

COLLEGE STUDENTS' KNOWLEDGE OF HOSTELS AND WHAT FACTORS
INFLUENCE THEIR INTENT TO STAY

by

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Abstract

Hostels play a significant role in the lodging industry throughout the world and even in some locations in the United States (U.S.). However, in many places in the U.S. hostels have yet to be introduced. They have the potential to offer budget lodging accommodation, but hotels and motels remain the most popular forms of lodging. This study investigated the perceptions of Kansas State University (KSU) students about hostels and their intent to use hostels.

A focus group was used to gain insight into students' perceptions of hostels and aided in the development of a written survey. An online survey was used to gather information from KSU students. It was sent to a randomly selected sample of 5,000 KSU students. There was a response rate of 8% (n=401).

Respondents knew about hostels and were willing to stay in them. A factor analysis was conducted on 31 characteristics of hostels that might be important to hostel users and it was determined that these items could be reduced to three factors: Safety and Amenities ($\alpha=.92$); Location and Socializing ($\alpha=.91$); and Accommodations ($\alpha=.60$). Safety and Amenities had the highest mean scores for individual items in the factor while Accommodations had the lowest. Multiple linear regression was used to determine if the three factors would predict KSU students' intent to stay in a hostel. The regression model was significant ($p \leq .000$) and all three factors were significant. The model had an R Square of .31. A t-test was used to determine if males and females differed in intent to stay in a hostel, Safety and Amenities, Location and Socializing, and Accommodation. Females had higher mean scores for Safety and Amenities and Location and Socializing than did males.

This study showed that college students would stay in a hostel. Hostel owners/operators and hostel organizations can use this information to better market their hostel and it will help

them to determine which amenities they will need to have to meet customer demands. Research should be conducted with a larger and more geographically diverse sample to determine if the results can be generalized beyond KSU students. Research with actual hostel users will help to determine characteristics they think are important and to compare results with this study.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my wife, Bethany Edwards, and thank Jesus Christ for helping me through the difficult times and putting me in a position of influence.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

In the United States (U.S.), alternatives to budget lodging accommodations beyond motels are limited. However, throughout the world, hostels play an important role in the lodging industry. From Europe where many tourists engage in the iconic summer backpacking trip, to the coasts of the U.S., and everywhere in between, hostels provide an option for travelers who wish to stay in budget lodging properties. But in some areas of the U.S., there are no hostels and the concept is still largely unknown. Due to the recent recession, there may be a potential market for hostels. There is a dearth of literature related to what people know about hostels and the influencing factors that affect their intent to stay in one.

Throughout the U.S., there are limited choices of budget lodging. According to the American Hotel and Lodging Association (AHLA) (2012b), of over 51,000 lodging properties nationwide, only 777 offer room rates under \$30 per night. The average room rate per night in the U.S. is \$98.07. Concurrently, the average rate for a hostel is typically between \$15 and \$45 per night (HI, 2012c). Other countries have benefited from this form of accommodation as a part of the lodging continuum because they are able to provide budget alternatives to more traditional forms of accommodation such as hotels and motels.

According to Rutherford (2009), many hotels in Las Vegas, NV have dropped their rates significantly due to the recent recession; from an average of \$146.53 per room per night in 2007 to only \$94.08 in 2009. Room rates play a major role in occupancy percentage. To maintain a high occupancy percentage, hotel operators, such as those in Las Vegas, have lowered their rates to attract guests. Granted, the recession affected various parts of the country differently. The research of Lesure (1984) shows six major U.S. cities and how the recession in the early 1980's

impacted each city. Even though each city was affected differently with respect to occupancy and room rates, they were all affected. Due to the economic crisis causing Las Vegas, a city that owes its very existence to tourism, to be hard hit, there is little question as to its impact on the lodging industry and its profitability across the U.S. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce (2010), the impact of the economic hardship on the economy has significantly affected the tourism industry due to decreased travel. For this reason, hostels may gain popularity because of their ability to offer accommodations at a budget rate.

Accommodation while traveling can be perceived as expensive and there are few options for travelers besides hotels and motels in the U.S. Even though many hotels have decreased their rates due to the recession, over the past 20 years, the average room rate has increased by approximately \$39.37 (AHLA, 2012a; AHLA, 2012b). Hostels could provide a unique alternative to these more traditional forms of lodging.

Because college students have emulated many of the characteristics of hostel users, it is important to study how they perceive this form of lodging to better understand their knowledge of hostels and what factors impact their intent to stay (Loker-Murphy & Pearce, 1995). This study will attempt to fill a gap in the literature about the hostel usage intentions of college students in a location where none currently exist. There is a dearth of literature related to tourists' perceptions of hostels and in most areas of the U.S., there are no hostels and the concept is still largely unknown and unexplored.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine college students' knowledge of hostels, their willingness to stay in a hostel, and factors that influence their intention.

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in this study.

1. Are college students aware of hostels?
2. What is college students' willingness to stay in a hostel?
3. What factors influence college students' intent to stay in a hostel?

Justification

Research on hostels has been focused around existing hostels and current hostel users. However, no research was found in the literature that showed what U.S. college students know of hostels, their willingness to stay in a hostel, and what factors influence their intentions. This research will attempt to answer the aforementioned questions, fill in the gap in the literature, and supplement existing hostel knowledge.

Significance of the Study

This study will help to better understand how U.S. college students view hostels. Because research about college students and hostel use was not found in the literature, this research will provide insight into this area and start to supplement the existing literature. In addition, the findings of this study will help entrepreneurial ventures by providing insight into college students' hostel usage intentions and a starting point on which to begin their market research.

Limitations of the Study

A limitation of this study is the use of survey research. There may be surveys returned that were not filled out truthfully or with responses that do not reflect true intentions. The results will not be generalizable beyond the population or sample used. Kansas State University students may not reflect the intentions of other college students in the U.S. or elsewhere in the world. The

variables proposed for this study have been generalized or adapted from research found in the review of literature. Previous research has shown that some hostel users are older than college students and this segment of the population may impact the findings of this study (Hecht & Martin, 2006; Mohsin & Ryan, 2003; Thyne, Davies & Nash, 2004).

Definition of Terms

The following definitions were used in this research:

College Student:

A college student is someone who is enrolled at Kansas State University.

Hostel:

An inexpensive lodging option for individuals and groups, with separate rooms for men and women, kitchens for guest use, a common room, and private storage options (Hosteling International, 2011).

Chapter 2 - Review of Literature

Hostels exist throughout the world and offer a variety of lodging options not found in traditional forms of accommodation such as hotels or motels. As the need for lodging that can fulfill several needs increases, hostels could have a potentially lucrative future as part of the lodging industry. This chapter takes a look at the overview of the lodging industry, the history of hostels, demographics of hostels users, the preferred characteristics of hostels, the global recession and effects of hostel users on economies, and hostel users' sources of marketing information.

Overview of Lodging Industry

The United States (U.S.) has a large tourism industry with considerable economic relevance. Because there are few hostels, hotels and motels tend to dominate the lodging industry. Even though hostels are few and far between in the U.S., it is essential to have an overview of the lodging and tourism industries to understand the environment in which they operate.

According to the American Hotel and Lodging Association (AHLA) (2012b), there were over 51,000 properties in the U.S. offering more than 4.8 million guest rooms. In 2010, these properties generated more than \$127.7 billion in sales. For the entire tourism industry, travelers spent approximately two billion dollars per day, or \$24,000 per second in the U.S. There is a considerable amount of money going into this industry and there may be a market for more budget friendly accommodations. In 2010, the revenue per available room was established at \$56.47, with the average room rate of \$98.07. The average occupancy is currently 57.6%, but has exhibited a downward trend, steadily decreasing over the past 20 years (AHLA, 2012a; AHLA

2012b). Even though hostels have much lower rates, typically between \$15 and \$45 per night, they may prove to be more attractive and profitable than more traditional forms of lodging due to their lower cost and different styles of accommodation (Hosteling International, 2012c).

In most every state, tourism is one of the top 10 industries (AHLA, 2012b). In the U.S., there are 7.4 million jobs directly related to tourism. Of those 7.4 million jobs, 1.6 million are in lodging alone (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2010). This indicates that hostels would be entering a very large and diversified industry. However, because they serve a market niche, there may be potential for them to become popular and grow as a form of lodging across the U.S. If growth were deemed to be possible, it would benefit the low job growth rate for the industry.

Unemployment has started to decline in the U.S. and the tourism industry continues to downsize its labor force (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2010). This is most likely due to uncertainty in the market and companies trying to be as lean as possible, only hiring when absolutely necessary. This practice of hiring only when necessary is to avoid layoffs, like those that occurred at the onset of the recession, if the economy worsens. Over the past three years, more than 1.1 million jobs were cut due to less travel. With unemployment becoming an issue in this industry, its growth rate has been affected. Growth for the lodging industry is expected to be at 5% for 2008 to 2018 (“Hotels and Other Accommodations”, 2009). That rate is much lower than the 11% for all other of industries in the U.S. combined. These job losses and the low development rate are due in part to the recession and general lack of travel (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2010).

Hostels may hold the key to unlocking growth in the lodging industry. By offering lodging at a budget rate and giving travelers the ability to travel for much less per day than more traditional forms of accommodation, hostels may spur travel to places that were once too

expensive to visit. Also, building hostels will provide jobs for the lodging industry, helping it to become more diversified in its offerings.

