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Living Like A Monk: Motivations and experiences of international participants in Templestay

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Templestay has transformed the perception and traditional role of Buddhist monasteries into a hybrid form of leisure and recreational dwelling that transcends religious boundaries. We identify four domains of motivational variables including learning, self-growth, being with nature, and relaxation. Based on data from 299 international participants in Templestay, empirical tests of the hypotheses revealed that motivational domains such as self-growth, nature, and learning exhibited significant differences based on the various socio-demographic backgrounds of international participants. Strategies are suggested for crafting Templestay as a cultural and monastic experience as well as segmenting and targeting international participants based on their needs.

Key Words : templestay; temple stay programs; religious tourism; religious tourism motivation

Introduction

The perception and traditional role of Buddhist monasteries has dramatically shifted from sacred religious sites toward sites for the provision of temple stay programmes (hereafter, simply Templestay), a hybrid form of leisure and recreational dwelling that transcends religious boundaries (Kaplan, 2010; Song *et al.*, 2015). Templestay originated in order to respond to a shortage of lodging establishments when Korea co-hosted the 2002 World Cup Soccer Games. Surprisingly, an estimated 1,000 internationals took part in this program, over a 42-day period, in conjunction with the World Cup (Kaplan, 2010). In order to provide authentic cultural experiences of sacred places, extensive efforts were made to promote sustainable tourism that benefited both tourists and the national image. The program plays a significant role in transforming the identity of Korean temples from mainly being a spiritual complex, of a specified religion, to being inclusive illustrations of Korean national heritage and culture (Kaplan, 2010). More specifically, Templestay enables participants to fully engage in collective religious, cultural, educational, spiritual, and leisure activities (Choe, Blazey, and Mitas, 2015).

Templestay, a creative form of religious tourism, has flourished in Korea since 2002. In contrast to conventional tourism, which emphasises traditional factors of production such as sun, sea, and natural

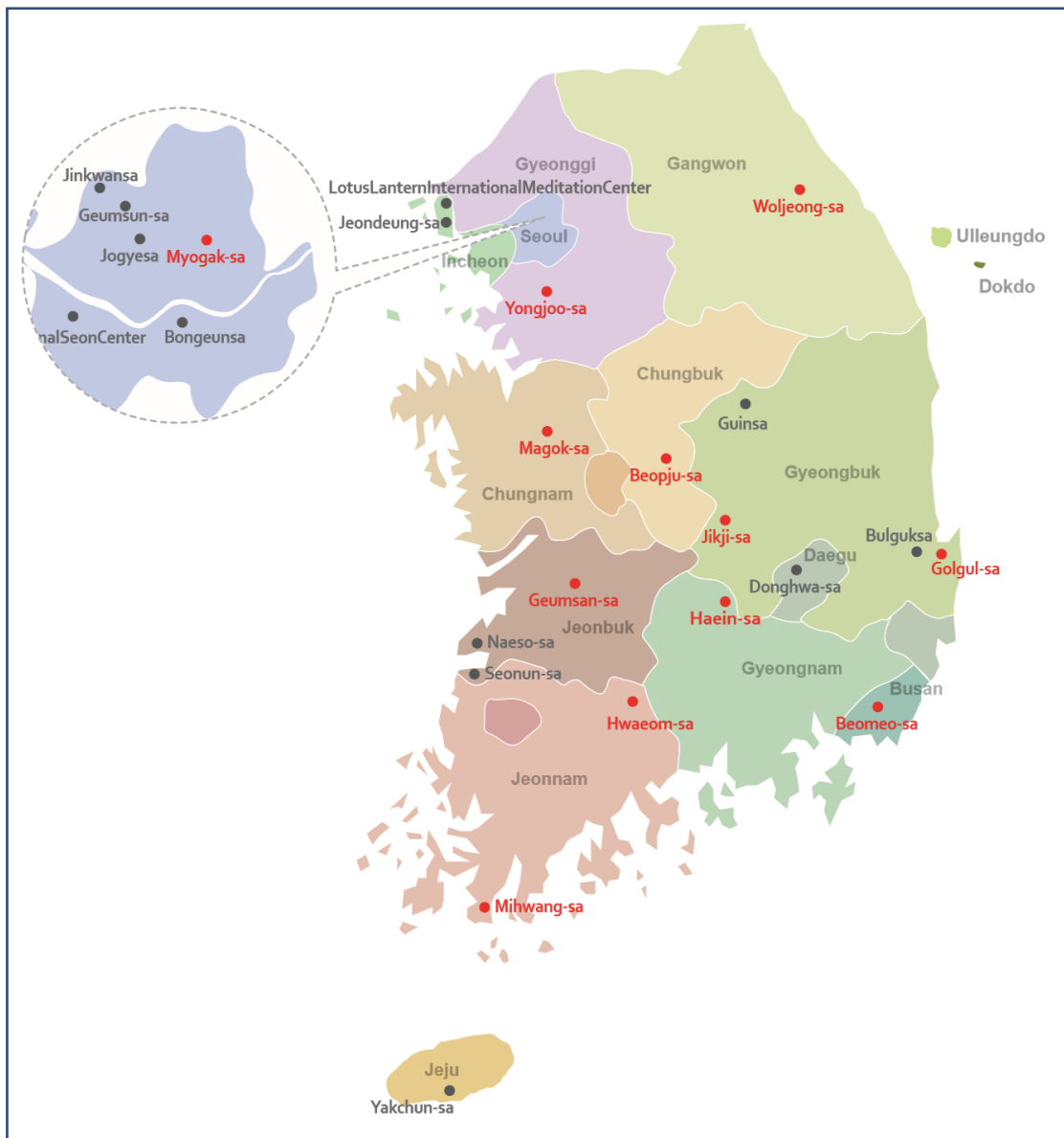
attractions, religious tourism focuses more on experience production and creativity (Richards and Wilson, 2007). We argue that Templestay is a distinct type of religious tourism for at least three reasons:

