is consistent with the expectancy-value framework

that serves as one of the important underpinnings of the TPB. For general attitude, the

outcome expectancy score was multiplied by the outcome evaluative score. The social

influence component multiplied the referents score by their motivation to comply score.

The perceived behavioral control variable took the efficacy belief score combined with

the control belief score. Immediately following this procedure, three more variables were

created to form the composite scores of each independent variable section. For example,

general attitude took the sum of all seven combined variables ($\sum$ biei), the sum score of

all social influence variables ($\sum$ bjmj), and the sum of all five perceived behavior control

variables ($\sum$ bcec).

After data screening of Stage 2, a linear regression was individually run on the

three composite variables ($\sum$ biei, $\sum$ bjmj, $\sum$ bcec) as the independent variable with the

transformed counterpart as the dependent variable (INVGA, INVSN, INVPBC). All

composite variables were correlated, though not strongly, and identified as significant.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter is divided into four parts. The first part is the summary of purpose
and results of the hypotheses testing. The second part, descriptive statistics, describes the
sample and behavior of the study's key variables. The third part, inferential statistics,
explores the relations among variables as they are framed by the Theory of Planned
Behavior. This part is also divided into three stages. Stage 1 explores the relation between
intention to use a vacation rental during the next 2 years and the set of predictors- general
attitude, social influence, and perceived behavioral control. It does so by regressing
intention scores on global attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control.
Stage 2 describes relations among empirically constructed attitude, social influence, and
perceived behavioral control variables and their more globally measured counterparts. An
important interpretation of this analysis is that the magnitude of the correlations can serve
as an indicator of how well the eliciting questionnaire was able to identify belief and
referent items with respect to their corresponding global measures. Stage 3 explores
relations among general attitude, social influence, and perceived behavioral control and
their belief and motivational components. The fourth part of this chapter, exploratory
analyses, divides the sample into different groups to examine whether or not differing
potential market segments exhibit varying belief and motivational structures when
making decisions about vacation rentals.

Summary of Purpose and Results

The purpose of this study was to examine the relation between intention to return to a vacation rental along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast and the variables of general attitude, social influence, and perceived behavioral control. Results indicated that behavioral intentions and these variables were related and significant; however, the relation was not very strong. General attitude was the strongest predictor in this study.

Many of the items of general attitude were comprised of factors that the consumer intentionally chose for their vacation. For instance, the consumer had their choice of accommodations (vacation rental, spaciousness of rooms), destination location (suitable proximity to home), cost (expensive rooms, outstanding amenities), and level of family atmosphere (children's programs/activities, events). As for the items labeled "beautiful beaches," the consumer has little or no control over the weather, natural or man-made disasters that may affect the beauty of the beaches, or water quality or clarity. As a natural resource, the beach is typically the reason for the destination to thrive, as mountains are to ski destinations (Klenosky, Gengler, & Mulvey, 1993). During this study, the beaches were affected by the British Petroleum (BP) oil spill of the *Deepwater Horizon* explosion of April 20, 2010. Because of this disaster, the respondents were very concerned about the environmental impact on the beaches.

Although the hypotheses were supported, the findings could be interpreted as being [different, conservative, skewed] because of the atypical representative of the respondents during this unique summer.

Results supported all the stated hypotheses proposed in this study.

Hypothesis 1 (H₁): As attitude toward renting a vacation rental along the
Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast during the next 2 years
became increasingly more positive, corresponding
intention would increase.

Hypothesis 2 (H₂): As social influence regarding renting a vacation rental
along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast during the next 2
years increased, corresponding intention would increase.

Hypothesis 3 (H₃): As perceived behavioral control over renting a vacation
rental along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast during the
next 2 years increased, corresponding intention would
increase.

Descriptive Statistics - Description of the Sample

This study took place in four cities located along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast
and was conducted using 11 different resorts comprised mostly of vacation rentals. These
cities were Gulf Shores, Alabama; Destin, Santa Rosa Beach (Seaside and Rosemary
Beach); and Panama City Beach, Florida. The Alabama resorts made up about 15% of the
sample, Destin comprised approximately 24.6% of the sample, and Santa Rosa Beach and
Panama City Beach each comprised 30% of the sample. The total sample size was 377.

Consistent with the purposes of the study, nearly all of the respondents (97.6%)
reported personal or family leisure as their travel purpose. The visitors were mainly
families, with 88.6% of all respondents being adults with children along on the trip. The
traveler groups were principally made up of 2 adults or more. The majority (37%) of the

travelers were made up of groups having 2 adults; however, several traveled with more than 2 adults (55.7%), while only 6% reported traveling with only 1 adult.

Most of these travelers came to the area by driving (85.6%) as compared to flying (9%), with the majority (52%) reporting coming from 200 to 500 miles away. The states with the most surveyed participants were Georgia (21%), Tennessee (13.4%), Alabama (12%), Louisiana (9%), and Kentucky (7.2%). A large percentage of the participants in the survey were repeat visitors (89.4%) to the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast.

This study had seven key variables that were analyzed: the dependent variable, behavioral intention, and the three independent variables, general attitude, social influence, and perceived behavioral control, along with empirical weighted sums. These weighted sums variables were created in the following manner. For the empirically-calculated attitude, labeled $\sum b_i e_i$, the product of the outcome expectancies and outcome evaluations was used; for the sum of social influence, labeled $\sum b_j m_j$, was the product of the referents and the motivation to comply, and for the sum of perceived behavioral control, labeled $\sum b_c e_c$, reflected the product of the efficacy beliefs and control beliefs. The empirically calculated variables are consistent with the expectancy-value theoretical underpinnings of TPB. The central tendencies (mean on a scale of 1 - 7), dispersion (standard deviation), and shape (skewness and kurtosis) of the key variables are presented in Table 1.

In Table 1, the results from the raw data show extremely high means (averages). On a scale of 1-7, the key variables all averaged very close to seven. The skewness, which is the amount and direction from horizontal symmetry, a score of zero represents normal distribution. These data reported a negative skew, whereas the kurtosis, which

Table 1

Central Tendencies, Dispersion, and Shape of the Key Variables on Raw Data

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Behavioral Intention	5.99/7	1.786	-1.939	2.583
General Attitude	6.22/7	1.111	-1.876	4.384
Social Influence	6.27/7	1.144	-1.481	1.422
Perceived Behavioral Control	6.15	1.288	-1.691	2.527
$\sum b_i e_i$	219.108	45.071	.090	.111
$\sum b_j m_j$	200.472	59.455	-.129	-.628
$\sum b_c e_c$	109.362	37.586	.180	-.160

should also be close to zero, reports the height and sharpness of the central peak. Several variables had peaked distributions. Taken together, skewness and kertosis measures suggested departures from normality that warrant data transformations to meet regression assumptions.