History of Hostels

Medieval times.

The precursor to the hostel dates back to medieval times. During this period, some apprenticeships required obligatory travel to another town or country in order to practice and hone the skills or trade that was being developed (Grassl & Heath, 1982). They stayed in lodging called Herzbergen zur Heimat and Kolpinghäuser, developed by Bodelschwing and Wichern, who were Protestant pastors, and Adolf Kolping, who was a Catholic priest, respectively. Also, students and scholars would travel throughout Europe to different universities to learn and teach (McCulloch, 1992). While itinerant, these people would stay in lodging houses or monastery housing called “bursae” (Grassl & Heath, 1982). They were allowed to stay only a few days so as to discourage permanent residency.

Bursae, Herzbergen zur Heimat, and Kolpinghäuser and other lodging houses were built specifically as temporary lodging meant to meet the needs of a particular demographic of the population; in this case, students, educators, and apprentices. Even though the hostel precursors were very basic, centuries later they would become temporary lodging facilities built for traveling youth and more widely accepted. It was not until the 19th century that change started to occur in Europe and transform this medieval form of accommodation.

The 19th century.

During the 19th century several precursors to the hostel were developed, which aided in their advancement and acceptance. These advancements included the formation of organizations that emphasized religion, scholarly places of accommodation, and recreation facilities. Although

hostels have changed over the years, there is no doubt that many aspects of them still pay tribute to their origins.

One of the first advancements for hostels in the 19th century came in the form of Christian associations for the betterment of youth. In 1844, George Williams founded the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) (Grassl & Heath, 1982). Not long after, in 1855, Mary Jane Kinnaird and Emma Roberts founded the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) (YWCA, 2011).

Williams, and many others during this time, had come from rural England into the city for work (YMCA, 2010). Upon arriving in London, he was appalled by the conditions there and set out to create "a refuge of Bible study and prayer for young men seeking escape from the hazards of life on the streets." Soon after, the YMCA was created.

Kinnaird and Roberts were disquieted about the well-being of women who had just moved to London (YWCA, 2011). Kinnaird developed housing in London for women who needed help, while Roberts supported them through faith and prayer. Through their actions, the YWCA was established. Both the YMCA and YWCA continued to establish facilities throughout Britain, providing people with a variety of activities to participate in and a place to stay (McCulloch, 1992).

A few years later in 1884, in Hohenelbe, Bohemia, Guido Rotter founded the Schüler und Studenten Herbergen or student hostels (Grassl & Heath, 1982). As the name implies, Rotter's Schüler und Studenten Herbergen were meant for students, in particular, those from high school and universities. However, this lodging was intended strictly for males. Nonetheless, it closely resembled the hostels of today through its offerings, style, and set-up.

One of the most influential factors in the creation of hostels during the 19th century was the increased popularity of recreation and fitness among the youth throughout Europe. Throughout the 1800's, many recreation clubs were established throughout the continent for youth activity (Grassl & Heath, 1982). Germany, in particular, was affected by this craze due to its location in the heart of Europe and in close proximity to the Alps.

In 1895, the Vienna, Austria based club, called The Friends of Nature, was founded (Grassl & Heath, 1982). They set out to encourage busy people to get out and enjoy nature (Naturfreunde, n.d.). The concept spread fast; first in Austria, and then throughout the rest of Europe. Small shelters and hiking centers were established throughout the Alpine regions of Europe that enabled the Naturfreunde and many other groups like them, to gain popularity and have a great influence on the hostel movement to come (Grassl & Heath, 1982).

Many advancements were made during the 19th century that guided the development of today's modern hostels. The YMCA, YWCA, Schüler und Studenten Herbergen, and recreation organizations formed a solid base for hostels and encouraged their fast acceptance. The 20th century would see even greater advancements, as hostels expanded to meet the needs of a broader audience.

The 20th century.

The vision of a hostel was well received during the 20th century. However, if it were not for a series of youth movements shortly beforehand and during the creation of the hostel, it might not have gained such popularity and continued its expansion worldwide. Several factors would prove influential in the expansion of hostels including the enjoyment of nature and wandering.

In Germany around 1900, there was a small youth movement that encouraged young people to reject the influence of mainstream society and turn to nature for fun and recreation

(Laqueur, 1962). These young people would travel through the country carrying everything they needed in backpacks and camping wherever they could (McCulloch, 1992). These groups called themselves the “Wandervögel”, which was a group officially founded by Karl Fischer with the help of some friends (Walker, 1970). The Wandervögel eventually split into many different groups, but they all continued to use the same name, although some variations were made. Even with the many variations of this group, their purpose was unwavering-to be free and discover nature.

During this time, young people wanted to make their own decisions and be free from the restrictions placed upon them at home and school (Laqueur, 1962). This perspective was partially due to the rapid industrialization that occurred in Germany around this time (Stachura, 1981). So much focus was placed on industrial expansion that people started to neglect themselves in the process. Many citizens found themselves trapped in unfortunate circumstances that limited new experiences. Through recreation and the enjoyment of nature, they found an escape from the hustle and bustle of their normal lives.

Although the youth movement was small, it had a major impact on the hostels to come. Members would become influential members of society and promote the concept of hostels (Grassl & Heath, 1982). With the influence of only a few whose values and ideals were in line with that of the youth movement, hostels were able to gain acceptance quite rapidly.

Later, in 1908, Robert Baden-Powell created the Boy Scouts Association (BSA) in England with the purpose of teaching young boys how to survive and live off the land, enhance their moral characteristics, and encourage helpfulness (Grassl & Heath, 1982). The BSA led to the development of the Girls Guides Association in 1910 that resembled the BSA, with the exception of it being exclusively for girls.

The Wandervögel, Boy Scouts, and Girls Guides were advocates for nature and the natural lifestyle of being outside (Grassl & Heath, 1982; McCulloch, 1992). These groups promoted the benefit and enjoyment of nature to its fullest. Greater emphasis would later be placed on recreation and youth involvement as well as travel from one hostel to the next while being in nature. These groups helped to establish a solid foothold for the advancement of this form of lodging.

The creation of the hostel.

In the early 20th century, Richard Schirrmann founded the first true hostel as we know it today, in Altena, Germany (Grassl & Heath, 1982). As a teacher, he often took his class on excursions into nature. Because many of his students did not speak German, he needed a way to teach so that they could understand. He found an opportunity by using class nature trips as learning experiences.

In 1907, Schirrmann established a hostel in his school classroom, but it wasn't until 1909, on one of his nature excursions, that Schirrmann came up with the idea for a hostel as we know it today (Grassl & Heath, 1982). When he and some students were caught in a thunderstorm and forced to take refuge in a school building, Schirrmann envisioned the youth of Germany welcoming the idea of learning while walking through nature. But one challenge included appropriate lodging for these youth. While waiting out the storm that night in the school building he thought up a solution to this very problem by using schools as lodging. Little did he know his idea would soon become a reality.

The hostel he had established in his school classroom moved to the Altena castle in 1912 after Schirrmann was appointed to the position of administrator of a museum there and allowed to renovate some rooms and turn them into a dormitory (Grassl & Heath, 1982; Hosteling USA,

1979). The concept of hostels spread from there, resulting in the creation of more than 83 youth hostels by 1913 (Grassl & Heath, 1982). Many hostels were created thanks to generous donations made to benefit youth, from various recreation clubs and influential people (Hosteling USA, 1979). Some cities even built and helped support the hostel by providing certain services for free or by giving monetary gifts for their advancement and/or development. In some instances, they were even built by cities and then given to the Youth Hostel Association (YHA) of that particular country.

Other countries soon adopted the youth hostel system (Grassl & Heath, 1982). Often these countries would establish a YHA to govern these organizations. The YHA was an organization that would establish rules and standards for its lodging establishment members. By 1931, there were 12 YHAs throughout Europe with over 2600 hostels (Grassl & Heath, 1982; HI, 2012b). However, each one differed significantly in their rules, regulations, and standards (Grassl & Heath, 1982). There was some difficulty with membership standards as well. These issues were soon addressed and resolved.

On October 20, 1932, the major European YHA's founded the International Youth Hostel Federation (IYHF) (Grassl & Heath, 1982). This new organization would meet annually throughout the world with the sole purpose of setting universal standards and unifying YHAs worldwide. To this day, the IYHF continues to play a large role in the development of hostels throughout the world and is responsible for the increased popularity and success of hostels the world over.

Hostels have evolved considerably since their inception. While once being simplistic places to sleep, cook, and socialize, they continually adapt to their environments to remain economically competitive while incorporating more comfortable accommodations (Grassl, 1979;

Grassl & Heath, 1982). They have progressed to the point that they have started to compete with other forms of lodging. Throughout history they have essentially progressed from small huts in the woods to larger establishments in cities, the country, and everywhere in between.

Hostels are proving to be an increasingly popular form of lodging among hostel users. According to O'Reilly (2006), backpacking is becoming more popular as a method of travel and is impacting various aspects such as lodging. With the increased popularity and development of backpacking also comes an increase in the expansion of hostels due to increased demand. Visser (2004) found hostels in South Africa to be in a period of growth. Through increasing use, they also increase their economic importance in the host community as well as create a more diversified accommodations market (Loker-Murphy, 1996; Mohsin & Ryan, 2003; Visser, 2004).