- First, there is a history of using religious facilities as public accommodations. For instance, with the fall of the Roman Empire, the church took a dominant role in society and was the sole authority recognised from one country to another. Monasteries and other religious houses welcomed travellers, with no pre-set room rate, but expected donations (Lundberg, 1994).
- Second, most activities, within Templestay, are directly excerpted from the daily practices of Buddhist monks.
- Third, religious tourists are attracted to places that provide a strong religious atmosphere (Vorzsak and Gut, 2009), a historical / cultural heritage experience (Lankford, Dieser, and Walker, 2005), and a natural environment (Wang, Chen, and Huang, 2015).

It follows, then, that Templestay has become an identifiable religious tourism product for internationals who desire to experience an ascetic life in a traditional Buddhist temple with accommodation.

Buddhism was introduced to the Korean peninsula approximately 1700 years ago and is deeply imbedded in the daily lives of Koreans. Nestled in the countless

Figure 1 : Map of Twenty-five Temples That offer Templestay for Foreign Tourists



Note : Red dots = temples participating in this research

Source : Authors

mountainsides and ridges are temples that boast pristine natural beauty. Since 2012, in order to be considered a participant, a visitor must spend at least one night at a temple experiencing its unusual environment. *The Impact of Culture on Tourism* published by the OECD Tourism Committee reports that Templestay is one of the five most successful culturally based tourist activities in the world (see Templestay in Korean Guidebooks). It also describes Templestay as an innovative theme-based tourist attraction (OECD, 2009). As you might expect, these invaluable global cultural and tourism resources are preserved and protected by the local government. Additionally, the Korean Buddhism Cultural

Corporation, since 2004, has systematically monitored and evaluated (e.g., tracking the number of participants) Templestay. Templestay participants are required to comply with religious practices, beliefs, and behaviours (e.g., taboos). These obligations are both stipulated and enforced by the respective temples. Although each temple provides structured activities, they vary from one temple to another. Over the past decade, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of international tourists who desire to experience traditional Korean culture as well as Buddhism. In 2014, compared to the previous year, the number of internationals that partook in Templestay was 25,560, a 17.6% annual increase.

The Benefits and Appeal of Templestay

An extensive analysis revealed that the main components of Templestay are associated with a pure monastic Buddhism experience and engagement, nature and well-being, rediscovering oneself, and learning the culture and heritage of Korean Buddhism. From a participant perspective, temples are perceived as sacred, and spiritual places of wellness. Templestay, as an experience, likely contains fundamental elements that are closely related to important aspects of human life and behaviour (Chun and Chong, 2011). Indeed, there is strong evidence that people's spiritual or religious experiences significantly contribute to quality of life domains (Johnston and Spilka, 1991). For instance, Lazar and Bjorck (2008) argued that certain religiously oriented activities, such as chanting, praying the rosary, and meditation lead to positive physiological changes and desirable health outcomes.

Templestay embraces a variety of religiously oriented activities and spiritual components of meditation that lead to positive physiological progress. Indeed, Chun & Chong (2011) argued that Templestay has a therapeutic component that provides an inner healing and self-reflection as one recovers from psychological and physical exhaustion. Through self-reflection, silence (i.e., talking is minimised in order to devote time for self-reflection and meditation), and contemplation, participants experience a sense of achievement and renewal as they reflect on themselves. The focus is on the journey of searching for one's true self, as well as tranquillity in an environment surrounded with natural beauty (Kwon, 2012). These arguments are supported by slogans proclaimed by the Korean Buddhism Cultural Corporation, including 'A Journey in Search of Myself' and 'A Happy Habit for Myself.'

Generally speaking, little work has been done to extend tourism motivation research to the context of tourism to religious sites such as this (Choe, Blazey, and Mitas, 2015). Templestay offers an exceptional opportunity to examine how religion and cultural heritage have become inseparably linked. Yet, despite steady annual growth of international participants, little effort has been made to identify the unique nature of Templestay from an interdisciplinary tourism perspective. It is important to identify tourist motivations for visiting pilgrimage sites because motivation is a key determinant of their behaviour (Choe, Blazey, and Mitas, 2015). Furthermore, individual tourists' motives are largely reflected by their leisure activities and

activities of interest (Bideci and Albayrak, 2016; Shuo, Ryan, and Liu, 2009). Motivation allows us to understand tourist behaviour such as perceived value of destination experience, destination choice, and activity involvement (Prebensen *et al.*, 2013). Therefore, it is plausible to conclude that one way to identify Templestay motivation is to examine individuals' engagement in Templestay activities.

The major purpose of this study is to address the gap in religious tourism research, both in understanding motivations and evaluating experiences of internationals at Korean Templestay and in prescribing Templestay promotion and management strategies. The research observes meaningful findings in motives based on gender, age, religious beliefs, and geographical origins. Our objectives are to:

- (1) identify motivation and experience attributes for internationals who participate in Korean Templestay and
- (2) explore socio-demographic differences in motivation and evaluation of experience among international overnight visitors to Korean temples.

Two research questions are proposed to accomplish the stated objectives.

First, Why do internationals participate in Templestay?

Second, Do international participants' motives and experience outcomes significantly differ based on socio-demographic variables?