Figures 3 - 6 show bar charts for the dependent variable (Behavioral Intention) and independent variables (general attitude, social influence, and perceived behavioral control) on the raw data. Table 1 reported extremely high mean scores and highly skewed and kurtotic dispersions. The following bar charts show the specific distributions of the dependent and independent variables of the raw data. These charts help to explain the extreme direction of the responses.
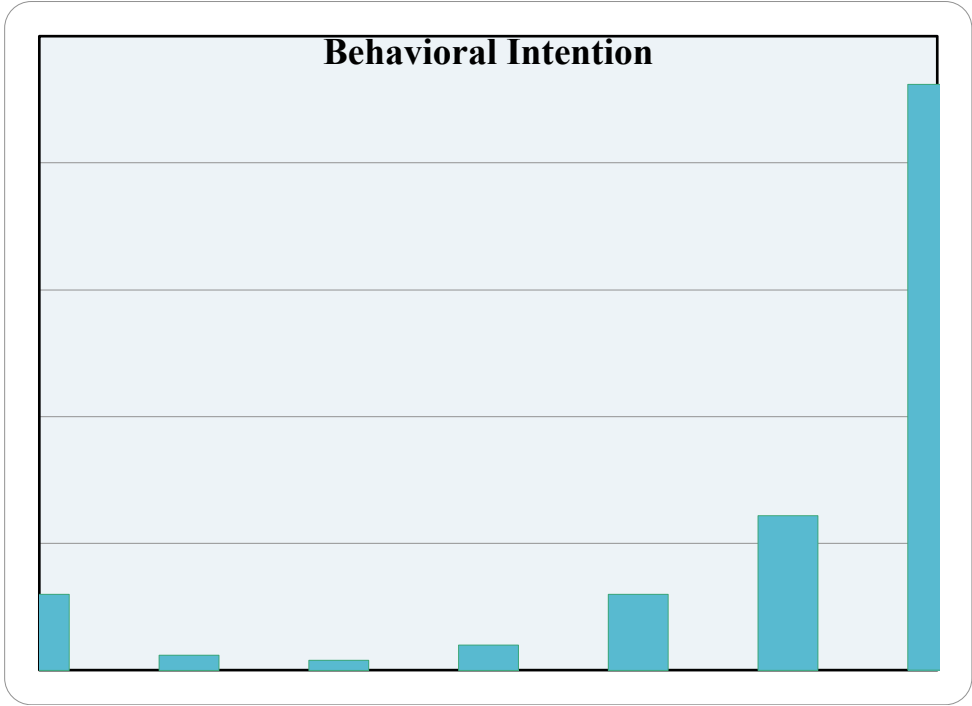
Figure 3. Bar Chart for the Dependent Variable (Behavioral Intention)
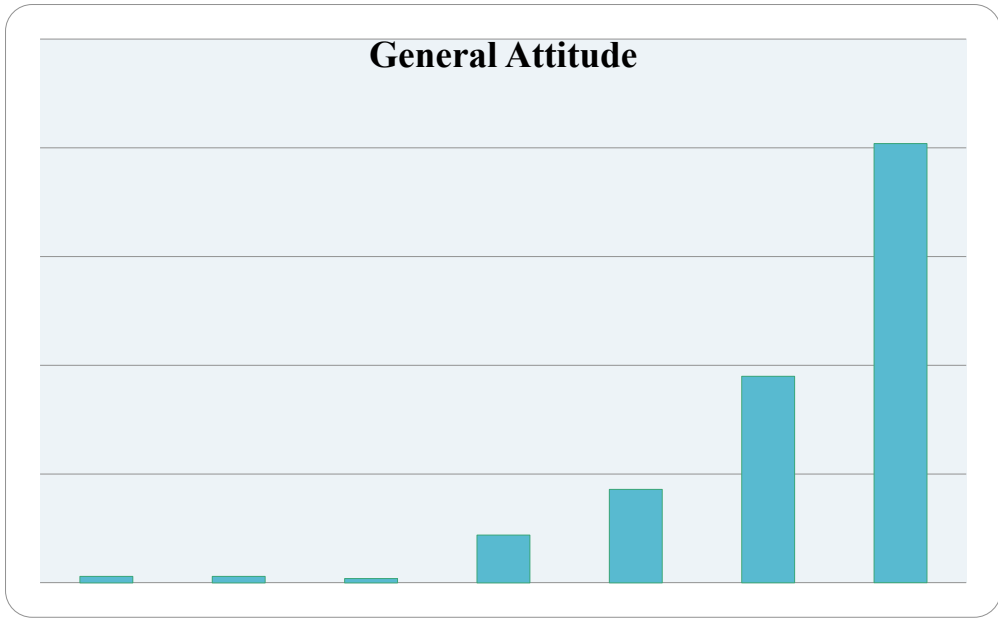
Figure 4. Bar Chart for the Independent Variable (General Attitude)
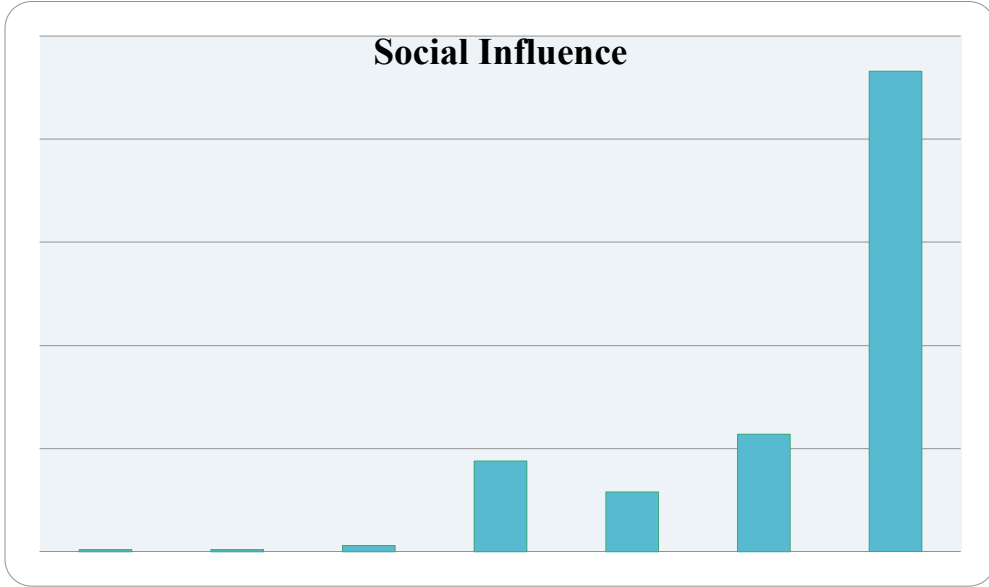
Figure 5. Bar Chart for the Independent Variable (Social Influence)
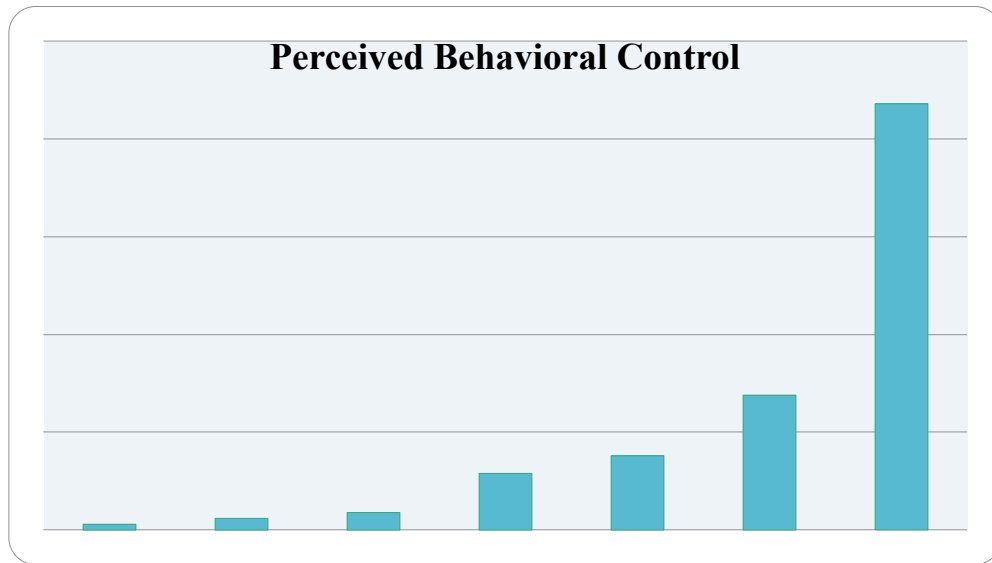
Figure 6. Bar Chart for the Independent Variable (Perceived Behavioral Control)

The next set of charts presented is the histograms for the empirically calculated weighted sums for attitude, social influence, and perceived behavioral control after data transformation, as shown in Figures 7 – 9. Histograms show the general shape of the distribution. The formation of these composite variables was described at the end of the methods section of this study. These figures show the distributions after the data transformation took place on the dependent and independent variables. The sum variables were created with the transformed data and as represented by these figures, the distributions are much more evenly dispersed.