Many of today's hostels are no longer located in the back woods and meant for people who are simply wandering around. Many are located in areas with large populations near points of interest, and are able to compete with other, more traditional, forms of lodging. For example, in New York City there is a hostel located near Times Square, various nightlife attractions, Central Park, shops, and transportation (HI, 2012a). Hostels promote different types of tourism and diverse types of tourists as well as allow for people to participate in tourism opportunities by being affordable. With proven success in a wide array of locations, both large and small, hostels may have the potential for success in parts of the U.S. where they have yet to be established.

Even though hostels are not as well established in the U.S. as in other places, there are lodging options that are very similar, but not well known to the public. According to Norman (1989) and "Hosteling USA" (1979), there are several colleges and universities throughout the country that open their dormitories during the off season and offer affordable accommodation to travelers. This form of accommodation is most likely more familiar to people, college students in

particular. The role hostels could play and perceptions about them in areas without this form of lodging is still unknown. They may have the potential to be an attractive and versatile form of lodging.

Hostels experienced great success due to their acceptance by youth. Success was also due in part to the inventiveness of Richard Schirrmann and others who successfully built upon its predecessors. Since the time they were developed, hostels have continued to grow and expand. The development and operation of the IYHF proved to be important in their development and significance worldwide through the creation of uniformity among YHA rules, regulations, and standards. Through these actions, hostels were able to keep up with the times and trends of their target market.

Due to the increasing popularity of hostels and backpacking, there is a reasonable motive to explore these two aspects. There is a plethora of research dedicated to the study of hostel users, their demographics, and the preferences of these individuals. However, there is not much written about college students and their intentions to use hostels.

Demographics of Hostel Users

The demographic profile of hostel users is unique. It is very difficult to distinguish them from other travelers because they have many common characteristics. Hostelers are also not restricted to hostels because of other forms of lodging available for them to use, such as hotels or motels (Mohsin & Ryan, 2003; Thyne, Davies & Nash, 2004). Due to these facts, hostelers have the ability to fit well into many different market segments, making it very difficult to pinpoint what characteristics accurately define them (Loker-Murphy, 1996; Thyne, Davies & Nash, 2004).

While hostel users may not share a clear set of characteristics that set them apart from any other traveler, there are a few common traits that they typically possess, and more importantly, act upon, such as their desire to stay in low cost lodging and tendencies to spend conservatively (Hecht & Martin, 2006; Loker-Murphy & Pearce, 1995; Mohsin & Ryan, 2003; Pearce, 1990). Hostel users come from all walks of life and many different situations and circumstances, but are able to essentially be classified as such by their money saving tendencies. They also desire to travel the country they are visiting and learn the lifestyle of the people, visit with others around them, plan their own travel arrangements, and engage in local activities (Loker-Murphy, 1996; Loker-Murphy & Pearce, 1995; Ooi & Laing, 2010; Pearce, 1990). According to Bowen and Daniels (2011), interaction among backpackers can lead to the sharing of experiences and new ideas benefiting both parties by expanding their knowledge and understanding of others' cultures and ways of life.

Research has shown that hostel users are typically:

1. Young, with the overwhelming majority being between 18 and 35 years old (Hecht & Martin, 2006; Loker-Murphy, 1996; Ooi & Laing, 2010; Pearce, 1990),
2. Well educated (Loker-Murphy, 1996; Ooi & Laing, 2010), and
3. At a transitional period in their life (Hecht & Martin, 2006; Mohsin & Ryan, 2003).

Characteristics of college students and the millennial generation.

Many college students are a part of the Millennial Generation that includes people born between the years 1977 and 1994 (American Generations, 2005; The Millennials, 2009). There are nearly 76 million people born between these dates and nearly 31 million of them are between the ages of 18 and 24, of which the majority tend to be college students (Mintel, 2011a; The

Millennials, 2009; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Almost 80% of those aged 18 to 24 are presently attending college or planning to attend sometime within the next three years (Mintel, 2011c). The educational attainment of the Millennial Generation is extremely high with over 60 percent of men and women enrolling in college after high school and the acquisition rate of a bachelor's or other advanced degree by high school graduates being approximately 30 percent (American Generations, 2005; The Millennials, 2001; The Millennials, 2009). Due to education playing a considerable role in the lives of these individuals, it makes sense that they have been shown to spend considerably more on education and books, but less on almost everything else, than any other age group in America (Mintel, 2011b).

Spending is of much concern to college students. It has been shown that they are often unemployed or underemployed (Mintel, 2011a). As a result, many people between the ages of 18 to 24 have limited finances and need to conserve their monetary resources as much as possible (Mintel, 2011b). According to The Millennials (2009), those under the age 25 have an income of around \$10,000. Due to budget restrictions and a need to reduce cost, cooking at home and using less expensive means of transportation are utilized (Mintel, 2011b). Having such a limited budget may allow for hostels to gain popularity with this market because hostels provide inexpensive lodging.

This age group also has been shown to value social activities but have a hard time being able to participate due to lack of funds (Mintel, 2011b). Research has found that people in this age range tend to be more social than any other age and have a need for affordable social situations. Not surprisingly, colleges offer many opportunities to socialize and are a key aspect in the social life of college students (Mintel, 2011c). According to Mintel (2011d), people in this

age range are fairly active and are the most likely to join a club or student organization as well as volunteer.

College students exhibit a passion for travel. It has been shown that 27% have traveled or plan to travel for at least a month sometime within the next three years (Intel, 2011c). Many of today's college students have a love of traveling and indicate that they will continue traveling in the future (Shields, 2011). According to American Generations (2005), the physical borders are becoming less of an issue due to an increase in travel in the age group. This holds promise for lodging that provides a budget alternative compared to more traditional forms of accommodation.

College students as a group embody many of the same traits as hostel users. From the data gathered, it is clear that they are young, have a desire to socialize with others, are on a budget, and like to travel for an extended period of time. They are also well educated due to being in college. Finally, they are in a transitional period of their lives. They are looking for the next stage in their life to come along, having either just graduated from high school or college.

When viewing these data, it makes sense that college students could be hostel users. The characteristics of the typical hostel user resemble those of college students. According to Loker-Murphy and Pearce (1995), students were most likely to be hostel users. Given that previous research has indicated that college students predominantly make up the hostel user market, it would be useful to determine American college students' perceptions of hostels.

Preferred Characteristics of Hostels

Hostel users often base their decision to stay in a hostel on a few main criteria or preferences. One of the most dominant preferences found in the review of literature was a want for budget lodging (Hecht & Martin, 2006; Loker-Murphy, 1996; Loker-Murphy & Pearce,

1995; Mohsin & Ryan, 2003; Pearce, 1990). Even when hotels were analyzed, price seemed to be a very important part of the stay (Sohrabi, Vanani, Tahmasebipur & Fazli, 2012). Research has shown that price is a significant factor when it comes to lodging, but because hostel users are typically on limited budgets, they want it to be very affordable and get them the most for their money and still allow for an enjoyable holiday.

One benefit to having a budget rate is that hostel users are able to extend their length of stay in a region (Hecht & Martin, 2006; Loker-Murphy & Pearce, 1995; Mohsin & Ryan, 2003; Pearce, 1990). This desire to stay longer in an area has also been shown in the research of Nash, Thyne, and Davies (2006). According to Hecht and Martin (2006), those who visited hostels in Toronto, Canada had an average stay that lasted 11.4 days in that city with a 45 day median travel period in that country. In Australia, hostel users stayed anywhere from four to 55 weeks in the country (Loker-Murphy & Pearce, 1995; Ooi & Laing, 2010). It is very clear that affordable, extended travel periods are quite common for this tourist segment, but the type of accommodations that hostels offer for a budget rate differ from that of hotels and motels.

Hostels offer a variety of room types and their users have shown a preference for dormitory type rooms, whether it is single or mixed sex (Hecht & Martin, 2006; Loker-Murphy, 1996). According to Loker-Murphy (1996), some hostel users, especially ones from North America, prefer to stay in private hostel quarters. This may be due to a lack of similar accommodations in America and a want for more familiar lodging such as hotels.

Other amenities that have been shown to be well received are a common/shared kitchen, common room, and restaurant or a place to buy food (Hecht & Martin, 2006; Shanka & Taylor, 2003). These facilities allow guests to prepare or purchase meals while traveling and an opportunity to unwind and socialize. The common factor in each of these facilities is that they

are shared and one has no choice but to be around other travelers, thus increasing opportunities for interactions. Hostels provide an opportunity to socialize with other travelers through the use of its amenities, but the social aspect does not stop there.

Several studies have shown that meeting fellow travelers, making new friends, and socializing with others is a top priority for many hostel users (Hecht & Martin, 2006; Loker-Murphy, 1996; Loker-Murphy & Pearce, 1995; Ooi & Laing, 2010; Pearce, 1990). When travelers interact with one another, they inevitably start to learn and experience the culture of that region, which has been shown to be important (Loker-Murphy, 1996; Loker-Murphy & Pearce, 1995; Ooi & Laing, 2010). One way that hostel users have shown interest in getting involved with the local culture is through participatory activities (Loker-Murphy, 1996; Loker-Murphy & Pearce, 1995; Pearce, 1990). This allows them to learn the lifestyle and culture of their host region firsthand. However, in choosing activities to participate in, the personal values they possess have been shown to influence their decision (Paris, 2010).