The following sections provide the theoretical underpinnings of the present study. First, we review the literature on religious tourism to ground the study context and place it within current thinking about religious tourism. Second, we review motivation theory, as it pertains to religious tourism, and specifically apply it to Templestay. Third, a research design is offered that identifies the appropriate variables to support our research hypotheses. Following that, we provide statistical and empirical evidence, a brief summary, managerial implications, limitations and directions for future research.

Religious Tourism

During the last few decades, sacred sites, widely spread across the world (Rinschede, 1992), have turned to tourism in order to increase funding. Indeed, Timothy and Olsen (2006) report that an estimated 240 million people travel to religious sites each year. Traditionally, religious tourism involves

Figure 2 : Promotional Image—Korean Templestay



Copyright © 2015, Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism

Source : Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism, 2015

people traveling away from their home to places or events of a sacred nature and participating in activities, rituals and ceremonies undertaken at the destination (Maneenetr and Tran, 2014: 32).

However, today, religious tourists also travel for educational, cultural, and recreational purposes (Woodward, 2004). Religion not only motivates religious tourism it also serves as the source of culture (Kong, 2005) and faith that attracts a diverse group of visitors (Henderson, 2010).

Most researchers agree that religion and tourism are linked. However, the literature is split. One school of thought suggests that tourism is opposed to pilgrimage (e.g., Collins-Kreiner and Kliot, 2000; della Dora, 2012; Fleischer, 2000; Smith, 1992). From this perspective, tourism inherently involves leisure and pleasure-seeking, while pilgrimage centres on pious behaviour (e.g., Collins-Kreiner, 2010). A second school suggests that pilgrimage is a type of tourism (e.g., Ron, 2009; Timothy and Olsen, 2006). Despite these diverging academic views of tourists and pilgrims:

both visit the same sacrosanct spaces at the same time, even if they have different experiences or related differently to the place being visited because of their religious or cultural backgrounds (Nyaupane, Timothy, and Poude, 2015:345).

Research on religious tourism has focused on issues such as economic development (Dasgupta, Mondal, and Basu, 2006), social culture (Joseph and Kavoori, 2001; Williams and Stewart, 1998), the ecosystem (Shinde, 2007), and perceived value to local residents (Terzidou, Stylidis, and Szivas, 2008; Uriely, Israeli, and Reichel, 2003). Outcomes of religious tourism include generating meaning in life (Fletcher, 2004), enhancing self-knowledge (Vorzsak and Gut, 2009), and improving mental health (Bergin, 1983). In this paper, we rely on the religious tourism literature for at least two reasons. First, research indicates that there are socio-demographic differences in demand for travel products at some religious sites. Second:

At religious sites, different types of tourists may require different experiences depending on their spiritual or secular needs or motives (Hughes, Bond, and Ballantyne, 2013:212).

Theory Development Of Templestay Motivation

Drawing on Yoon and Uysal (2005), motivation is defined here as psychological and biological needs and wants including forces that arouse, provide direction, and integrate an individual's behaviour and activity. We explore Templestay using insights from sociology, in particular, we rely on the generally accepted push-pull model (e.g., Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1977, 1981). From the perspective of push-and-pull theory, people are motivated to travel because they are pushed by intrinsic intangible forces and 'pulled,' or 'inspired' by external tangible forces in their choice of a given destination. The research is divided as to whether push factors temporally proceed pull factors (Dann, 1981) or if they are fundamentally related to each other (e.g., Klenosky, 2002). In the context of our study, intrinsic push factors may include faith-seeking, self-development, relaxation, and escape from everyday life. Perhaps, among other things, visitors may be seeking authenticity, that is, 'an internal truth' and a well 'defined heritage,' (MacCannell, 1989). Drawing on McCannell (1989), Jamal and Lee note, from a macro-sociological perspective, that

the (in)authenticity of interpersonal relationships and general experiences of phony and pseudo-events in modern society make people seek authenticity outside of their everyday existence (p. 51).

On the other hand, extrinsic pull factors may include access to cultural and religious environments and sacred temples (Wang, Chen, and Huang, 2015).

Pull factors notwithstanding, our focus here is on the unique motivational characteristics of Templestay. To fully understand the motives for Templestay is considerably complicated and cannot be explained by a single attribute. Reasons being, unlike traditional religious tourism where pilgrims are religiously motivated, motives of Templestay participants range from extremely religious to highly secular. Indeed, temples in Korea attract tourists from all walks of life due to archeological value, cultural heritage, and the natural scenery that temples provide.

Tourists are impelled to escape from their ordinary daily boundaries to an unusual environment to discover new experiences and excitement. Push factors urge individuals to escape from the pressure of the

Figure 3 : Promotional Image—Korean Templestay



Copyright © 2015, Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism

Source : Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism, 2015

Box 1 : Four Domains of Motivational Variables used in Templestay

Self-growth and reflection. Self-growth, a push factor (Wang, Chen, and Huang, 2015) is the degree to which participants experience a sense of achievement and renewal through self-reflection, silence, and contemplation (Heintzman, 2002, 2009; McDonald and Schreyer, 1991). International participants, perhaps needing to recover from both physical and psychological exhaustion, may seek the inner healing and self-reflection that Templestay provides (Chun and Kim, 2012). Indeed, one can relax both body and soul with Zen meditation, yoga, tea ceremonies, and meditation to acquire deep knowledge about the self and the meaning of life during relaxation.