Inferential Statistics of Stage 1 Analyses

After data were cleaned and transformed, intent to rent again was regressed on general attitude, social influence, and perceived behavioral control. Regression results indicate that each independent variable was a significant predictor of intent in a simultaneous
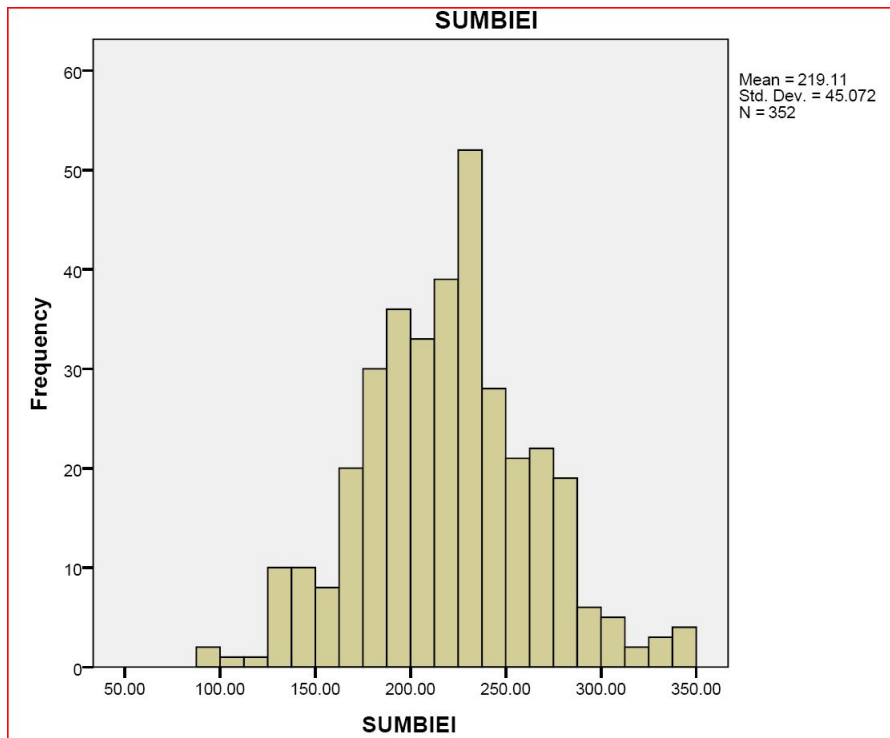
Figure 7. Histogram for Sum of Independent Variable (General Attitude reported as SUMBIEI or ∑BiEi)
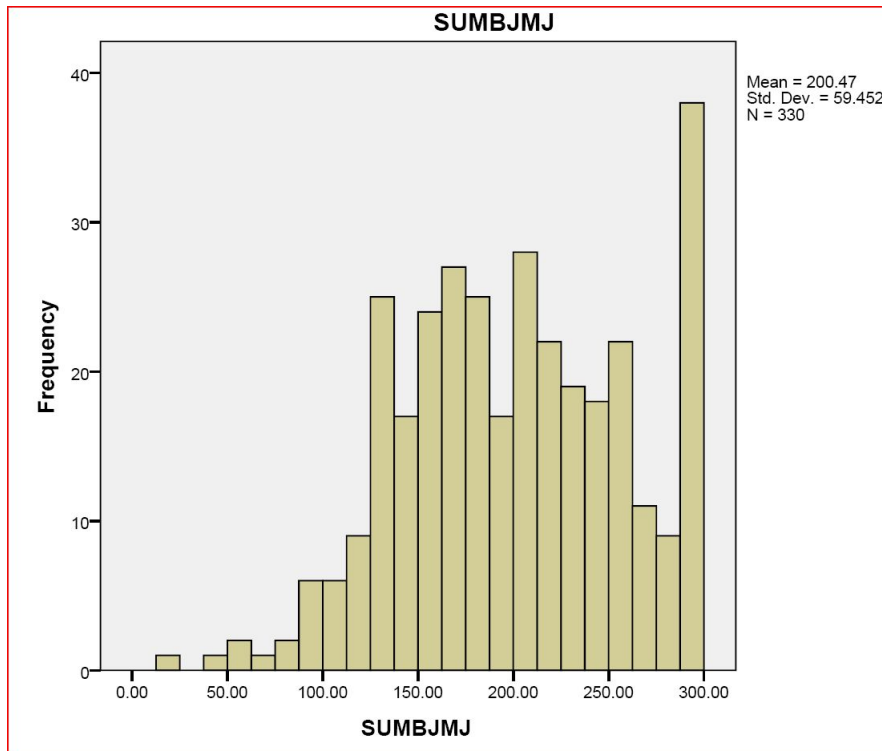
Figure 8. Histogram for Sum of Independent Variable (Social Influence reported as SUMBJMJ or ∑BjMj)
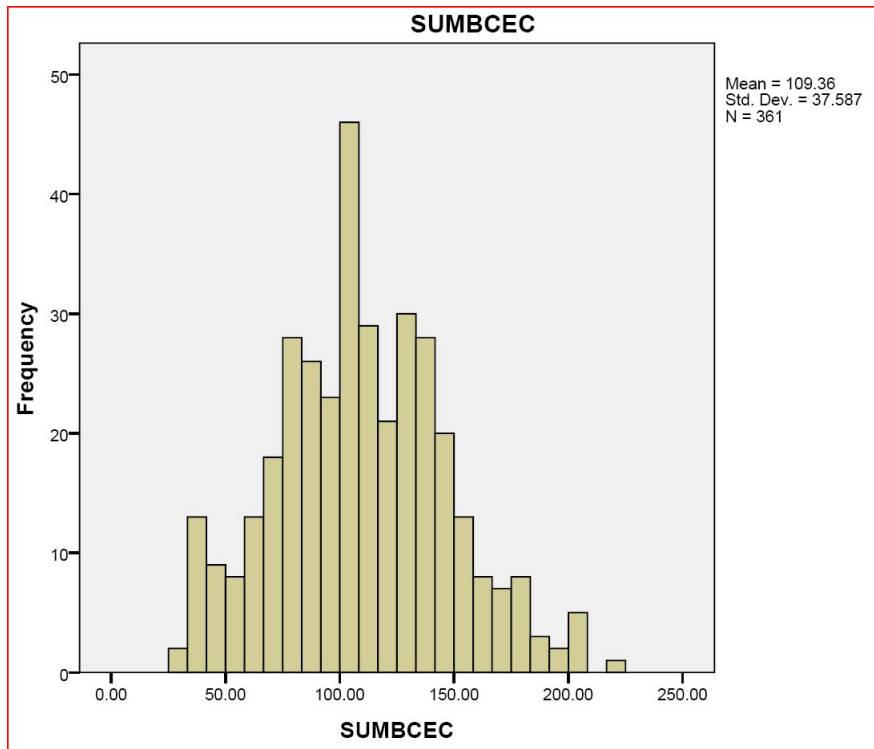
Figure 9. Histogram for Sums of Independent Variable (Perceived Behavioral Control reported as SUMBCEC or ∑BcEc)

regression and the model explained about 40% of the variance in intent (Table 2). The standardized regression coefficient suggests that attitude was the strongest predictor of intent whereas social influence was the least strong predictor of intent.

<div align="center">Inferential Statistics of Stage 2 Analyses</div>

In this study, "Stage 1 analysis," is, in the language of the Theory of Planned Behavior, a prediction model. However, the Theory of Planned Behavior seeks to do more than predict attitude – behavior consistency. It also seeks to understand the belief and motivational structure behind any given prediction model. This is typically done through the use of an "eliciting questionnaire" designed to generate belief and

Table 2

Summary of Correlation and Regression Analysis of Intention on General Attitude, Social Influence, and Perceived Behavioral Control (*N*=365)

Correlations (on transformed data)	Behavioral Intention	General Attitude	Social Influence	Perceived Behavioral Control
Behavioral Intention	1.000	.585***	.507***	.521***
General Attitude		1.000	.647***	.577***
Social Influence			1.000	.571***
Perceived Behavioral Control				1.000

***Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed)

Variable	B	*SE* B	β	*T*-Value	*T*-Signf.
General Attitude	.391	.061	.359	6.353	.001
Social Influence	.151	.060	.142	2.522	.012
Perceived Behavioral Control	.242	.054	.233	4.449	.001

$R^2 = .404$; $R^2_{Adj} = .399$
$F = 81.483$; $df = 3/364$; $p > .001$.

motivational items that underpin the prediction model. These are examined in what, in this study, is called "Stage 3" analysis. "Stage 2" analysis, on the other hand, is a transitional analysis that quantifies how well the eliciting questionnaire worked in identifying important belief and motivational components of attitude, social influence, and perceived behavioral control, collectively. As described in Chapter 3, empirically

constructed attitude, social influence, and perceived behavioral control variables were created through a set of weighted sums (i.e., $\sum BiEi$, $\sum BjMj$, $\sum BcEc$). Stage 2 analysis involves the correlation between the global measures and corresponding weighted sums version of the variable. Nonsignificant relations mean for that component of the Theory of Planned Behavior model, further analysis should not be conducted. The eliciting questionnaire was not able to generate belief and/or motivational components for the construct in question. Strong correlations indicate that the eliciting questionnaire did an excellent job of identifying belief and motivational components. For example, the higher the correlation (i.e., the closer the correlation coefficient, r, is to +1), the stronger the relationship, and the better we can predict a person's intentions from the corresponding variable (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). Weak correlations indicate further analyses are warranted; however, the eliciting questionnaire did a poor job and other belief and/or motivational items await discovery. Figure 10 summarizes the results of Stage 1 and Stage 2 analyses. The figure shows in Stage 1 that all three independent variables [attitude, social influence and perceived behavioral control] were associated with behavioral intention. The multiple correlation coefficient, (R), can range from zero to 1.0 and is reported as .635 and is statistically significant at $p \le .001$. The correlation coefficient, (r), ranges from -1 to +1, and the more the correlation departs zero and approaches -1 or +1,the stronger the relationship. Also in this stage, a weight (w) (standardized regression coefficient) was obtained from each predictor variable, which represents the variables independent contribution. As shown in Figure 10, general attitude had the strongest contribution to explained variance in intention, followed by perceived behavioral control, and social influence; all were significant findings.
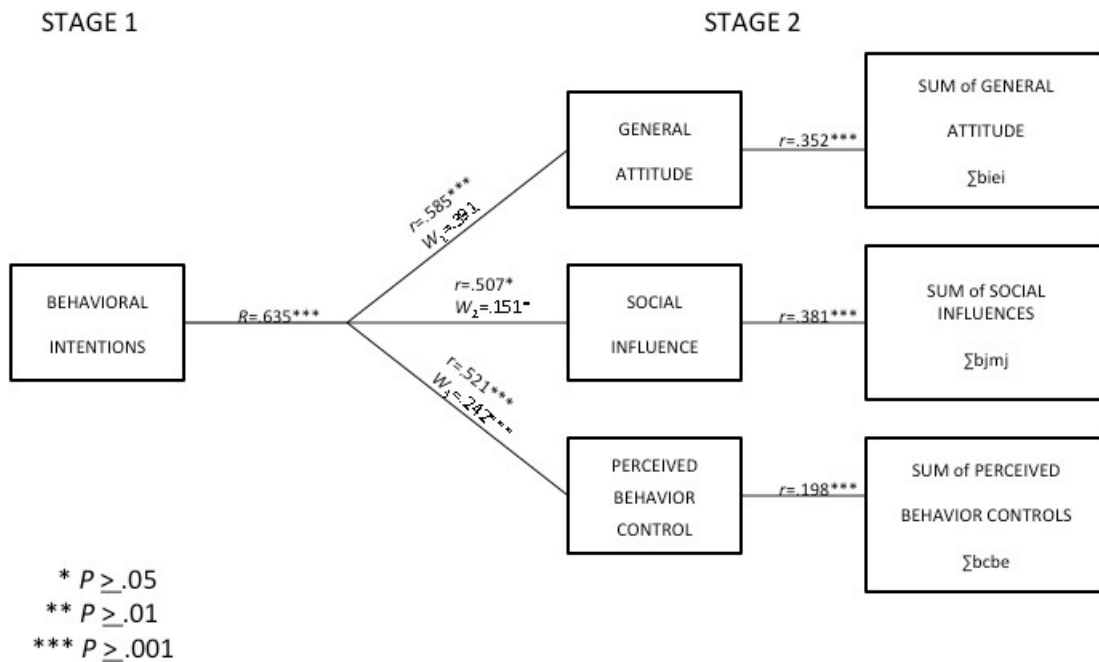
Figure 10. Relationships between Behavioral Intentions and General Attitudes, Social Influences, and Perceived Behavioral Controls