Culture plays a large role in tourism. According to Urošević (2010), offering an opportunity to experience local culture is not only an incentive for tourists to visit a particular destination but also has the potential to benefit the local economy of that region. However, with culture playing such an important role in hostel user preferences, the location of the hostel takes on a very important function. It has been shown to influence three main areas of preference. The hostel should be located: 1) near areas of interest (Chan & Wong, 2005; Hecht & Martin, 2006), 2) near transportation (Hecht & Martin, 2006; Lee, Kim, Kim & Lee, 2010), and 3) in a safe part of town (Hecht & Martin, 2006; Lee et al., 2010).

Safety is a key preference for hostel users and can be linked back to location. It can take on many forms, from having the lodging establishment in a safe location to providing safety

deposit boxes for guest use. Hostels, as well as hotels, provide security in variety of ways. Some of the more common forms are lockers in guest rooms for secure personal storage, safes, secure locks, 24/7 front desk service, and emergency systems (Hecht & Martin, 2006; Shanka & Taylor, 2003; Sohrabi et al., 2012). According to research conducted by Leggat, Mills, and Speare (2007), people staying at hostels are more worried about the circumstances of their present situation than potential acts of terrorism. This shows the extent to which safety is important. Females tend to be more concerned about safety than males and research has shown that females like for lodging to be recommended and close to transportation (Hecht & Martin, 2006; Mohsin & Ryan, 2003).

The services that are offered play a large role as well. Several services have been identified that are in great demand for lodging. The front desk staff and the assistance provided affect many areas of satisfaction with the stay (Emir & Kozak, 2011; Hecht & Martin, 2006; Shanka & Taylor, 2003). Services such as internet and laundry facilities have been noted to be significant (Hecht & Martin, 2006).

These preferences have been shown to influence the hostel user and the choices they make. Most importantly, hostels can fit the lifestyles of hostellers. The more hostel user preferences a hostel can encompass, the more likely it will be used. The more it is used, the greater the influence they can exert on the tourism industry and local economies.

The Global Recession and Effects of Hostel Users on Economies

In recent years there has been a global economic downturn. However, even in these times of hardship, Jugović, Kovačić, and Safić (2010) showed that the volatility of the economy did not cause substantial fluctuation in destination or transportation choice by travelers going to Istria, Croatia. This also may be true elsewhere. Because hostels are typically more affordable

than other forms of lodging, they may do well in difficult times because they offer the opportunity to lessen the financial impact of travel. In addition, hostel users typically spend less per day than other tourists and are generally budget-conscious (Thyne, Davies & Nash, 2004). This may prove an important differentiating factor for hostels during times of economic downturns.

Hostel users generally have a positive impact on their host community's economy. While they may spend less per day compared to other tourists, they actually spend more in the long run due to their length of stay (Loker-Murphy & Pearce, 1995). According to Loker-Murphy (1996) and Mohsin and Ryan (2003), the hostel user market is a significant force that is of great value to the local economies in Australia. The findings of Visser (2004) suggest that tourism that is focused towards this market has potential to grow the economies where tourists stay and travel. In most areas of the world, backpacking has become more common place and is starting to become a normal occurrence and a permanent part of the lodging industry (O'Reilly, 2006).

Sources of Marketing Information

The best way to reach an intended audience is to market or advertise the product or service being sold in a way that is perceived as favorable to the target market. Those who stay at hostels find their travel information from "maps, travel guidebooks, the Internet, and information from word of mouth" (Nash, Thyne & Davies, 2006). Recommendations by family and friends, newspapers, magazines, and brochures were found to be well used sources (Fesenmaier & Vogt, 1992; Thyne, Davies & Nash, 2004). Leggat, Mills, and Speare (2007) suggested that if websites were to furnish pertinent material in an orderly and logical manner, it could become a significant factor in helping people make travel decisions. In order to stay competitive, hostels should stay

up to date with sources of marketing and manage how they are seen by potential users. This will help to influence people and affect where they stay while traveling.

Summary

Throughout the history of hostels, many aspects stand out: the creation of lodging for specific people, places for youth to be positively influenced, and an emphasis on recreation and fitness. The development of hostels was influenced by these aspects and even though they have changed considerably since their inception, many of those aspects can still be seen today. Hostels have evolved to be modern and suited to fit the needs of the people they serve. Although hostel users are not as common in many parts of the U.S., a target market may be determined by gathering the traits of hostel users from previous research and comparing them to college students who have been shown to be similar.

Recent research has revolved around determining who hostel users are and what differentiates them from other travelers, what aspects of hostels are the most important to them, and what effects they have on the economy. Hostel users today are still very similar to the users of the past, with the exception of having a desire for more amenities. The improvement of this form of lodging and a set of uniform standards to provide users with acceptable accommodations is ongoing. Through providing hostel users with suitable accommodations, they will naturally tend to use this type of accommodation more, thus benefiting the economies of the areas in which they are located.

Hostels offer a different type of lodging that may prove to be popular with those seeking budget alternatives. The economy is still slow for the tourism industry because people are not traveling as much as they once did. However, hostels may benefit this industry by providing a means for affordable travel that does not currently exist with more traditional forms of lodging.

However, because hostels are not as common in the U.S., there is a need for more research about how hostels are perceived by the target market. This study was intended to determine college students' knowledge of hostels and what factors influence their intent to stay in one.

Chapter 3 - Methodology

The purpose of this study was to determine college students' knowledge of hostels, their willingness to stay in a hostel, and factors that influence that intention. This chapter presents the methods used in the study including the research design, study sample, research instrument, institutional review board approval, data collection, and data analysis methods.

Research Design

This exploratory study used both qualitative and quantitative research methods. A qualitative approach (focus group) was conducted to determine the previous knowledge students had of hostels and how they felt about hostels in general. Responses to the focus group were used to develop a survey to collect quantitative data. The survey was used to collect data about how Kansas State University (KSU) students perceive hostels and if they will choose to stay in one if given the option.

Study Sample

Focus group.

The focus group was comprised of a convenience sample of students in the College of Human Ecology. This sample was recruited through the Assistant Dean for Student Support who sent out an email to the College of Human Ecology asking for volunteers to participate. There were five volunteers able to meet for the focus group.

Survey.

For the survey, a random sample of 5,000 KSU students was selected from the population of all KSU students. College students are most likely to be the same age as the typical hostel

user. This sampling method was selected due to resource availability, including budget, time, and researcher availability. In addition, college students have many of the traits of hostel users. Hostel users are generally between 18 and 35 years old and college students are generally between 18 and 24 (Loker-Murphy and Pearce, 1995).

Institutional Review Board Approval

The research process and the focus group and survey instruments were approved by the KSU Institutional Review Board prior to data collection. The human subjects approval letter is included in Appendix A. No complications were anticipated as there were no questions asked that would harm participants. As such, the survey did not pose any risk to those responding.

Data Collection

Data were collected using a focus group and an online survey. The focus group met in early September and the survey was administered in late September 2012.

Focus group.

The focus group consisted of five students. Participants were asked a series of questions (Appendix B) and their responses were tape recorded and then transcribed into an abridged transcript (Appendix C) that allowed for data to be categorized and interpreted (Krueger & Casey, 2000). The focus group was conducted in five parts. The first part consisted of questions related to participants' usage of hostels and their knowledge of any U.S. hostels. The second part consisted of showing participants the places where hostels were located in the U.S. and seeing how they responded to this new information. The third part was comprised of questions asking about their perceptions of hostels, what things they considered important for a hostel to have, how they felt about hostels, if they would consider staying in a hostel, and what the advantages and disadvantage to using one would be. The fourth part was a slideshow that included pictures

of some current hostels. The final part asked participants about how the new information had changed their perceptions of hostels and their decision to stay in one. The focus group participants were given a \$10 gift card to Starbucks for their cooperation.

One respondent who was unable to attend the focus group responded to the following questions by email: 1) Have you have ever stayed in a hostel?; 4) If you have not stayed in a hostel nor know anyone who had, do you know what a hostel is?: 8) What factors would you consider the most important to you if you were to stay in a hostel?; and 9) Why would you not choose to stay in a hostel?

Survey

A written survey was developed to determine KSU students' perceptions of hostels (Appendix D). The electronic survey included an introductory statement inviting the students to participate as well as informed consent information. The survey included three response sections.

The first section included the definition of a hostel to give participants a reference point. In this section, questions asked about the sample's current lodging usage such as lodging frequency and length of stay. It also identified students' perceptions about alternative forms of accommodation and their knowledge, usage, and overall perception of hostels.

The second section included 31 specific characteristics related to hostels to determine how KSU students perceive them. These characteristics were adapted from the description of a hostel, results of previous studies, and the findings from the focus group. Variables such as "cleanliness of hostel," "television," and "safety," were added because they were mentioned as important in the focus group discussion. These characteristics were broken down into 10 distinct categories related to rooms, privacy, facilities, food, social, economic, cultural, location, security, and services. In addition, there was a question at the end of the section that asked about the

likelihood of students to stay in a hostel. Responses to each item in section two were given using a Likert-type rating scale ranging from 1 (dislike very much) to 7 (like very much).