Relaxation and meditation. Relaxation is one of the characteristics that most people associate with leisure, which has been defined as time spent in activities that provide intrinsically rewarding experiences (Iso-Ahola, 1999). Perhaps, this is because it provides relief from the stress and strain of everyday life (Beard and Ragheb, 1980). Poria, Reichel, and Biran (2006) found that the motivation for pilgrimage focuses largely on learning (for self-growth) and involvement in recreational activities. Indeed, the major attractions of Templestay include both spirituality and nature-based recreation (Lee and Han, 2009).

Being with nature. Nature-based recreation and leisure activity is one of the major attractions of Templestay since it connects an individual to the natural world. Korean temples, many of which are strategically positioned in national parks, are not only magically unspoiled but also completely immersed in tranquility. Templestay provides an opportunity to live a simple life away from the international participants' usual environment. Chun and Chong (2011) argued that nature related Templestay is oneness with nature, engagement with nature, connection to self and a natural aesthetic environment. Additionally, Templestay participants are motivated, by educational and cultural interests, to learn more about the history of a site.

Educational and cultural learning experiences. Packer (2006) argued that individuals are motivated to visit historical and cultural sites to experience learning activities. Participants may also want to understand a particular faith and/or enjoy an authentic experience (Kwon, 2012). This is especially true with internationals who emulate the austerity of a monk's life by attending religious services, reading sacred texts, and participating in a variety of cultural components such as traditional cooking, tea ceremonies, Buddhist art painting and crafting, and martial arts lessons. Fladmark (1998) argued that although pilgrim-tourists visit religious sites for religious reasons, many are also driven by non-religious motives such as a desire for adventure, discovery of uniqueness and cultural enrichment. Indeed, '*culture is the top motivating factor in religious tourism when one intends to experience the tradition of the culture followed by interest in that particular religion (religious/cultural). These are followed by self-reflection (personal) and interest in religion*' (Tripathi, Choudhary, and Agrawal, 2010:499). At the very least, individuals who are primarily motivated by religious belief, possess simple curiosity in addition to a desire to better understand the sacred and the transcendent (Shuo, Ryan, and Liu, 2009).

workplace and stresses associated with urban life and individual capitalism while pull factors may include the urge to travel different places in search of novelty and adventure (Akama, 1996). Individual travellers are pulled by external forces that destination characteristics provide (Crompton, 1979; Uysal and Jurovski, 1994). This behaviour is similar to prevailing push and pull factor theories proposed by many tourism researchers (Caber and Albayrak, 2016).

A number of studies uncover the motivation and interest of temple visitors. For example, Choe, Blazey, and Mitas (2015) investigated the motivation of tourists visiting a Buddhist temple in Chinatown, Los Angeles. Their study found that participants were highly motivated by the prospects of being within a tranquil atmosphere that provided mental relaxation and relieved stress and tension. They also found that visitors were motivated to discover and learn new

elements as well as expanding their interest and knowledge of Buddhism. Lee and Han (2009) identified the major functions of Templestay, including participation in religious ceremonies, preservation of cultural heritage and assets, appreciating ecological value, and spiritual relaxation of oneself. Their arguments are consistent with the claim made by the Jogye Order of Korea. Similarly, Song *et al.* (2014) argued that Templestay is largely divided into three different categories:

- (1) relaxation and meditation to the replenishing of the body and mind;
- (2) learning the traditions and customs of Buddhism culture, and;
- (3) the daily practice of monastic activities and Buddhist rituals intended to allow participants to be free from worry, and anxiety while rediscovering themselves.

Figure 3 : Promotional Image—Korean Templestay



Source : Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism, 2015

Table 1: Frequencies of Sample Characteristics

Categories		Foreigners	
		N	(%)
Gender	Male	118	40.7
	Female	172	59.3
	N	290	
Age	10-19	10	3.3
	20-29	135	45.2
	30-39	62	20.7
	40-49	45	15.1
	50-59	35	11.7
	60+	12	4.0
	N	299	
Religion	Protestant	76	26.3
	Catholic	85	29.4
	Buddhism	38	13.1
	No Religion	83	28.4
	Other	7	2.4
	N	289	
Nationality	North American	91	40.1
	European	79	34.8
	Asian	43	18.9
	Other	14	6.2
	N	227	

In addition to these three elements, Chun and Kim (2012) stressed the importance of nature-based Templestay in which individuals escape from routine daily life to the unusual environment of Templestay.

Summarising, contemporary anthropological views emphasise a multiplicity of motives and interests of temple visitors. Based on literature (e.g., Beard and Ragheb, 1983; Choe, Blazey, and Mitas, 2015; Kozak, 2002; Wang, Chen, and Huang, 2015) our study focuses on four motivational categories and experiences:

- (1) self-growth and reflection,
- (2) relaxation and meditation,
- (3) being with nature, and
- (4) educational and cultural learning.

Research Methodology

Method

The research tool was a structured questionnaire that was sent through the mail. An English version of the self-administered survey (500 questionnaires) was distributed to 12 different, government approved, temples throughout Korea. The researchers expected that examining temples, in various locations, would identify common elements that would generalise international participants' motivation for participating in Templestay. These temples all had established Templestay programs and were highly recognisable to international participants. The researchers consulted with temple administrators and instructed them as to how the questionnaire should be administered. The respondents were given an opportunity to answer the questionnaire after participating in Templestay.

Sample Characteristics

As indicated in Table 1, the sample had considerable variance across gender, age, religion, and nationality. In the following sections, we elaborate on the general patterns observed in the data.