Stage 2 analyses show that all weighted sums indicators were associated with their corresponding global measures and all reported as significant at $p \leq .001$. However, correlations were low (see Figure 10), suggesting that the eliciting questionnaire overlooked important variables. These low correlations could be explained by the long lag between when the eliciting questionnaire was conducted and when the main study questionnaire was conducted, and the oil spill likely affected belief and motivational structures.

Belief and Motivational Components of Attitude, Social Influence, and

Perceived Behavioral Control

In the following section, Table 3 reflects the summary of the three independent variables and their percentage of variance explained along with the significant predictors while examining the complete data set. The main predictors off attitude were reported as outstanding amenities and close proximity to home. Social influence had two main predictors as well and they were spouse and extended family. Children were repeatedly reported as one of the most important referents, but interestingly enough, they dropped out when combined with the motivation to comply components. As for perceived behavioral control, the only predictor that was significant was that of job/work schedule.

Further results of regressions and correlations designed to identify the underlying belief and motivational structures of the more global attitude, social influence, and perceived behavioral control variables, are presented in Appendix G.

Description of Exploratory Analyses Variables

A few variables were selected to perform exploratory analyses to examine antecedent-to-the-model effects. Among these antecedents were price of the accommodations, number of years visited, party size, and distance traveled.

For the price variable, data were collapsed into three groups: high, midrange, and economy clientele. The high level group was made up of the respondents from Seaside and Rosemary Beach, Florida region. A typical vacation rental within this region ranges from $3,000 up to $15,000 for a week long rental. This area does not have condominiums, but mostly multimillion dollar homes available for rent. The midrange resorts included TOPS'L Beach & Racquet Resort (Destin, FL) and The Beach Club

Table 3

Variance Percentages and Significant Predictors from Stage 3 Analyses between Independent Variables and Their Components

	BiEi	Outcome Expectancies	Outcome Evaluations
Gen Attitude			
R^2	.169	.151	.111
% of Variance	16%	15%	11%
Significant Predictors	Beautiful Beaches Outstanding Amenities [a]	Beautiful Beaches Outstanding Amenities [a]	Beautiful Beaches Outstanding Amenities [a]
	Expensive Rooms Spaciousness of Rooms	Expensive Rooms Spaciousness of Rooms	Expensive Rooms [a] Spaciousness of Rooms
	Family Atmosphere Proximity from Home [a]	Family Atmosphere [a] Proximity from Home [a]	Family Atmosphere Proximity from Home [a]

	BjMj	Salient Referents	Motivation to Comply
Social Influence			
R^2	.243	.311	.089
% of Variance	24%	31%	8%
Significant Predictors	Children	Children [a]	Children
	Friends	Friends [a]	Friends
	Employees	Employees	Employees
	Spouse [a]	Spouse	Spouse [a]
	Extended Family [a]	Extended Family [a]	Extended Family
	[a]Management	Management	Management

	BcEc	Efficacy Beliefs	Control Beliefs
Perceived Behavioral Control			
R^2	.050	.094	.014
% of Variance	5%	9%	1%
Significant Predictors	Economy	Economy	
	High Price of Gas	High Price of Gas	
	Job/Work Schedule [a]	Job/Work Schedule [a]	

a= variance significant in the multiple regression ($p < .05$)

(Gulf Shores, AL). Their typical rentals range from $2,300 to $4.500 per week during the peak season of summer. The rentals in the midrange level are mostly two- and three-bedroom condominiums. The economy resorts, which range from $1,100 to $3,200 per weekly rental, were made up of respondents from Shores of Panama, Sterling Resorts (Panama City Beach, FL) and Sterling Resorts (Destin, FL). These resorts offer accommodations comprised mostly of one- to three-bedroom condominiums.

The other categories that exploratory analyses were performed on were the number of years visited, party size, and the distance traveled to partake in the vacation. The variable "years visited" was divided into two groups: those who have visited the area between 0 – 5 years and those who have visited more than 5 years. Party size was collapsed into two levels: 1 – 3 adults in the traveling party, and 4 or more adults in the party. Finally, the variable of distance traveled was collapsed into three groups: less than 200 miles away, 200 – 500 miles away, and more than 500 miles away from the destination.

<div align="center">Procedures Performed for Exploratory Analyses</div>

For each exploratory variable, regression analyses were run on each variable [price of the accommodations, years visited, party size, and the distance traveled] with the composite variable [$\sum B_i E_i$, $\sum B_j M_j$, $\sum B_c E_c$] and the related variable components related to the variable being analyzed. As an example, within the general attitude variable, a comparison was run for a correlation between attitudes and the expectancy-value components for each price of the accommodation variable; high, midrange, and economy. Then multiple regression analyses were conducted on attitudes and the expectancy and evaluative beliefs individually. This procedure was repeated for social

influence on the referents and motivation to comply components and perceived

behavioral control on the efficacy and control beliefs. The findings of these various

group results were examined in comparison to the Stage 3 results on the full sample.

<center>Exploratory Evaluations of the Data</center>

In reviewing the exploratory groups, a number of patterns emerged. The variables

most strongly influenced were general attitude and social influence.

Behavioral Beliefs

While conducting a comparison between the results of the full sample and the

various groups previously described, the items labeled "*outstanding amenities*" and

"*proximity to home*" seemed to consistently emerge as significant predictors in multiple

regressions on general attitude. All other items were strong and significant except

"*crowded beaches*" and "*expensive rooms,*" which performed poorly throughout the

analyses.

Normative Beliefs

For social influence, the best performing predictors in multiple regressions

throughout the various analyses between groups were "*spouse*" and "*extended family*,"

while "*children*" and "*friends*" emerged as significant predictors if the motivation to

comply components were removed. As anticipated, the "*employee"* and "*management*"

items did not perform well in any of the three social influence categories.

Control Beliefs

In examining the perceived behavioral control variable, only one item seemed to

be a consistent performer and that was "*job/work schedule*." The other items of

"*hurricane presence*" and "*current economy*," and "*high price of gas*" did not show up as significant in any regression results (individual or multiple). These items have not been emphasized in the media as much as they have in previous years and the further removed they are from media attention the less important they appear to be to the respondent. (This is the area of the survey where the respondents would write-in "oil spill" during the early part of the data collection process.) The only item within perceived behavioral control that consistently appeared was that of their "*job/work schedule*."

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this chapter is to interpret the results of the study and to provide additional insights regarding the findings. This chapter consists of a summary of the purpose and results, a discussion of the findings, a synthesis of previous research with the findings from this study, the implications of the findings for professional practice, a listing of the study's limitations, and directions for future research.

Summary of the Purpose and Results

To review, the purpose of this study was to examine the relation between intention to return to a vacation rental along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast and the variables of general attitude, social influence, and perceived behavioral control. All of the variables were related to intention to return and reported as significant, although the relations were moderate. All hypotheses (H_1, H_2, and H_3) were supported by the results; however, the results could be interpreted as an atypical representative of respondents during this reported summer of the oil spill disaster. This means that the respondents of this study could have been different, conservative, distracted by the oil spill disaster as compared to respondents of typical summer season along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast.