The final section was comprised of demographic questions including sex, age, annual income, race/ethnicity, student status, student classification as traditional or non-traditional, college of study, country, and continent of origin. In addition, a place for an email address was available for those wishing to be entered into a prize drawing. A closing statement thanked participants for their time and cooperation.

The Information Technology Services (ITS) department at KSU provided 5,000 randomly selected email addresses for the distribution. The addresses were unknown to the researcher to ensure anonymity. An email cover letter (Appendix E) was sent out to the students chosen by ITS inviting them to participate in the survey. The cross sectional survey was issued online and was available for nine days with an email reminder (Appendix F) sent out one week after the original distribution. Five respondents were chosen at random to win a \$20 gift card to Starbucks for their participation.

Data Analysis

Focus group.

The data from the focus group were analyzed using the long table approach (Krueger & Casey, 2000). The transcript from the tape-based focus group session was used to help segment the data into specific categories. Once the data were segmented, it was compared to the findings of previous studies of hostels and hostel users. It helped to determine where and how the views of hostel users and KSU students were similar and different. The survey instrument was then edited to ensure that it was consistent with the responses given by focus group respondents and would provide as useful data as possible. The variables were modified somewhat due to the

findings from the focus group. Some variables such as “cleanliness of hostel,” “television,” and “safety,” were added because they were mentioned as important factors in the focus group discussion.

Survey

In section one of the survey, relating to current lodging usage, feelings about the cost of lodging and hostel knowledge, usage and perceptions, frequencies, means, and standard deviations were used to describe distribution and central tendencies of the data. Section two consisted of 31 characteristics of a hostel that might be important to customers. A principal component factor analysis with a varimax rotation was conducted to determine if the 31 items could be grouped into fewer factors. A scree plot was evaluated to determine the appropriate number of factors. After evaluating the scree plot, a factor analysis was run using a three factor solution (Appendix G).

A Cronbach’s alpha was calculated for each factor to determine the internal consistency of the items in the scale. Two of the three factors, “Location and Socializing” and “Safety and Amenities”, had high reliability, $\alpha=0.92$ and $\alpha=0.91$, respectively. One factor, “Accommodation”, had an alpha of 0.46. In order to determine how the items in the factor related to each other, an item-total scale analysis was conducted. Results showed that the alpha would increase to 0.60 if the item “private rooms” were eliminated. Thus, this item was removed from the factor. Once the factors were finalized, multiple regression analysis was performed to determine which factors affected the participants’ intention to stay in a hostel. A regression model was also used to examine the relationship of age, annual income, and year in college with intent to stay. T-tests were used to compare mean scores of males and females for intent to

stay in a hostel, and the factors of Safety and Amenities, Location and Socializing, and Accommodation.

Section three included demographic questions. Frequency distributions were used to describe the study sample in terms of sex, age, annual income, race/ethnicity, student status, and college of study.

Chapter 4 - Results

This chapter will discuss the results of this study. The focus group results are discussed and specific examples are given to show how respondents commented. These results are followed by the results of the survey of Kansas State University.

Focus Group

The abridged transcript (Appendix C) outlines the findings of the focus group. The focus group consisted of five students, all of whom were female. There were two Human Nutrition, one Speech Pathology, one Marriage and Family Therapy, and one Family Studies and Human Services major. Two of the five participants had previously stayed in a hostel and three of the five knew someone who had stayed in a hostel previously. Regardless, all participants were aware of hostels.

All hostels the participants, or someone they knew, had stayed in were located in Europe. Greece, Portugal, France, and Germany were the countries mentioned. However, one person was aware of hostels located in the U.S. Participants had learned about hostels from four sources: 1) in school; 2) travel experiences; 3) popular media; and 4) family and friends. The overall perception of hostels was somewhat negative. Participants referenced the movie “Hostel” and thought of them as places where strange people would stay. However, even though the participants had an overall negative image of hostels, they indicated that they would stay in a hostel in the future to save money, but only if they were not traveling alone. Some of their comments about staying in a hostel included:

- “Actually, I probably would. I would actually, I think, because I want to be cheap. I want to go to see the sights, so, I mean, skimp on where you sleep.”

- “I think I would to save money.”
- “I think I would probably do it just because it’s a good way to save money. Hotels are kind of expensive.”
- “I would if I was with someone else. I wouldn’t do it alone.”

The factors that participants indicated as most important while staying in a hostel were: 1) safety; 2) security; 3) bathrooms in separate areas (shower in one area and toilet in another so both can be utilized at the same time); 4) welcoming atmosphere; 5) cleanliness; 6) breakfast; 7) location; 8) space; and 9) price. Some of the comments from respondents related to important factors that they would want to see in a hostel included:

- “I really like, actually, that separate dorm thing. It would make me feel more comfortable about, like, my safety, my security.”
- “I’m ok as long as there’s a bed, like, running water and bathroom.”
- “Maybe if they had a way for you to lock up your stuff when you leave.”
- “A breakfast would be a nice bonus. It wouldn’t be, like, a deal breaker.”

The reasons given for not staying in a hostel were 1) safety; 2) privacy; 3) cleanliness; 4) outside of comfort zone or used to the comforts of hotels; and 5) location not close to attractions. From the data gathered from participants, safety, security, cleanliness, and location play a major role in participants’ decision about whether or not to stay in a hostel. Some of the comments from the respondents were:

- “If I was traveling alone, I don’t think I would ever stay in a hostel.”
- “I just feel safer in packs.”
- “Safety is the only thing I can think of.”

- “Privacy, I guess. If I was with my husband or something.”
- “When I’ve been on trips before, I’ve always stayed in hotels.”
- “I guess I would also say how far away it is from the attractions and stuff.”

The advantages of staying in a hostel were cost, access (perceived to be “open” or “available”), convenience, and social aspects of meeting new people. The aspect of saving money occurred again and again in the focus group discussion and appears to be a main motivator for choosing a hostel. Some of the comments from the respondents were:

- “I would say cost. And that it is also easier to get into a hostel if you just got into town.”
- “Cost.”
- “Maybe the social aspect. You might meet fellow travelers and they would give you good ideas of stuff to do.”

The disadvantages of staying in a hostel mentioned by participants were: 1) cleanliness; 2) privacy; 3) safety; 4) security; 5) space; 6) sharing a bathroom; 7) taking one’s own toiletries; and 8) unsure about extra fees. The disadvantages dealt mainly with issues of safety, security, and privacy. Participants were not sure about the safety of hostels because they were so inexpensive. Privacy also played a large role because one is never alone at a hostel and one is constantly surrounded by other travelers. Some comments made by participants were:

- “I wouldn’t feel clean when I left.”
- “Maybe not as much space.”
- “I think privacy.”
- “Sharing the bathrooms and those types of things. It’s just kind of annoying.”
- “When they charge a fee for you to use the linens.”

Once pictures of hostels were shown, participants' perceptions of hostels changed. They commented that hostels were more modern and updated than they expected. They didn't expect a kitchen, dining hall, or social areas to be included. They were also surprised to see how colorful and inviting they were. From their changed perceptions, all agreed that they were more likely to stay in a hostel.

When asked about staying in a hostel in the U.S. specifically, respondents stated that they would 1) to save money, 2) if they could find them because hostels are not marketed as hotels and they don't want to have to search for them, 3) if the city it were located in was not the final destination or place they were going to end their trip, and 4) only if they were traveling with friends. Some of their comments were:

- "I think that if I were by myself or with a friend I definitely would."
- "With friends, yes."
- "I think I probably would. Especially if I was in a group with a couple people and we were trying to save money to do other things."
- "I would probably research it and see if it was in a good part of town."
- "If I was on a pleasure vacation where I was pulling out all the stops I would probably stay in a hotel."
- "It would depend on what I was there for."

One male was not able to make the focus group meeting but wanted to participate. He was sent the following questions: 1) Have ever stayed in a hostel?; 4) Do you know what a hostel is?; 8) What factors would you consider the most important to you if you were to stay in a hostel?; and 9) Why would you not choose to stay in a hostel? He indicated that he was aware of hostels, however he had never stayed in one. The most important factors of a hostel to him, if he

were to stay in one, would be its location and if he knew anyone who had stayed and recommended that particular hostel. He also said that he would not stay in a hostel if he were traveling alone due to safety. Thus, it appears that both females and males have safety concerns.

Survey

There was a total of 401 responses, an 8% response rate. The survey took an average of 18 minutes and 12 seconds to complete. The demographic characteristics of the study sample are summarized in Table 5.1. Females made up the majority of the respondents, representing 61.6% of the sample. Participants 18-25 years old accounted for 86.5% of respondents. As can be expected, respondents were mainly undergraduate students with an overall response rate that showed an increasing trend with student status with freshmen representing 18.8%, sophomores 17.9%, juniors 24.7%, and seniors 30.9%. The responses given by college are representative of the university with more responses from larger colleges, such as the College of Arts and Sciences, and fewer responses from smaller colleges, such as the College of Human Ecology and the College of Business. The typical annual income of participants was low, as would be expected, with 75.9% of respondents earning less than \$10,000 annually. The predominant race/ethnicity of respondents was Caucasian.