Gender

An examination of the distribution of gender among international visitors to Templestay revealed that nearly 60% of international participants were women (see Table 1). This unequal proportion is consistent with previous religion literature which found females more likely to be engaged in religious practices and spiritual involvement (e.g., Maselko and Kubzansky, 2006). More recently, the Pew Research Centre conducted surveys in 84 countries measuring

religiosity (i.e., identification, attendance at worship services, and prayer frequency). Their finding that 83.4% of women identify with a faith group compared to 79.9% of men provides support for there being a global gender gap in religion (Sherwood, 2016).

Age

Age was measured as a continuous variable consisting of six categories (3.3%, 10-19 years old; 45.2%, 20-29 years old; 20%, 30-39 years old; 15.1%, 40-49 years old; 11.7%, 50-59; and 4%, over 60 years old). Thus, over 60% of Templestay participants were under the age of 39, which suggests that Templestay appeals to a relatively young group of international participants.

Religion

To determine religious denomination, respondents were asked to note their religious affiliation. A low representation of Buddhism (13.1%) suggested that Templestay programs draw attention from a diverse group of people who share different religious beliefs (26.3%, Protestant; 29.4%, Catholic; 28.4%, no religion; and 2.4%, other). This result suggests that Templestay must be distinguished from traditional religious or pilgrimage tourism in that respondents may have religious interests but not all of them are primarily motivated by religious reasons.

Nationality

Table 1 also describes the composition of international participants by their geographical region. The respondents came from different countries of origin and were classified based on four major regions including North America, Europe, Asia, and other. North America includes both the United States and Canada. Among Europeans, 30.4% of participants were from Germany and 26.4% were from France. Surprisingly, only 14.4% of international participants were from Asian countries, largely from Malaysia and India. Based on the nationality characteristic, participants were primarily from North America and European countries.

Number of Visits

Mayo and Jarvis (1981) proposed the consistent theory which stated that an individual is expected to pursue things that are predictable and consistent in order to reduce psychological tension. This line of reasoning, when applied in the context of our conceptualisation, suggests that we would find that a considerable number of international participants would be repeat visitors. However, a large number of international participants

Table 2 : Result of explanatory factor analysis

Motivation and experience of Templestay	Factors			
	F1	F2	F3	F4
Factor 1: Self- growth and reflection				
I think I will see changes in myself through this templestay	0.750			
I had a chance for self-discovery to take a look at who I am through this templestay	0.750			
I became aware of many things through this templestay.	0.738			
I felt that I internally grew up through this templestay	0.861			
Factor 2: Being with Nature				
I enjoyed interacting with nature during this templestay.		0.891		
I enjoyed becoming a part of nature during this templestay.		0.804		
I felt comfortable being with nature during this templestay		0.808		
Factor 3 : Relaxation and Meditation				
I felt that I was able to escape from my daily life through this templestay.			0.666	
My mind and body experienced comfort during this templestay.			0.715	
I had a chance to relax through this templestay.			0.733	
I released my stress from daily life through this templestay			0.713	
Factor 4 : Learning and Education				
I expanded my knowledge through this templestay.				0.594
I was able to understand monastic lifes and Buddhist culture.				0.797
This templestay allowed a chance to learn about Buddhist culture.				0.821
Eigenvalue	7.125	1.590	1.120	0.832
Variance (%)	51.32	11.36	8.00	5.94
Cumulative Variance (%)	51.32	62.68	70.68	76.62
Cronbach's α	0.891	0.870	0.878	0.792
Number of Items (N=14)	4	3	4	3
Note 1) Principle Component Analysis with Varimax with Kaiser Normalization Rotation was used.				
Note 2) Q5 was excluded from the study.				

(91.5%) experienced Templestay for the first time. One explanation for the relatively low percentage of people participating in Templestay more than once (despite their satisfaction with their experience), may be related to the travel costs of visiting Korea or the large number of other appealing destinations in the world.

Construction of Motivation Variables and Questionnaire Development

Recall, that motivation is defined here as psychological and biological needs and wants including forces that arouse, provide direction, and integrate an individual's behaviour and activity (Yoon and Uysal, 2005). A total of 15 motivation measurement items were initially developed based on a review of the literature on tourism, leisure and recreation as well as the specifics of religious tourism. These items were adapted to reflect different attributes related to the motives for international participants' Templestay visit. Respondents were asked their level of agreement or disagreement with statements intended to capture the four major dimensions of motivations and experiences

of Templestay (i.e., self-growth and reflection, relaxation and meditation, being with nature, and educational and cultural learning - see Box 1). The survey instrument used a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). At the end of the questionnaire, participants were asked to provide socio-demographic information such as gender (male / female), nationality, age group (stated in 10 year increments beginning with 10-19 years old to 60 and above), religion category (Protestant, Catholic, Buddhism, no religion, and others) and number of times that they participated in Templestay. Some questionnaires were eliminated because they were incomplete or had an excessive amount of missing data. After discarding unusable questionnaires, a total of 299 useful questionnaires (59.8%) were collected and coded for data analysis. More specifically, the size of the sample ranges from 227 to 299 due to some missing observations in certain socio-demographic categories.

Statistical Results

To achieve the objectives of the study, several statistical methods were employed. Factor analysis was used to explore and identify factors associated with the underlying dimensions for the motives and respondent Templestay experiences. Cronbach's alpha was derived to determine the internal consistency and reliability of each factor. Additionally, a series of ANOVA tests were used to assess whether there were any significant differences between the four dimensions of Templestay, and respondent socio-demographics including gender, age, religion, and country of origin.

Factor analysis is based on the assumption that the factors are correlated. Given the exploratory nature of this study, a principal component analysis was performed using orthogonal rotation (Malhotra and Birks, 2003). The results of principal components analysis with varimax rotation (used to maximise differences between factors) are reported in Table 2.