Discussion of the Findings

The strongest predictor of the variables in this study was general attitude. The respondents had much more influence over the factors that made up this variable. They were able to control the outcomes regarding their choice of destination (proximity from home), the price, the amenities offered, the spaciousness of the room, and the level of family atmosphere. Many of these factors can be determined when booking the reservation; therefore, the respondents will have a solid expectation of these factors and more than likely not be let down.

The other variables, social influence and perceived behavioral control, had less of a guaranteed outcome to the respondents. They could not control what other people thought of their decisions of booking a vacation rental and did not base their decision heavily on the thoughts of the others in their life. Similarly, the respondents viewed themselves as having had no control over the factors of the variable, perceived behavioral control, which supports the purpose of this variable; for instance, the presence of hurricanes, economy conditions, high gas costs, health of the family members, and the job/work schedule. As these two predictors increased, the corresponding intentions increased, but not as strongly as they did with the general attitude variable.

Synthesis with Previous Research, the Present Research,

and Implications for Practice

In reviewing similar research within the tourism industry of visitor's intention to return, a number of implications and directions can be found. This study revealed practical implications specifically to the vacation rental market to influence behavioral intentions of their current and potential guests, while other tourism studies have focused

on various areas and contexts, such as the cruise ship industry (Petrick, 2004a, 2004b; Petrick, Li, & Park, 2007; Petrick, Tonner, & Quinn, 2006), tourist consumption behavior planned versus realized (March & Woodside, 2005), wine tourism (Sparks, 2007), leisure activity choice (Ajzen & Driver, 1992), and travel destination choice (Um & Crompton, 1990), and travel decision-making (Quintal, Lee, & Soutar, 2010).

Similar to this study relating with tourist consumption behavior, March and Woodside (2005) were able to determine two "key drivers" that were unique to their area as compared to the destination competitors. These were *"cultural sight-seeing"* and *"visiting historic sites and museums."* Their findings helped them identify the most effective brand positioning opportunities for marketing their product (Prince Edward Island) as a leisure destination. In reviewing the present study, the main "key drivers" from our behavioral beliefs were *"outstanding amenities"* and *"proximity from home*." The same marketing tactic could be helpful for the various areas/regions or property management companies to help capture more of the market share. For instance, management knowing that *"proximity from home*" is a key driver for making the guests' vacation decision, billboards and magazine ads within a 500 mile radius should mention how quick it is to access the beach. On the other hand, the vacation rental market can do the same with the proximity ad and ensure it also mentions the amenities offered, especially amenities that traditional accommodations do not offer (i.e., full kitchens, in unit washer/dryers, spaciousness of rooms/separate bedrooms).

Market saturation has become a growing issue in various tourism destinations, along with other industries (e.g., business and residential real estate, automobiles, consumer goods). Therefore, many companies are maximizing their talents and use of

resources to help gain the competitive edge (Petrick, 2004a, 2004b; Petrick, Tonner, & Quinn, 2006). Existing research has reported several important antecedents which influence a visitor's intent to revisit. Some of these variables are customer satisfaction (Anderson, Fornell, & Lehmann, 1994; Oh & Weaver, 1995; Petrick, Morias, & Norman, 2001), service quality (Morias, Backman, & Dorsch, 2004; Williams & Buswell, 2003; Zeitaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996, 1985), and perceived value and past experiences (Petrick, Morias, & Norman, 2001). These variables have been contributing factors to the visitor's intention to revisit. Instead of focusing this research on the macro-themes of past research, this study purposefully detailed out the important factors from the visitors' perspective. This approach helped to identify the specific items that were recurrent and are now malleable by tourism managers to entice visitors through their doors.

Thus applying the TPB to the vacation rental context, this study revealed the following insights. First, the general attitude results show that the guests are more likely to repeat their visit if the amenities offered are beyond that of traditional lodging. Second, the guests value the location being within proximity to their homes. Other important issues to the guests were that of the beauty of the beaches, the spaciousness of the rooms, and the family atmosphere offered at the resort. In examining the social influence results, the guests expect family and friends to approve of the rebooking behavior using a vacation rental. The most important influences were spouse and extended family followed by children and friends. As for the perceived behavioral control, the guests believed they had the resources to perform the behavior with their job/work schedule being the most influential determinant.

Description of the Limitations of the Study

Like all studies, this study had limitations. The most unique limitation occurred on April 20, 2010, when an explosion occurred on the semisubmersible offshore drilling rig *Deepwater Horizon* in the Gulf of Mexico, killing 11 rig workers and injuring 17 others. On April 24, 2010, it was found that the wellhead was damaged and was leaking oil into the Gulf. This significant spill posed a serious threat to wildlife, affecting as many as 400 species along the coastal areas of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida. This man-made disaster has gone down as the largest offshore oil spill in U.S. history, costing $40 billion (Jones & Jervis, 2010). The well was permanently capped on September 19, 2010. Therefore, the first limitation related to this study is that of generalizability. Since the summer of 2010 was a very atypical summer along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast, it cannot be compared to that of any other summer or similar vacation rental market. A typical summer has averages of 85%-100% occupancy rates from Memorial Day weekend through the first week of August. Area reservations were off by as much as 80% during this summer, as reported by ABC's *World News* on July 2, 2010. In 2010, the occupancy averages hovered around 45%-70% with higher spikes only during weekends. The rental areas located in Seaside and Rosemary Beach, Florida had higher rental averages than all other areas during the summer of 2010 (Cottage Rental Agency, 2010, Cottage Rental Company, 2010).

Many repeat vacationers decided to select an alternative destination this year and went to other parts of the South, such as North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee. Travel watchers and planners also said that many chose other alternative destinations this past summer, including the Caribbean, Europe, Costa Rica, and Central America. With

this disaster being national news, the media continued to report that the oil was going to inevitably cover the beaches of the Gulf Coast. "It's the fear more than the reality" said a group director of 20 who switched his beach reservation to South Carolina. "They just see it's [oil] in the Gulf. It's close by. And they have heard so many lies about this oil spill and how many gallons [have spilled] they don't really believe anybody. They think it's better to be safe than sorry" (Jones & Jervis, 2010).

The fact that actual respondents may not be representative of the targeted respondents could be another limitation of the study. The population characteristics and other details were adequately represented, but the socioeconomic characteristic could have impacted the results. In a typical summer, the rental prices would have never been discounted. Jones and Jervis (2010) reiterated that summer is prime tourist season for communities dotting the coast. In 2009, Alabama's beaches brought in 25% of the $9.2 billion in tourism dollars (Jones & Jervis, 2010). Therefore, many of the respondents could be discount hunters and not necessarily the typical vacationer who would be the target of this study, or on the other hand, they could be the die-hard beach-goers; there is no way of knowing this distinction. They could be repeat guests but may have never rented a vacation rental accommodation versus a hotel option.

The questionnaire items designed to capture the perceived behavioral control variable of the study could be seen as another limitation. These items did not perform well and only represented 5% of the explained variance. This issue could be based on how the questions were written, the location of the items within the instrument itself, or the level of understanding of the questions from the respondent. According to the TPB, these questionnaire items had to be worded from the answers collected by the qualitative

responses to the eliciting questionnaire, not adjusted by the researcher. Some of the perceived behavioral control items were the last questions on the questionnaire, so fatigue could have accounted for poor performance. Adding to this limitation could be the length of the five-page questionnaire. To complete the questionnaire, the time averaged 5-8 minutes, but there was a lot of reading involved. Many of the respondents were outside in popular resort areas or at the beach, where bright sunshine could have made it difficult to read and comprehend. It was very difficult to collect questionnaires when it was overcast or raining; people disappeared from the common resort areas if any bad weather was apparent.

Also, the data itself, after the first analysis, presented a problem that could be interpreted as a limitation. The main variables of the study (behavioral intention, general attitude, social influence, and perceived behavioral control) were severely skewed, highly kurtotic, and showed constrained variance. Therefore, these variables required transformation in order to be further analyzed and interpreted. A reflect and inverse transformation was used to reduce skewness and kurtosis on the independent variables (general attitude, social influence, and perceived behavioral control) and reduce the number of outliers. The raw data central tendencies are reported in Table 1, while the transformed data are reported in Figure 4.

Another limitation is the amount of time that passed between the eliciting belief questionnaire and the actual data collection. The eliciting questionnaire was collected during the summer of 2008 and the actual data collection was accomplished in the summer of 2010; therefore, 2 years had passed. The responses would most likely be the

same and representative of the sample, but it would increase validity and reliability if they were administered closer together.

<center>Directions for Future Research</center>

It would be interesting to replicate this study during a "nondisaster" summer. The data would be a better representation of a typical summer and many more implications would be able to be drawn from the results. The oil spill of this past summer was a non-foreseeable occurrence and therefore, 2010 has gone down in history as an "outlier" year, hopefully not to be repeated. Therefore, information taken from this study cannot be generalized to any other summer until the study is repeated in a "typical" summer season. If this study captured new visitors to vacation rentals and/or the area, it would be interesting to see if they will repeat their visit in the vacation rental and/or the area in future years.