Table 5.1. Demographic Characteristics of the Study Sample (n=401)

Characteristic	Number	Percentage
Sex		
Male	136	31.6%
Female	265	61.6%
Age		
Younger than 18	3	0.7%
18-25	372	86.5%
26-35	23	5.4%
36-45	1	0.2%
46-55	2	0.5%
Annual Income		
Less than \$5,000	235	54.7%
\$5,000-\$10,000	91	21.2%
\$10,001-\$15,000	34	7.9%
\$15,001-\$20,000	15	3.5%
\$20,001-\$25,000	7	1.6%
\$25,001-\$30,000	5	1.2%
More than \$30,000	14	3.3%
Race/Ethnicity		
White (Caucasian)	351	81.6%
Black or African American	10	2.3%
Asian	13	3%
Hispanic or Latino	20	4.7%
Native American or Pacific Islander	4	0.9%
Other	3	0.7%
Student Status		
Freshman (Less than 30 credit hours)	81	18.8%
Sophomore (30-59 credit hours)	77	17.9%
Junior (60-89 credit hours)	106	24.7%
Senior 90+ credit hours	133	30.9%
Graduate (Master's)	3	0.7%
Graduate (Doctoral)	0	0%
Other	1	0.2%
College		
Agriculture	60	14%
Architecture, Planning and Design	8	1.9%
Arts and Sciences	136	31.6%
Business	50	11.6%
Education	37	8.7%

Engineering	56	13%
Human Ecology	53	12.3%
Technology and Aviation	1	0.2%
Veterinary Science	0	0%

Note: Percentage not equal to 100% due to non-response

The knowledge and experience of KSU students about hostels are summarized in Table 5.2. Almost 3/4 of participants had knowledge of hostels. Those who knew about hostels are indicated learning about them from friends and family, the media such as TV or Internet, and from personal experience. When asked about previous hostel usage, the overwhelming majority (70.9%) had not stayed in one. Of those who had stayed in a hostel, they indicated typically staying for less than four nights. The number of times stayed in a hostel was between one and three times.

The previous use of lodging by KSU students is summarized in Table 5.3. Survey respondents indicated that they regularly use hotels or motels with the vast majority staying for only a few nights each time they use lodging. Students indicated that they travel mainly with family.

Perceptions about hostels and hotels and the cost and availability of affordable lodging are summarized in Table 5.4. The overall perception of hostels was rated mainly neutral, but had more positive ratings than negative. Respondents indicated that they feel somewhat negatively about the availability of affordable lodging. Cost was shown as a fairly significant factor affecting their length of stay.

Table 5.2. Knowledge and Experience of Kansas State University Students with Hostels (n=401)

Characteristic	Number	Percentage
Knowledge of hostels		
Yes	317	73.7%
No	112	26.1%
Source of hostel knowledge		
From Experience	99	23%
From Friends of Family	143	33.3%
From School (Class Project, Etc.)	66	15.4%
From Media (TV, Internet, Etc.)	139	32.3%
Other	26	6.1%
Previous hostel usage		
Yes	123	28.6%
No	305	70.9%
Length of hostel stay		
1-2 nights	57	13.3%
3-4 nights	46	10.7%
5-6 nights	7	1.6%
7-8 nights	4	0.9%
9-10 nights	4	0.9%
11-12 nights	0	0%
More than 12 nights	4	0.9%
Average number of times having stayed in a hostel		
Less than 2	54	12.6%
2 to 3	30	7%
4 to 5	13	3%
6 to 7	4	0.9%
8 to 9	4	0.9%
10 to 11	2	0.5%
More than 11	15	3.5%

Note: Percentage not equal to 100% due to non-response

Table 5.3. Previous Lodging Usage Reported by Kansas State University Students (n=401)

Characteristic	Number	Percentage
Average hotel/motel stays per year		
0 to 1	106	24.7%
2 to 3	161	37.4%
4 to 5	80	18.6%
6 to 7	34	7.9%
8 to 9	27	6.3%
10 to 11	9	2.1%
More than 11	13	3.0%
Average length of stay		
1 day	109	25.4%
2 days	180	41.9%
3 days	94	21.9%
4 days	29	6.7%
5 days	10	2.3%
6 days	1	0.2%
More the 6 days	7	1.6%
Typical amount spent on lodging		
Less than \$50	37	8.6%
\$50-\$60	70	16.3%
\$61-\$70	43	10%
\$71-\$80	80	18.6%
\$81-\$90	83	19.3%
\$91-\$100	71	16.5%
More than \$100	46	10.7%
Travel Companions		
Family	303	70.5%
Spouse	32	7.4%
Friends	60	14%
Alone	13	3%
Tour Group	6	1.4%
Other	16	3.7%

Table 5.4. Perceptions of Kansas State University Students (n=401) about hostels and the Cost and Availability of Affordable Lodging

Item	Number	Percentage	Mean±SD
Impact of cost on length of stay			4.7±1.6
Very Insignificantly	22	5.1%	
Insignificantly	25	5.8%	
Somewhat Insignificantly	45	10.5%	
Neutral	63	14.7%	
Somewhat Significantly	137	31.9%	
Significantly	98	22.8%	
Very Significantly	40	9.3%	
Perceptions of hostels			4.3±1.4
Very Negative	10	2.3%	
Negative	21	4.9%	
Somewhat Negative	88	20.5%	
Neutral	151	35.1%	
Somewhat positive	56	13%	
Positive	70	16.3%	
Very Positive	31	7.2%	
Feelings about the availability of affordable lodging			3.7±1.4
Dislike Very Much	18	4.2%	
Dislike	80	18.6%	
Somewhat Dislike	101	23.5%	
Neutral	119	27.7%	
Somewhat Like	58	13.5%	
Like	39	9.1%	
Like Very Much	15	3.5%	
Feelings about the current cost of lodging			3.1±1.1
Dislike Very Much	33	7.7%	
Dislike	106	24.7%	
Somewhat Dislike	132	30.7%	
Neutral	122	28.4%	
Somewhat Like	29	6.7%	
Like	7	1.6%	
Like Very Much	1	0.2%	

Note: Scale ranged from 1 (Very Insignificantly)/(Very Negative)/(Dislike Very Much) to 7 (Very Significantly)/(Very Positively)/(Like Very Much)

The importance or likeability ratings of 31 characteristics of hostels are summarized in Table 5.5. A principal components factor analysis (see Appendix G for the rotated factor matrix) was used to determine if the 31 characteristics of hostels could be grouped into fewer factors. Three factors were identified. A 12-item factor, which was named Safety and Amenities, had a high internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha of .92. A 14-item factor, named Location and Socializing, also had a high internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha=.91). The third factor, Accommodation, comprised of six items, had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.46. An item-total scale analysis was conducted to determine if there were items that did not fit with the other items in the scale. It was determined that if the item "private rooms" were omitted, the alpha would increase to 0.60. Thus, that item was omitted from the factor prior to statistical analysis.

The factor Safety and Amenities had four variables tied for highest mean: safety (6.3 ± 1.2); hostel security (6.3 ± 1.2); free breakfast (6.3 ± 1.1); and location of hostel in a safe part of town (6.3 ± 1.4). The lowest rated was TV (5.4 ± 1.5) but it was only .9 lower than the highest. The factor Location and Socializing had three variables tied for highest mean: inexpensive accommodation (6.1 ± 1.2); location of hostel near areas of interest (6.1 ± 1.1); and experiencing the local culture (6.1 ± 1.0). The lowest rated item was single sex dormitory type rooms (4.7 ± 1.5).

Items in the factor Accommodation had lower means than items in the other two factors. The highest three were common/shared kitchen for guest use (5.3 ± 1.4); common/shared bathroom (4.2 ± 1.6); and mixed sex dormitory type rooms (3.9 ± 1.6). The lowest rated characteristic was additional costs for items such as bed linens (3.0 ± 1.5).

These three factors were used in a regression analysis to determine if they could predict whether or not a college student would stay in a hostel. The mean and standard deviation for the likelihood of college students to stay in a hostel was 4.7 ± 1.8 . The number of respondents

(percentages) for this question was 33 (7.7%) Very Unlikely, 32 (7.4%) Unlikely, 30 (7.0%) Somewhat Unlikely, 69 (16.1%) Neutral, 84 (19.5%) Somewhat Likely, 71 (16.5%) Likely, and 82 (19.1%) Very Likely. The regression analysis model measuring hostel characteristics and intent to stay (Table 5.6) was significant ($p=.0001$). The R-Square was .31. This indicates that the percentage of variance in the dependent variable accounted for by the independent variables is about one third. All factors were significant when predicting college students' intent to use a hostel (Table 5.7).

A regression model was used to determine if age, income, or student status could predict intent to stay in a hostel. This model was not significant. T-tests compared males and females for likelihood to stay in a hostel, and the factors Safety and Amenities, Location and Socializing, and Accommodation. Females had a higher mean score (73.2) than males (70.2) for safety and amenities ($p=0.006$) (Table 5.8). Females also had a higher mean score (80.7) than males (77.9) for the factor location and socializing ($p=.024$) (Table 5.9). Sex was not significant for the factor Accommodation or for intent to stay in a hostel. Race/Ethnicity and College were not related to any of the factors or likelihood to stay in a hostel.