A total of 15 motivation and experience variables were developed and then factor analysed (see Table 2). The following four variables are associated with *Self-Growth (Factor 1)*:

- I think I will see changes in myself through this Templestay.
- I had a chance for self-discovery; to take a look at who I am through this Templestay.
- I became aware of many things through this Templestay.
- I felt that I internally grew up through this Templestay.

There were three variables associated with *Nature (Factor 2)*:

- I enjoyed interacting with nature during this Templestay.
- I enjoyed becoming a part of nature during this Templestay.
- I felt comfortable being with nature during this Templestay.

Relaxation (Factor 3) comprises four motivation items:

- I felt that I was able to escape from my daily life through this Templestay.
- My mind and body experienced comfort during this Templestay.
- I had a chance to relax through this Templestay.
- I released my stress from daily life through this Templestay.

Three variables that centre on a broader awareness of the heritage and cultural significance of religious sites load well on *Learning (Factor 4)*:

- I expanded my knowledge through this Templestay.
- I was able to understand monastic life and Buddhist culture.
- This Templestay allowed a chance to learn about Buddhist culture.

Three factors had eigenvalues greater than 1 while eigenvalue for the learning factor was 0.832. The attribute 'I felt a sense of well-being through the Templestay' (Q5) was eliminated because it displayed a low correlation with other attributes in the construct. The remaining fourteen items had relatively high reliability coefficients, ranging from 0.67 to 0.86.

The four factors that emerged, explain 76.6% of the total variance. The first factor, Self-growth accounts for 51.3% of the variance while the second factor associated with Nature explains 11.36% of the variance. The Nature factor is related to the extent that Templestay offers leisure / recreational pursuits. Relaxation, the third factor, explains 8% of the variance. The fourth factor, Learning, is composed of three motivational items and accounts for 5.94% of the variance. Learning is intended to capture a desire to learn about Buddhism and cultural components of Templestay. High levels of Cronbach's alphas were observed suggesting high and moderate levels of reliability (.891, .87, .878, and .792 respectively).

Summarising, the outcome of factor analysis results yielded four main motivational domains of Templestay. Our findings indicate that self-growth, being with nature, relaxation and learning are underlying factors that define motivations and experience. These motivation and experience dimensions are consistent with earlier religious, recreation, and heritage tourism motivation studies (e.g., Beard and Ragheb, 1980; Choe, Blazey, and Mitas, 2015; Nyaupane, Timothy, and Proudell, 2015).

Table 3 : Mean differences - male v female.

Independent Samples Test			
	t-test for Equality of Means		
	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
EXP_Growth	-.352	286	.725
EXP_Nature	-1.492	286	.137
EXP_Relax	-1.227	286	.221
EXP_Learn	-1.144	286	.254

Table 4 : Test for differences in terms of learning, self-growth, being with nature and relaxation among the five religions.

ANOVA		Sum of Squares	df	Mean	F	Sig.
EXP_Growth	Between Groups	11.816	4	2.954	3.012	.019**
	Within Groups	277.570	283	.981		
	Total	289.386	287			
EXP_Nature	Between Groups	12.735	4	3.184	3.258	.012**
	Within Groups	276.539	283	.977		
	Total	289.274	287			
EXP_Relax	Between Groups	7.640	4	1.910	1.901	.110
	Within Groups	284.330	283	1.005		
	Total	291.969	287			
EXP_Learn	Between Groups	7.463	4	1.866	1.839	.121
	Within Groups	287.121	283	1.015		
	Total	294.584	287			

** $P < .05$

In addition to factor analysis, the following four hypotheses were established to test significant differences in motivation / experience evaluation based on socio-demographic variables.

H1. (a-d) There are significant differences with respect to (a) learning, (b) self-growth, (c) being with nature, and (d) relaxation as they pertain to *gender* (male or female).

H2. (a-d) There are significant differences in terms of (a) learning, (b) self-growth, (c) being with nature, and (d) relaxation among the four *religions*.

H3. (a-d) There are significant differences in terms of (a) learning, (b) self-growth, (c) being with nature, and (d) relaxation among the four *geographical regions*.

H4. (a-d) There are significant differences in terms of (a) learning, (b) self-growth, (c) being with nature, and (d) relaxation among *age* groups.

The mean scores for variables related to the gender of the respondent were tested with two-tail t test. A series of ANOVA tests were conducted to determine whether

Table 5 : Test differences in terms of learning, self-growth, being with nature and relaxation among the four nationalities.

ANOVA		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
EXP_Growth	Between Groups	11.529	3	3.843	3.721	.012**
	Within Groups	228.232	221	1.033		
	Total	239.761	224			
EXP_Nature	Between Groups	.273	3	.091	.093	.964
	Within Groups	217.322	221	.983		
	Total	217.595	224			
EXP_Relax	Between Groups	1.580	3	.527	.511	.675
	Within Groups	227.772	221	1.031		
	Total	229.351	224			
EXP_Learn	Between Groups	4.839	3	1.613	1.941	.124
	Within Groups	183.635	221	.831		
	Total	188.474	224			

** $P < .05$

Table 6: Test of differences in terms of learning, self-growth, being with nature and relaxation among age groups.