Social media, email blasts, and Internet marketing are making more and more of a presence in the visitor's decision of vacation destination and trip details. With the emergence of Trip Advisor, Facebook groups/pages, blogs, etc., further study of the impact these marketing tactics have on booking trends would also be useful. Another direction for future research would be to expand on the groups that this study touched on during the exploratory analyses section. Leisure tourism is a product that is jointly consumed; its activities reflect directly and indirectly all group members (Chadwick, 1987; March & Woodside, 2005). Group composition, years visited, distance traveled, and property status (different geographical and socioeconomic areas within the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast) would be some of the individual components that would be interesting to expand on in future research. In leisure settings, for example, the

composition of the group heavily influences the behavior of its members (March & Woodside, 2005; McIntosh & Goeldner, 1990). This is especially true if children are a part of the group composition (Fodness & Murray, 1999; March & Woodside, 2005)

More research is warranted on the decision-making process of first-time visitors versus repeat visitors, along with what influences a first-time visitor's decision to choose a vacation rental compared to the alternatives. Also, further research would be useful in comparing repeat visitors of more than 5 years with those visitors who have been coming to the area less than 5 years. A deeper look into the different geographical regions of the Gulf Coast would also be interesting, in relation to vacation rental determinants.

Still another direction for future research would be to conduct similar studies in various other vacation rental destinations and compare different areas of the country. Tourism continues to have trade and industry publications that represent hotel and motel settings, and future research should be expanded to include the vacation rental industry.

This study provided useful insights into the behavioral intentions of consumers within the vacation rental industry. The TPB process helped to identify key determinants that made a difference to the population in their decisions regarding rebooking a vacation rental within the next 2 years along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast. This study also lets the reader know the most important aspects and beliefs items that consistently appear within a vacationer's general attitude, social influence, and perceived behavioral control parameters, all of which affect their intentions. The TPB was a relatively good predictor of intentions and, with the complexities of tourist destinations, will continue to be useful as more studies are focused on this unique travel and tourism area of vacation rentals. Because of the unique limitations of this study, these findings may be interpreted as

conservative and a TPB may be show as a stronger predictor of a visitor's intention to return if conducted during a typical summer.

APPENDIX A

ELICITING QUESTIONNAIRE

Eliciting Questionnaire   Lisa Kate Price

For the intended study, "vacation rental" represents the leisure visitor as compared to that of business and implies the accommodation type is in the single or multi-family condominiums or single home dwellings as compared to hotels rooms.

1. What do you believe are the *advantages* of renting a "vacation rental" for a vacation along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast within the next five years?

2. What do you believe are the *disadvantages* of renting a "vacation rental" for a vacation along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast within the next five years?

3. Is there anything else you associate with renting a "vacation rental" for a vacation along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast within the next five years?

4. Are there any individuals or groups who would *approve* of you renting a "vacation rental" for a vacation along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast within the next five years?

5. Are there any individuals or groups who would *disapprove* of you renting a "vacation rental" for a vacation along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast within the next five years?

6. Are there any other individuals or groups who come to mind when you think about renting a "vacation rental" for a vacation along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast within the next five years?

7. What factors or circumstances would enable you to rent a "vacation rental" for a vacation along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast within the next five years?

8. What factors or circumstances would make it difficult or impossible for you to rent a "vacation rental" for a vacation along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast within the next five years?

9. Are there any other issues that come to mind when you think about the difficulty of renting a "vacation rental" for a vacation along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast within the next five years?

APPENDIX B

MAIN STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE

In conjunction with a study by the Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Department at the

University of Utah, Go Play, Inc. kindly requests your participation in the following survey
Your answers will remain confidential.

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND INFORMATION. Please describe you and your travel group by responding to each of the following questions.

1. Purpose of your visit:

   ○ Personal/family leisure
   ○ Convention/Group Meeting
   ○ Business
   ○ Other, Please specify

   _____

2. Which property are you staying at on this trip?
   ○ The Beach Club, Gulf Shores, Alabama
   ○ Rosemary Beach, Florida
   ○ Seaside, Florida
   ○ Shores of Panama, Panama City Beach, Florida
   ○ Sterling Resorts, Destin, Florida
   ○ Sterling Resorts, Panama City Beach, Florida
   ○ Other: _____

3. <u>Including yourself,</u> how many adults, ages 18 and older, are with you on this trip?
   ○ One
   ○ Two
   ○ Three
   ○ Four
   ○ Five
   ○ Six or more

4. Are there any children under the age of 18 years of age accompanying you <u>on this trip?</u> If yes, please answer
   Number 5, if no proceed to Number 6.
   Yes or No

5. Please indicate the number and appropriate age(s) of the children <u>on this trip?</u>
   ___ Age 0–3   ___ Age 12-14

   ___ Age 4-7   ___ Age 15-17

   ___ Age 8-11

6. Please indicate the travel mode that represents you <u>on this trip</u>.
   Fly   Drive   Both   Other, _____

7. How far away do you reside from this destination?
   ○ Less than 200 miles away
   ○ 200 to 500 miles away

○   More than 500 miles away

8. Where is your primary residence?
    _____(City) _____(State)   _____(Zip)

9. Is this your first visit to the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast Florida? Yes or   No

10. If **no**, how many years (does not have to be consecutive) have you been visiting this area?
    _____

SECTION 2: For questions 11- 14 please place an X in the slot that indicates your thoughts or beliefs. For the intended study, "vacation rental" represents the leisure visitor as compared to that of business and implies the accommodation type is in the single or multi-family condominiums or single home dwellings as compared to hotels rooms.

1.   **Extremely**   **Extremely**
                                                 Unlikely   **Neither**   **Likely**

How likely is that you will vacation   ____:____:____:____:____:____:____
in a "vacation rental" along the
Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast within
the next two years?

2.   **Extremely**   **Extremely**
                                                 Bad   **Neither**   **Good**

Using a "vacation rental"   ____:____:____:____:____:____:____
for a vacation along the Florida/Alabama
Gulf Coast within the next two years, is ____.

3.
                                                 Should not   **Neither**   **Should**

Most people who are important to me ____:____:____:____:____:____:____
think I /we _____ vacation in
a "vacation rental" along the Florida/
Alabama Gulf Coast within the next two years.

4.   **Extremely**   **Extremely**
                                                 Difficult   **Neither**   **Easy**

Given the present circumstances,   ____:____:____:____:____:____:____
how easy would it be for you to vacation
using a "vacation rental" along the
Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast
within the next two years.

SECTION 3: Please mark an "X" on the scale for the following questions.

Before they go on vacation, people often have expectations about what they might see and experience. Questions 15 through 21 are about the likelihood that you would see or experience certain things when you vacation in a vacation rental, such as the one you are currently using, along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast.

For each of the following, please insert the items below in the given blank:
how likely is it that you would experience _____

if you vacation in a vacation rental along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast within the next two years?	**Extremely Unlikely**	**neither**	**Extremely Likely**
5. *Beautiful beaches*	____:____:____:____:____:____:____		
6. *Outstanding amenities*	____:____:____:____:____:____:____		
7. *Crowded beaches*	____:____:____:____:____:____:____		
8. *Expensive rooms*	____:____:____:____:____:____:____		
9. *Spaciousness rooms*	____:____:____:____:____:____:____		
10. *A family atmosphere*	____:____:____:____:____:____:____		
11. *Suitable proximity of the resort from home*	____:____:____:____:____:____:____		

Sometimes when we make important decisions, such as where to vacation, we look to others in helping us to make our decision. In Questions 22 through 27 we are interested in your thoughts about who thinks you either should or should not vacation in a vacation rental along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast.

For each of the following items please indicate how much you think each of the following people think you should or should not use a vacation rental during the next two years. Please do so by placing an X in the blank that indicates your response.

	Should Not	*Should*
12. *My children think I…*	____:____:____:____:____:____:____	
13. *My friends from past visits think I…*	____:____:____:____:____:____:____	
14. *Employees of the resort think I …*	____:____:____:____:____:____:____	
15. *My spouse thinks I …*	____:____:____:____:____:____:____	

16. My extended family thinks I …   ____:____:____:____:____:____:____

17. The management of the resort thinks I …   ____:____:____:____:____:____:____

Some events make following our intentions easy to accomplish; others make following our intentions difficult.   For each of the following, please indicate how easy it would be to vacation in a vacation rental along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast during the next two years. Please do so by placing an X in the slot that indicates your choice.

	Difficult	**Easy**

18. The presence of hurricanes would make it …   ____:____:____:____:____:____:____

19. The current state of the economy would make it…

____:____:____:____:____:____:____

20. The high price of gas would make it …   ____:____:____:____:____:____:____

21. The good health of my family would make it … ____:____:____:____:____:____:____

22. My job/work schedule would make it …   ___:____:____:____:____:____:____

SECTION 4: In section 3 (Questions 15 through 21) you indicated how likely it is that you would see or experience certain things while vacationing along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast. In Questions 33 through 39 we ask you to evaluate how good or bad those things might be.