Table 5.5. Perceptions of Kansas State University Students on Likability of Hostel Characteristics (n=401)

Characteristic	Frequency (Percentage)							Mean±SD
	Dislike Very Much	Dislike	Somewhat Dislike	Neutral	Somewhat Like	Like	Like Very Much	
Factor: Safety and Amenities ($\alpha=.92$)								
Safety	4 (.9)	3 (.7)	8 (1.9)	18 (4.2)	34 (7.9)	95 (22.1)	239 (55.6)	6.3±1.2
Hostel security (locks on doors, etc.)	5 (1.2)	1 (.2)	8 (1.9)	23 (5.4)	23 (5.4)	102 (23.7)	239 (55.6)	6.3±1.2
Free breakfast	4 (.9)	1 (.2)	3 (.7)	23 (5.4)	40 (9.3)	91 (21.2)	239 (55.6)	6.3±1.1
Location of hostel in a safe part of town	4 (.9)	2 (.5)	3 (.7)	25 (5.8)	37 (8.6)	106 (24.7)	224 (52.1)	6.3±1.1
Room security (lockers, safes, etc.)	4 (.9)	1 (.2)	10 (2.3)	30 (7)	31 (7.2)	112 (26.1)	213 (49.5)	6.2±1.2
Cleanliness of hostel	4 (.9)	5 (1.2)	10 (2.3)	21 (4.9)	31 (7.2)	91 (21.2)	239 (55.6)	6.2±1.2
Internet	2 (.5)	3 (.7)	14 (3.3)	40 (9.3)	40 (9.3)	89 (20.7)	213 (49.5)	6.1±1.3
24/7 front desk service	3 (.7)	3 (.7)	7 (1.6)	43 (10)	55 (12.8)	95 (22.1)	195 (45.4)	6.0±1.2
Private bathroom	3 (.7)	3 (.7)	5 (1.2)	52 (12.1)	58 (13.5)	108 (25.1)	172 (40)	5.9±1.2
Laundry facilities	2 (.5)	7 (1.6)	9 (2.1)	68 (15.8)	76 (17.7)	103 (24)	136 (31.6)	5.7±1.3
Snack shop	4 (.9)	5 (1.2)	11 (2.6)	57 (13.3)	77 (17.9)	129 (30)	118 (27.4)	5.6±1.3
Television	5 (1.2)	9 (2.1)	18 (4.2)	96 (22.3)	66 (15.4)	79 (18.4)	128 (29.8)	5.4±1.5
Factor: Location and Socializing ($\alpha=.91$)								
Inexpensive accommodation	5 (1.2)	4 (.9)	10 (2.3)	21 (4.9)	41 (9.5)	114 (26.5)	206 (47.9)	6.1±1.2
Location of hostel near areas of interest	4 (.9)	0 (0)	6 (1.4)	26 (6.1)	60 (14)	134 (31.2)	171 (39.8)	6.1±1.1
Experiencing the local culture	3 (.7)	1 (.2)	2 (.5)	30 (7)	62 (14.4)	123 (28.6)	180 (41.9)	6.1±1.0

(continued)

Table 5.5. Perceptions of Kansas State University Students on Likability of Hostel Characteristics (n=401) (continued)

Characteristic	Frequency (Percentage)							Mean±SD
	Dislike Very Much	Dislike	Somewhat Dislike	Neutral	Somewhat Like	Like	Like Very Much	
Location of hostel near transportation	4 (.9)	0 (0)	4 (.9)	36 (8.4)	68 (15.8)	140 (32.6)	149 (34.7)	5.9±1.1
Socializing	5 (1.2)	3 (.7)	8 (1.9)	46 (10.7)	64 (14.9)	121 (28.1)	154 (35.8)	5.8±1.3
Meeting new people	4 (.9)	6 (1.4)	10 (2.3)	44 (10.2)	73 (17)	119 (27.7)	145 (33.7)	5.8±1.3
Establishing friendships	6 (1.4)	8 (1.9)	7 (1.6)	39 (9.1)	73 (17)	121 (28.1)	147 (34.2)	5.8±1.3
A common room to relax and hang out	4 (.9)	3 (.7)	6 (1.4)	50 (11.6)	62 (14.4)	142 (33)	134 (32.2)	5.8±1.2
Rooming with others familiar to you	7 (1.6)	2 (.5)	9 (2.1)	39 (9.1)	86 (20)	148 (34.4)	110 (25.6)	5.7±1.2
Opportunity for food preparation	5 (1.2)	2 (.5)	8 (1.9)	51 (11.9)	79 (18.4)	142 (33)	114 (26.5)	5.7±1.2
On-site cafeteria	4 (.9)	3 (.7)	11 (2.6)	60 (14)	91 (21.2)	131 (30.5)	101 (23.5)	5.6±1.2
Activities (recreational activities, games, etc.)	5 (1.2)	5 (1.2)	9 (2.1)	81 (18.8)	89 (20.7)	108 (25.1)	104 (24.2)	5.5±1.3
Extended travel period (traveling for more than a few days)	6 (1.4)	5 (1.2)	19 (4.4)	88 (20.5)	84 (19.5)	103 (24)	96 (22.3)	5.3±1.4
Single sex dormitory type rooms	13 (3)	29 (6.7)	28 (6.5)	123 (28.6)	70 (16.3)	97 (22.6)	41 (9.5)	4.7±1.5

(continued)

Table 5.5. Perceptions of Kansas State University Students on Likability of Hostel Characteristics (n=401) (continued)

Characteristic	Frequency (Percentage)							Mean±SD
	Dislike Very Much	Dislike	Somewhat Dislike	Neutral	Somewhat Like	Like	Like Very Much	
Factor: Accommodations ($\alpha=.60$)								
Common/shared kitchen for guest use	9 (2.1)	7 (1.6)	23 (5.4)	70 (16.3)	76 (17.7)	133 (30.9)	83 (19.3)	5.3±1.4
Common/shared bathroom (one for men and one for women)	38 (8.8)	25 (5.8)	53 (12.3)	117 (27.2)	68 (15.8)	73 (17)	27 (6.3)	4.2±1.6
Mixed sex dormitory type rooms	32 (7.4)	60 (14)	64 (14.9)	102 (23.7)	69 (16.1)	56 (13)	18 (4.2)	3.9±1.6
Rooming with others unfamiliar to you	79 (18.4)	70 (16.3)	96 (22.3)	63 (16.7)	49 (11.4)	35 (8.1)	9 (2.1)	3.2±1.7
Additional costs for items such as bed linens	75 (17.4)	78 (18.1)	114 (26.5)	77 (17.9)	30 (7)	19 (4.4)	8 (1.9)	3.0±1.5

Note: Likert scale of 1 (Dislike Very Much) to 7 (Like Very Much)

Table 5.6. Regression Analysis for Hostel Characteristics and Intent to Stay

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	423.5	3	141	59.3	0.000
Residual	943.8	397	2.4		
Total	1366.9	400			

Table 5.7. Coefficients for Hostel Characteristics and Intent to Stay

Model	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant		-1.97	0.050
Safety and Amenities	-0.11	-2.02	0.044
Location and Socializing	0.42	6.94	0.000
Accommodation	0.28	5.67	0.000

Table 5.8. Regression Analysis for Sex to Safety and Amenities

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Safety and Amenities * Sex	840.4	1	840.4	7.6	0.006
Between Groups	44002.6	399	110.3		
Within Groups	44843.0	400			
Total					

Table 5.9. Regression Analysis for Sex to Location and Socializing

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Location and Socializing * Sex	709.4	1	709.4	5.2	0.024
Between Groups	54941.0	399	137.7		
Within Groups	54941.0	399	137.7		
Total	55650.4	400			

Chapter 5 - Conclusions

This study was conducted to determine college students' knowledge of hostels, their intention to stay in a hostel, and factors that influence their intention. The results can be used to benefit the lodging industry, especially hostels. This chapter will present a summary of research findings and discuss implications for the hostel industry and for future research.

Summary of Research

Thirty-one characteristics of hostels were evaluated to determine what factors influenced the intent of KSU students to stay in a hostel. Many of the characteristics of hostels were rated high. Students indicated that safety was a major concern. The characteristics of hostels related to safety were rated higher than all other items. Students indicated that hostels should be located near areas of interest, in a safe part of town, and near transportation.

Cleanliness of the hostel was another highly rated factor. In addition to cleanliness, there should be many amenities offered in hostels because KSU students are used to staying in hotels or motels that offer many amenities. This explains why characteristics such as free breakfast and having the opportunity to prepare food or buy meals at the hostel were rated high.

The social aspect was shown to play a significant role in the travel of KSU college students. The concept of meeting people, hanging out, and relaxing in common areas was appealing to them. Students also indicated experiencing the local culture as an important factor while traveling.

The price of a night's stay was very influential as well. KSU students indicated that they liked the idea of an extended travel period. However, the majority also indicated that cost influenced their length of stay in lodging while traveling.

There were a number of characteristics of hostels that KSU students did not perceive well. Many of the characteristics revolved around privacy issues and different rooming arrangements. Neither rooming with unfamiliar people, nor having mixed sex dormitory type rooms with males and females was well liked. This may be a concept that many Americans are not familiar with and are unsure about. Also, a common bathroom was an area of concern. Finally, additional costs, such as for linens, was not well liked.