ANOVA		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
EXP_Grow	Between Groups	8.486	5	1.697	1.718	.130
	Within Groups	288.514	292	.988		
	Total	297.000	297			
EXP_Nat	Between Groups	4.758	5	.952	.951	.448
	Within Groups	292.242	292	1.001		
	Total	297.000	297			
EXP_Relax	Between Groups	4.407	5	.881	.880	.495
	Within Groups	292.593	292	1.002		
	Total	297.000	297			
EXP_Learn	Between Groups	16.857	5	3.371	3.514	.004***
	Within Groups	280.143	292	.959		
	Total	297.000	297			

*** $P < .01$

differences exist between the four factor domains and socio-demographic variables that include religious background, geographical region, and age. Hypotheses 1a-d state that learning, self-growth, being with nature, and relaxation will differ depending on whether the participant is male or female. As shown in Table 3, H1a-d were not supported. Thus, none of the four domains exhibited significant differences based on the gender of the respondent.

Hypothesis 2a-d states learning, self-growth, being with nature, and relaxation will differ depending on the participants' religion. As indicated in Table 4, H2b and H2c were supported. Growth (Factor 1) and Nature (Factor 2) related motivation and experience is different based on the participants' religion at the 5% significant level (P -value < 0.05). This result indicates that there is difference in the Growth and Nature factors among the five religious groups. H2a and H2d were not supported. Relaxation and cultural and

learning domains failed to show statistical differences based on religious beliefs.

Hypothesis 3a-d states that learning, self-growth, being with nature, and relaxation will differ depending on geographical region. H3c Nature (Factor 2), H3d Relaxation (Factor 3), and H3a Learning (Factor 4) factors were rejected. H3b was supported. As indicated in Table 5, the statistical result revealed that the Self-growth (Factor 1) was significantly different among four different geographical origins. Thus, there is a difference in the influence of Self-growth dimensions of motivation / experience for attending Templestay depending on geographic origin.

Hypothesis 4a-d state that there are differences in terms of self-growth, being with nature, relaxation and learning among different age groups (see Table 6). H4b, H4c, and H4d are not supported. The result reveals that there is no difference with respect to Growth (Factor1), Nature (Factor 2) and Relaxation (Factor 3). However, H4a is supported. Learning related motivation / experience (Factor 4) is significantly different at (1% significant level) among age groups. In Table 7, we summarise and highlight our findings.

Table 7 : Summary of Hypotheses Results

Categories	Differences in socio-demographic variables
Growth	Religion , Nationalities (both at the 5% significant level)
Being with nature	Religion (5% significant level)
Relaxation	None
Learning	Age (1% significant level)

Discussion

Templestay has transformed the perception and traditional role of Buddhist monasteries into a hybrid form of leisure and recreational dwelling that transcends religious boundaries. We identified four domains of motivational variables including learning and cultural development, self-growth, being with nature, and relaxation. Using a sample of 299 Templestay participants as a context for our research, we find strong support for some of our predictions.

We posited that learning, self-growth, being with nature, and relaxation will differ depending on whether the participant is male or female. Instead, we found that the four motivational variables did not differ depending on the gender of the respondent. Our findings are in contrast to previous research that suggests that females and males have very different religious motivations. In particular, Choe, Blazey, and Mitas (2015) found that females had higher relaxation (i.e., stimulation avoidance) scores.

We proposed and found that self-growth and being with nature motivations / experiences would differ depending on the religion of the participant. Although Heintzman (2009) argues that nature-based recreation has been found to be conducive to spiritual well-being, our findings indicate that some religions place greater importance on being with nature than others. There are at least four reasons why nature facilitates spirituality including: (1) it elicits a sense of wonder, (2) allows one to connect with God, (3) provides peace and tranquillity, and (4) creates space to reflect and explore spirituality (Heintzman, 2009). Thus, temple managers 'should recognise the emotional-spiritual motivations, regardless of their religious beliefs,' (Choe, Blazey, and Mitas, 2015:74).

Like Choe, Blazey, and Mitas (2015), we find that relaxation and learning are underlying factors that define motivations and experience. However, we proposed that learning and relaxation motivations would differ depending on religion. Instead, we found that relaxation and learning domains do not show statistical differences based on religious beliefs. This was surprising in light of nascent research. For example, Nyaupane, Timothy, and Poude (2015) found that non-Buddhists had a stronger tendency to visit Buddhist holy sites in Lumbini, Nepal for recreational purposes (e.g., curiosity, pleasure, entertainment). Perhaps, a larger number of Buddhists in our sample might have made a difference. On the other hand, our findings are consistent with Tomasi (2002) who argued

that the distinction between pilgrimage driven by faith and tourism for cultural and recreational purposes no longer holds.

We proposed and found that self-growth motivation and experience would be significantly different among the four geographical regions. One would not expect participants from Asia to place as much importance on self-growth, through Templestay, as someone from North America. However, we also proposed, but did not find, that learning, being with nature, and relaxation motivations and experiences significantly differ depending on country of origin.

This was surprising - one would expect that participants from Asia, having been exposed to Buddhist temples growing up, would not place as much as importance on learning and cultural development as participants from other parts of the world.

We proposed and found that learning related motivation / experience is significantly different among *age* groups. However, we also proposed that self-growth, being with nature, and relaxation motivation and experiences would significantly differ depending on the age of the Templestay participant. Instead, we find that there are no significant differences in these motivations / experiences depending on the age group of the participant. The being with nature finding runs counter to previous research. For example, Kim, Lee, and Klenosky (2003), examined the influence of push and pull factors on visitors to Korean National Parks. They argued that student groups have very different nature motivation / experience than older people (50 years of age or above). For example, student groups look for facilities or routes that facilitate adventure and socialising whereas seniors may appreciate walking trails and health enhancing facilities.