You might evaluate some outcomes of vacationing in a vacation rental along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast during the next two years as good. Other outcomes may be evaluated as bad. Please evaluate, for you, each of the following outcomes of utilizing a vacation rental along the Florida/Alabama Gulf coast during the next two years.
Please do so by placing an X in the slot that indicates your choice.

	Bad	**Good**

23. Beautiful beaches are …   ____:____:____:____:____:____:____

24. Crowded beaches are …   ____:____:____:____:____:____:____

25. Expensive rooms are …   ____:____:____:____:____:____:____

26. Close proximity of the resort from home is … ____:____:____:____:____:____:____

27. Outstanding amenities of the resort are…   ____:____:____:____:____:____:____

28. A family atmosphere at the resort is …   ____:____:____:____:____:____:____

29. Spaciousness rooms are …   ____:____:____:____:____:____:____

People often have beliefs that others think that they should or should not do something. However, some of those people influence our decisions more than others do. Questions 40 through 45 ask you to revisit those people who might be interested in your vacation decisions and ask you to indicate how motivated you are to satisfy their wishes.

When you think about utilizing a vacation rental along the Florida/Alabama Gulf coast during the next two years, how strongly are you motivated to comply with the wishes of the following people? Please do so by placing an X in the slot that indicates your choice.

	Not at All	*Very Much*

30. My children   ____:____:____:____:____:____:____

31. My friends of past visits   ____:____:____:____:____:____:____

32. The employees of the resort   ____:____:____:____:____:____:____

33. The management of the resort   ____:____:____:____:____:____:____

34. My spouse   ____:____:____:____:____:____:____

35. My extended family   ____:____:____:____:____:____:____

Many factors can influence important decisions such as vacation choices. Some of those factors are within our control; others are not. Further, we sometimes attach importance to those factors. Questions 46 through 50 explore how important controlling some of these factors are in making your decision to vacation in a vacation rental along the Florida/Alabama Gulf Coast.

Please evaluate how important it is for you to be in control of the following <u>when you think about vacationing in a vacation rental along the Florida/Alabama Gulf coast during the next two years</u>. Please indicate your response by placing an X in the slot that indicates your choice.

	Extremely Unimportant	*Extremely Important*

36. The presence of hurricanes   ____:____:____:____:____:____:____

37. The current economy   ____:____:____:____:____:____:____

38. The high price of gas   ____:____:____:____:____:____:____

39. The good health of my family   ____:____:____:____:____:____:____

40. *My job/work schedule*   ____:____:____:____:____:____:____

APPENDIX C

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES FOR MAIN STUDY

QUESTIONNAIRE

DATA COLLECTION TRAINING OUTLINE

A. Introduction   6:00 – 6:15

    a. Principle investigator
    b. Supervisors

B. Presentation of Theoretical Foundation   6:15– 6:45

    a. Theory of Planned Behavior
    b. Modal Salient Beliefs
    c. Attitudes
    d. Social Influences
    e. Perceived Behavioral Control

C. Main Study Questionnaire by Principle Investigator   6:45– 7:30

    a. Review of sections
    b. Sample with partners before instruction (both administer & take survey)
    c. Discussion of arising questions
    d. Reliability and validity consistency importance

D. Presentation of Scripts by Principle Investigator   7:30 – 7:45

    a. Introduction of Questionnaire
    b. Background Information
    c. Answering process
    d. Review and presentation of scripts by team members

E. Facilitation of Questionnaire using Scripts   7:45 – 8:00

    a. Questionnaire administering practice
    b. Feedback and questions

APPENDIX D

RESEARCH ASSISTANCE AGREEMENT

This is your invitation to assist me as a research assistant for my doctoral dissertation. As a research assistant you are committing to a half-day of data collection training. The training will take place on Monday, June 7, 2010 from 6:00 until 8:00pm, at Laketown Wharf. As a data collector you will be trained on administering the main study questionnaire and the basics of the research foundations.

This training will assist you in the data collection process that will be a part of your summer internship. In order to get a sufficient amount of data you will be asked to conduct several surveys per week for a three week period of time during the summer. These surveys will be a face-to-face interview style survey method with the resort guests. The process should be taken seriously and the standards maintained as discussed during the training. The number of questionnaires that you conduct will be contingent upon your schedule. These are to be conducted while you are on duty and your other responsibilities have been completed.

I want to thank you in advance for your willingness to assist me in this important portion of my dissertation and graduate school process. I feel your friendly and unique acceptance of others and your ability to work with people will create an environment conducive for positive guests' interactions. If you have questions I can be contacted at kate@goplayinc.com or 850-368-3526.

I, _____, agree to be a part of this data collection team. I understand the importance of accuracy and reliability as a member of the team. I will do everything in my power to complete the collection process during this internship to the best of my ability.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Supervisor: _____ Date: _____

Resort Collection Team (circle one):
Beach Club   Seaside/Rosemary Beach   Shores of Panama
          Sterling-PCB   Sterling-Destin

APPENDIX E

DATA COLLECTION PLAN

	The Beach Club	**Sterling - Destin**	**Seaside/Rosemary**	**Sterling - PCB**	**SOP**
Assigned Data Collectors	Kristina Kyle	Joy Mildred	Kate Alan Joey/Lauren /Travis	Kate Chanel	Kate Jen
Supervisor	Kate	Joy	Kate	Kate	Kate
Location Codes	1=Poolside 2=Club 3=Market 4=Ice Cream/Internet 5=Lobby	1=Shores Club 2=Sands Lobby 3=Shores Poolside 4=Shores lobby/internet 5=Sands Poolside	1= West Pool (SS) 2=Adult Pool (SS) 3=West Lawn (RMB) 4=Ice cream (SS) 5=Sugar Shak (RMB)	1=Splash Poolside 2=Breeze lobby 3=Reef Pool 4=Splash Lobby/atrium 5=Beach Poolside	1=Poolside 2=Lobby 3=Atrium (internet) 4=Mahi Bar & Grill 5=Beach
Collection Days	Tuesday Thursday Saturday	Monday Wednesday Sunday	Monday Wednesday Friday	Monday Wednesday Sunday	Tuesday Thursday Saturday

APPENDIX F

DATA COLLECTION SCHEDULE

APPENDIX F	TBC			STERLING - Destin				SEASIDE & ROSEMARY		STERLING PANAMA CITY		
	Weekday 1	Weekday 2	Wkd 1	Weekday 1	Weekday 2	Wkd 1	Weekday 1	Weekday 2	Wkd 1	Weekday 1	Weekday 2	Wkd 1
Week 1	MONDAY	FRIDAY	SUNDAY	TUESDAY	THURS	SAT	MON	THURS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	THURS	SUNDAY
10A-12P					SANDS LOBBY			ICE CREAM		REEF POOL		
1P-3P		POOLSIDE						WEST POOL				SPLASH LOBBY
3P-5P	MARKET		ICE CREAM	SHORES - POOL		SANDS LOBBY		WEST LAWN	SEASIDE	LOBBY - SPL	REEF POOL	
5P-7P			POOLSIDE			SHORES CLUB	WEST POOL SS	RMB				
Week 2	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	SATURDAY	MONDAY	THURS	SAT	WED	FRIDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	SUNDAY
10A-12P	MARKET	POOLSIDE						SUGAR SHAK			BREEZE LOBBY	
1P-3P							RMB	WEST POOL				
3P-5P			ICE CREAM	SHORES LOBBY	SANDS LOBBY	SANDS LOBBY	SS	WEST LAWN - RMB				REEF POOL
5P-7P			MARKET		SHORES POOL			WEST POOL SS		SPLASH LOBBY		BREEZE LOBBY
Week 3	MONDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	SUNDAY	MON	TUESDAY	SUNDAY	TUESDAY	FRIDAY	SAT
10A-12P	ICE CREAM				SHORES LOBBY			WEST POOL			SPLASH LOBBY	
1P-3P		POOLSIDE	LOBBY		SANDS POOL					SPLASH POOL		

Time									
3P-5P			ICE CREAM		SHORES CLUB	WEST LAWN	ADULT POOL		BEACH POOL
5P-7P					SHORES CLUB	RMB	SUGAR SHAK		SPLASH POOL

	SOP		
	Weekday 1	Weekday 2	Wkd 1
Week 1	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
10A-12P	BEACH		ATRIUM
1P-3P			LOBBY
3P-5P		MAHI B&G	
5P-7P			
Week 2	MONDAY	FRIDAY	SUNDAY
10A-12P	ATRIUM		
1P-3P			
3P-5P		MAHI B&G	LOBBY
5P-7P			BEACH
Week 3	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	SATURDAY
10A-12P			
1P-3P	POOLSIDE		
3P-5P			BEACH
5P-7P		ATRIUM	MAHI B&G

APPENDIX G

SUMMARY OF CORRELATION AND REGRESSION

ANALYSES; TABLES 4 - 12

Table 4

Summary of Correlation and Regression Analysis of General Attitude on Expectancy –
Value Components

Correlations

General Attitude

Beautiful Beaches	.217***
Outstanding Amenities	.343***a
Crowded beaches	.054
Expensive Rooms	.096
Spaciousness Rooms	.192***
Family Atmosphere	.258***
Proximity from Home	.266***a

***Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (1-tailed)
a = variance significant in the multiple regression
R^2 = .169; F = 9.885; df = 7/340; p< .001.

Variable	B	*SE* B	β	*T*-Value	*T*-Signf
Beautiful Beaches	. 002	.002	.076	1.384	.167
Outstanding Amenities	.007	.002	.223	3.497	.001
Crowded beaches	-.002	.002	-.058	-.959	.338.
Expensive Rooms	.002	.002	.076	1.296	.196
Spaciousness Rooms	.001	.002	.032	.559	.577
Family Atmosphere	.002	.002	.069	1.178	.240
Proximity from Home	.004	.001	.180	3.445	.001

R^2 = .169; R^2_{Adj} = .152
F = 9.885; df = 7/347; p> .001.

Table 5

Summary of Correlation and Regression Analysis of General Attitudes on Outcome
Expectancy Beliefs

Correlations

General Attitude

Beautiful Beaches	.227***
Outstanding Amenities	.302***a
Crowded beaches	.072
Expensive Rooms	.105*
Spaciousness Rooms	.153***
Family Atmosphere	.276***a
Proximity from Home	.209***a

***Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (1-tailed)
a = variance significant in the multiple regression
$R^2 = .151$; $F = 8.816$; $df = 7/347$; $p < .001$.

Variable	B	SE B	β	T-Value	T-Signf
Beautiful Beaches	.023	.014	.096	1.663	.097
Outstanding Amenities	.059	.018	.195	3.285	.001
Crowded beaches	-.003	.010	-.015	-.252	.801
Expensive Rooms	.005	.011	.028	.494	.622
Spaciousness Rooms	.002	.014	.009	.155	.877
Family Atmosphere	.045	.021	.126	2.168	.031
Proximity from Home	.028	.009	.154	2.994	.003

$R^2 = .151$; $R^2_{Adj} = .134$
$F = 8.816$; $df = 7/354$; $p > .001$.

Table 6

Summary of Correlation and Regression Analysis of General Attitudes on Outcome
Evaluations

Correlations

	General Attitude
Beautiful Beaches	.148***
Outstanding Amenities	.246***a
Crowded beaches	-.021
Expensive Rooms	.067***a
Spaciousness Rooms	.175***
Family Atmosphere	.147**
Proximity from Home	.227***a

***Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (1-tailed)
a = variance significant in the multiple regression
R^2 = .111; F = 6.276; df = 7/351; p< .001.

Variable	B	*SE* B	β	*T*-Value	*T*-Signf
Beautiful Beaches	.031	.020	.083	1.543	.124
Outstanding Amenities	.055	.024	.155	2.351	.019
Crowded beaches	-.014	.010	-.087	-1.477	.141
Expensive Rooms	.023	.010	.130	2.204	.028
Spaciousness Rooms	.027	.017	.087	1.541	.124
Family Atmosphere	.000	.022	.000	-.007	.994
Proximity from Home	.029	.010	.155	2.874	.004

R^2 = .111; R^2_{Adj} = .094
F = 6.276; df = 7/358; p> .001.

Table 7

Summary of Correlation and Regression Analysis of Social Influence on Referents and Motivation to Comply Components

Correlations

	Social Influence
Children	.317***
Friends	.276***
Employees	.165**
Spouse	.386***a
Extended Family	.402***a
Management	.159**

***Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (1-tailed)
a = variance significant in the multiple regression
R^2 = .243; F = 16.990; df = 6/317; p< .001.

Variable	B	*SE* B	β	*T*-Value	*T*-Signf
Children	. 002	.002	.086	1.425	.155
Friends	.002	.001	.076	1.178	.240
Employees	.002	.002	.076	.620	.535
Spouse	.007	.002	.240	4.088	.001
Extended Family	.006	.001	.263	4.411	.001
Management	-.002	.003	-.097	-.785	.433

R^2 = .243; R^2_{Adj} = .229
F = 16.990; df = 6/323; p> .001.

Table 8

Summary of Correlation and Regression Analysis of Social Influence on Referents Components

Correlations

	Social Influence
Children	.349***a
Friends	.438***a
Employees	.287***
Spouse	.335***
Extended Family	.520***a
Management	.279***

***Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (1-tailed)
a = variance significant in the multiple regression
R^2 = .311; F = 24.123; df = 6/320; p< .001.

Variable	B	*SE* B	β	*T*-Value	*T*-Signf
Children	. 042	.019	.135	2.261	.024
Friends	.045	.015	.175	2.944	.003
Employees	.006	.018	.021	.307	.759
Spouse	-.005	.018	-.017	-.270	.787
Extended Family	.092	.017	.358	5.361	.001
Management	.001	.020	.004	.064	.949

R^2 = .311; R^2_{Adj} = .299
F = 24.123; df = 6/323; p> .001.

Table 9

Summary of Correlation and Regression Analysis of Social Influence on Motivation to Comply Components

Correlations

	Social Influence
Children	.186***
Friends	.131***
Employees	.094*
Spouse	.209***a
Extended Family	.215***a
Management	.110*

***Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (1-tailed)
a = variance significant in the multiple regression
$R^2 = .089$; $F = 5.453$; $df = 6/333$; $p < .001$.

Variable	B	*SE* B	β	*T*-Value	*T*-Signf
Children	. 019	.012	.092	1.586	.114
Friends	.000	.010	.002	.036	.971
Employees	-.014	.025	-.098	-.577	.565
Spouse	.019	.025	.132	.773	.440
Extended Family	.044	.016	.153	2.732	.007
Management	.028	.010	.161	2.715	.007

$R^2 = .089$; $R^2_{Adj} = .073$
$F = 5.453$; $df = 6/339$; $p > .001$.

Table 10

Summary of Correlation and Regression Analysis of Perceived Behavioral Control on Efficacy-Control Components

Correlations

	Perceived Behavioral Control
Hurricane Presence	.063
Current Economy	.174***
High Price of Gas	.142**
Good Health of Family	.086
Job/Work Schedule	.198***a

***Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (1-tailed)
a = variance significant in the multiple regression
$R^2 = .094$; $F = 7.379$; $df = 5/353$; $p < .001$.

Variable	B	*SE* B	β	*T*-Value	*T*-Signf
Hurricane Presence	. 000	.002	.011	.188	.851
Current Economy	.004	.003	.105	1.407	.160
High Price of Gas	.000	.003	.006	.082	.935
Good Health of Family	.000	.001	-.009	-.160	.873
Job/Work Schedule	.004	.001	.156	2.450	.015

$R^2 = .050$; $R^2_{Adj} = .036$
$F = 3.708$; $df = 5/358$; $p > .003$.

Table 11

Summary of Correlation and Regression Analysis of Perceived Behavioral Control on Efficacy Beliefs

Correlations

	Perceived Behavioral Control
Hurricane Presence	.063
Current Economy	.193***
High Price of Gas	.220***
Good Health of Family	.078
Job/Work Schedule	.286***a

***Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (1-tailed)
a = variance significant in the multiple regression
$R^2 = .050$; $F = 3.708$; $df = 5/355$; $p < .01$.

Variable	B	SE B	β	T-Value	T-Signf
Hurricane Presence	-.004	.012	-.021	-.372	.710
Current Economy	.009	.013	.047	.669	.504
High Price of Gas	.018	.014	.090	1.266	.206
Good Health of Family	-.009	.009	-.053	-.945	.345
Job/Work Schedule	.044	.011	.248	3.950	.001

$R^2 = .094$; $R^2_{Adj} = .081$
$F = 7.379$; $df = 5/360$; $p > .001$.

Table 12

Summary of Correlation and Regression Analysis of Perceived Behavioral Control on
Control Beliefs

Correlations

	Perceived Behavioral Control
Hurricane Presence	.017
Current Economy	.007
High Price of Gas	-.061
Good Health of Family	.074
Job/Work Schedule	-.009

***Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (1-tailed)
a = variance significant in the multiple regression
$R^2 = .014$; $F = 1.019$; $df = 5/361$; $p < .406$.

Variable	B	*SE* B	β	*T*-Value	*T*-Signf
Hurricane Presence	. 002	.012	.012	.195	.846
Current Economy	.012	.015	.057	.781	.435
High Price of Gas	-.022	.014	-.114	-1.610	.108
Good Health of Family	.023	.016	.084	1.458	.146
Job/Work Schedule	-.002	.011	-.013	-.216	.829

$R^2 = .014$; $R^2_{Adj} = .000$
$F = 1.019$; $df = 5/366$; $p > .406$.

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