The credibility of our Templestay research is augmented by a sizeable number of participating temples that capture a wide geographical distribution. Additionally, these temples are recognised and officially approved by a reputable organisation. Therefore, our study is sufficiently plausible to draw general conclusions pertaining to: (1) international participant motivations, and (2) the extent to which international participants' motives and experience outcomes differ based on socio-demographic variables. Although the findings of the research are not consistent with all of the research hypotheses, the research highlights considerable implications.

Implications

Over the past decade, Templestay has become an increasingly important element of certain religious tourism destinations. This research offers valuable insight into the motivations of international participants and the way in which they evaluate Templestay experiences. The results contribute to the literature on push and pull theory by extending it to the context of Templestay. To our knowledge, this is the first study to examine the push motivations of Internationals participating in Korean Templestay. Reisinger and Mavondo (2004) argued that the most common characteristics used in tourism to distinguish consumers are gender and age. While much previous research identified gender differences in religious motives, contrary to those studies, Templestay did not exhibit differences in motivations or experience outcomes between male and female. However, motivational domains such as self-growth, nature and learning exhibited significant differences based on the various socio-demographic backgrounds.

The results of the study should be of great interest to practitioners as it suggests a number of important managerial implications. For example, the differences in motivation among visitors can inform destination planning and marketing strategies. From a religious tourism marketing perspective, it is essential to understand the behaviour, needs, and preferences of religious tourists so that Templestay services and products can be designed to dovetail with participants' expectations. Pawitra, and Tan, (2003) argued that in a global tourism industry, increased competition for tourists complicates efforts to develop identifiable tourism products that depict a destination as unique and distinguishable from other tourism products. Thus, Templestay administrators should pay close attention to the program activities chosen by different individuals.

Our findings suggest that broad categories of International Templestay participants (driven by, e.g., the gender of the respondent) may not be relevant for targeting potential participants. Drawing on sociology and psychology (e.g., Durkheim, 1951), the variation within any population group is often wider than the collective difference between any two groups. Thus, it may be more effective to group potential visitors into clusters by common motivation and experience. In order to get international visitors to participate in Templestay, it is important to leverage what is known about similar individuals who are often in completely different socio-demographic groups (Morris, 2016). More succinctly, in the context of Templestay,

marketers should focus on the attributes that have a high level of importance to prospective participants and that serve the purpose of their visits.

Accordingly, we expect that our findings have implications for the segmentation analysis of current and potential Templestay participants. Attention must be paid to meet the needs of Templestay participants and provide them a highly customised experience (i.e., need-based segmentation). Research suggests that tourists are less motivated by the specific qualities of a destination, as they are the match between a destination's major attributes and the traveller's psychological needs (e.g., the need for self-actualisation, curiosity, exploration, and variety).

Nevertheless, it is strongly advocated that the image of Templestay, as a non-traditional accommodation, be crafted and promoted as a cultural and monastic experience. This task is particularly important as Korea prepares to host the 2018 Winter Olympic Games in the remote city of Pyeongchang, which currently lacks sufficient lodging establishments. In light of the impending 2018 Games, tourism destination marketers should develop new tourism products that connect Templestay with surrounding tourist attractions, thereby, offering integrated and diversified tourism products. By combining resources, and collaborating with local communities, Templestay managers, and their partners, will be able to target wider markets and target them more effectively.

Limitations and Future Research

Our study is limited to a focus on four motivational factors (i.e., self-growth, relaxation, learning, and being with nature). Both our exploratory research (including interviews and discussions with temple managers) and the literature suggested these as important. Other kinds of motivational domains that might be explored include pleasure-seeking / fantasy (Kozak, 2002), socialisation and pull factors such as maintenance (Prebensen *et al.*, 2013). Additionally, specific cross-cultural motivation comparisons of socio-demographics (e.g., Catholic vs Protestant) were not tested. Although our study included Buddhist internationals, we did not attempt to compare their motivation and experiences to those of Korean Buddhists. In spite of its limitations, given the scarcity of research on Templestay, the contribution of the research as it relates to a relatively new and hybrid form of innovative tourism should not be overlooked. The limitations of the study also suggest a future research agenda.

A considerable number of researchers have examined the behaviour of repeat visitors to resorts, theme parks, and various religious shrines (e.g., Kim, Lee, and Klenosky, 2003). Gitelson and Crompton (1984) argued that first time visitors tend to seek a variety of new cultural experiences while those seeking relaxation will tend to choose familiar sites. While their arguments are confirmed by empirical evidence, it is not clear if their claims are applicable to Templestay. Due to a relatively small sample size (only 9% or 27 internationals were repeat visitors), the study was not able to explore the behavioural differences between first time participants and repeat partakers. Future research could provide more detailed outcomes by examining their repetitive motives and selection of specific activities and experiences.

Conclusions

This study makes at least four contributions to the literature on religious tourism and heritage. First, it identified four motivational domains (self-growth, being with nature, relaxation, and learning) relative to Templestay participants. Our analysis of the differences in these motivation and experience domains for different socio-demographic sub-groups indicate a number of important differences. Second, we found that growth and nature motivations and experience vary with the religion of the Templestay participant. Third, we found that the importance of self-growth motivation / experience varies with country of origin. Fourth, we found that learning related motivation / experience varies with the participant's age group.

Our study provides insight to policy makers, temple managers, and those who market Templestay experiences. In particular, we provide information on how to more effectively *segment* and *target* potential Templestay participants. Continuing this line of reasoning, the present study offers suggestions for *positioning* Templestay experiences relative to competing offerings. We hope that the findings of our study will serve as the basis for the development of Templestay marketing strategies. Our findings can be evaluated and implemented by the religious tourism industry in Korea to improve Templestay services and, thereby, provide enhanced experiences for international tourists.

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