However, despite the characteristics that were not well liked, KSU students indicated that they would use hostels. The 31 characteristics measured were reduced to three factors using a principle component factor analysis: Safety and Amenities; Location and Socializing; and Accommodations. All three factors were significant in a regression model predicting hostel usage intentions. Thus, these three factors need to be given the proper attention by hostel owners in order to reach and satisfy the college student market.

The results of this study add support to previous studies used in the review of literature. The following aspects are followed by the studies they support.

- Safety and security were of the utmost importance (Hecht & Martin, 2006; Shanka & Taylor, 2003; Sohrabi et al., 2012).
- They like having many amenities such as Internet and laundry facilities (Hecht & Martin, 2006).
- Opportunity to prepare or buy food (Hecht & Martin, 2006; Shanka & Taylor, 2003).
- Socializing and meeting new people (Hecht & Martin, 2006; Loker-Murphy, 1996; Loker-Murphy & Pearce, 1995; Mintel, 2011b; Ooi & Laing, 2012; Pearce, 1990).
- Being able to experience the local culture (Loker-Murphy, 1996; Loker-Murphy & Pearce, 1995; Ooi & Laing, 2010).

- Price was considered important (Hecht & Martin, 2006; Loker-Murphy, 1996; Loker-Murphy & Pearce, 1995; Mohsin & Ryan, 2003; Pearce, 1990; Sohrabi, et al., 2012).
- Extended travel was seen as favorable (Hecht & Martin, 2006; Loker-Murphy & Pearce, 1995; Mohsin & Ryan, 2003; Pearce, 1990).
- Dorm rooms were not perceived favorably by Kansas State University student which supports the findings of Loker-Murphy (1996) that states that North Americans typically prefer more private accommodations. This stance differs from the results of Hecht and Martin (2006).

Implications for Hostel Industry

For hostels already in operation or for entrepreneurs looking for a successful venture, hostels hold a potentially lucrative future. This study shows that KSU students would use hostels while traveling. This research indicates some key characteristics for hostel owners/operators or entrepreneurs looking to be successful in the hostel market.

To attract KSU college students, a hostel should be safe, clean, have many amenities, such as Internet, laundry facilities, and snack shop, have facilities for food preparation or a store to purchase food items, be in a good location with close proximity to local attractions, provide opportunities to meet other travelers, and be priced inexpensively. There should not be any additional costs on top of the room rate. An all inclusive rate is suggested. Because it has been indicated that an extended travel period was well liked and cost did impact KSU students' typical length of stay, having low rates would be very appealing and critical to incentivize college students to stay in a hostel for extended periods of time.

With respect to rooms, hostels should provide a mixture of room types: mixed sex dormitory rooms; single sex dormitory rooms; and private rooms. Many KSU college students

are used to private rooms while traveling and may be unsure about dormitory rooms. Also, it is recommended that there be a bathroom in each sleeping room in the hostel. Common/shared bathrooms were not well perceived in this study.

Hostels should use this data for marketing purposes. While KSU students viewed hostels somewhat positively, the rating for hostel perception was not high. Hostels need to market what they are, what amenities they offer, and how they can meet the needs of college students through those offerings. This will aid in increasing customer perceptions and attracting new business.

Implications for Research

There are many research implications of this study. Further research opportunities include conducting this study at other colleges and universities across the nation in order to obtain a better understanding of a more geographically diverse sample to determine if the results of this study are generalizable. Also, because items in the “Accommodation” factor had lower ratings than other factors, it would be interesting to see if other similar characteristics of hostels would rate higher. Also, surveying actual hostel users to determine characteristics they think are important and comparing results with this study would strengthen evidence for decision making.

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Appendices

Appendix A-IRB Human Research Subjects Letter

TO: Jeannie Sneed
HMD
103 Justin

Proposal Number: 6333

FROM: Rick Scheidt, Chair 
Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects

DATE: 08/23/2012

RE: Proposal Entitled, "College Students' Knowledge of and Intent to Stay in Hostels"

The Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects / Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Kansas State University has reviewed the proposal identified above and has determined that it is EXEMPT from further IRB review. This exemption applies only to the proposal - as written - and currently on file with the IRB. Any change potentially affecting human subjects must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation and may disqualify the proposal from exemption.

Based upon information provided to the IRB, this activity is exempt under the criteria set forth in the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, **45 CFR §46.101, paragraph b, category: 2, subsection: ii.**

Certain research is exempt from the requirements of HHS/OHRP regulations. A determination that research is exempt does not imply that investigators have no ethical responsibilities to subjects in such research; it means only that the regulatory requirements related to IRB review, informed consent, and assurance of compliance do not apply to the research.

Any unanticipated problems involving risk to subjects or to others must be reported immediately to the Chair of the Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, the University Research Compliance Office, and if the subjects are KSU students, to the Director of the Student Health Center.

Appendix B-Focus Group Questions Sequence

Focus Group Questions Sequence

1. How many of you have ever stayed in a hostel?
2. Do you know anyone that has stayed in a hostel?
3. Where was the hostel that you or your friend stayed in located?
 - a. Are you aware that there are hostels in the U.S?
4. For those of you who have not stayed in a hostel nor know anyone who had, do you know what a hostel is?
5. How did you first learn about hostels?
6. What is your perception of hostels?
7. Would you consider staying in a hostel in the future?
8. What factors would you consider the most important to you if you were to stay in a hostel?
9. Why would you not choose to stay in a hostel?
10. What are the advantages of staying in a hostel?
11. What are the disadvantages of staying in a hostel?

A slide show of pictures of hostels was shown to participants to show them an idea of what hostels look like. They were also shown the website <http://www.hiusa.org/northeast> to show them where hostels were in the U.S.

12. From this new information, what is your perception of a hostel? / How has your perception of a hostel changed?
13. From this new information, would you consider staying in a hostel? / Has your decision changed?
14. Would you consider staying in a hostel in the U.S.?

Appendix C-Abridged Transcript of Focus Group

Abridged Transcript of Focus Group

Question 1: How many of you have ever stayed in a hostel?

- Yes-2
- No-3

Question 2: Do you know anyone that has stayed in a hostel?

- Yes-3
- No-2

Question 3: Where was the hostel that you or your friend stayed in located?

- Europe: Athens, Greece, Portugal, France, and Germany

Question 3, Subpart A: Are you aware that there are hostels in the U.S.?

- 1 person was aware of hostels located in the U.S. (Boulder, CO)

Question 4: For those of you who have not stayed in a hostel nor know anyone who has, do you know what a hostel is?

- Yes-5
- No-0
- Where random people stay together
- A different kind of lodging conditions

Question 5: How did you first learn about hostels?

- Class project in 8th grade to plan a vacation on a budget. Found they could stay inexpensively
- The movie “Hostel”
- Through books
- Family vacation to Europe-book “Let’s Go Europe”
- From sister who had stayed at a hostel

Question 6: What is your perception of hostels?

- Movie “Hostel”. Negative impression
- Random people stay at a place
- Uneasy about staying there
- Perceived as dirty and unclean
- Somewhat dated and not so nice

Question 7: Would you consider staying in a hostel in the future?

- Yes, to save money
- To go see the sights
- Yes, if traveling with someone else
- Yes, to save money
- Family oriented-men with men and women with women
- Could have family rooms

- To save money, hotels are expensive

Question 8: What factors would you consider the most important to you if you were to stay in a hostel?

- Separate areas for safety and security
- No bed bugs, personal safety, running water, bathroom, a decent bed
- Bathroom-wants toilets and showers in separate rooms (easy use of toilet and shower by separate people)
- Welcoming
- Offered breakfast
- A place to lock up personal belongings
- Safety
- Cleanliness
- Price-save money compared to other choices
- Breakfast a bonus but not a deal breaker
- Space
- Location and if people I know had stayed there before and recommended it

Question 9: Why would you not choose to stay in a hostel?

- Traveling alone, personal security
- Safety
- Privacy
- Used to hotels-hostels are outside of comfort zone
- Want creature comforts such as the plush bedding and TV
- If traveling with children or husband
- Cleanliness
- Location-want to be close to attractions
- If traveling alone they would not, due to the questionable level of safety

Question 10: What are the advantages of staying in a hostel?

- Cost
- Access-perceived to be “open” and “available”
- Convenience
- Social aspects-meeting new people and get good travel tips

Question 11: What are the disadvantages of staying in a hostel?

- Cleanliness-wouldn't feel clean after they left
- Privacy
- Security-people might take stuff while they weren't looking
- Couldn't relax-paranoid feeling, always watching others
- Limited space
- Sharing bathroom-annoying
- Taking own toiletries
- Unsure about extra fees for items such as linens

Question 12: From this new information, what is your perception of a hostel? / How has your perception of a hostel changed?

- More updated than they thought
- Didn't expect kitchenette or dining hall
- Didn't expect social areas
- Not confined to one's room
- Surprised that it was colorful and inviting

Question 13: From this new information, would you consider staying in a hostel? / Has your decision changed?

- All agreed they were more likely to stay based on pictures
- Considered hostels to be nicer than before the slideshow

Question 14: Would you consider staying in a hostel in the U.S.?

- Yes, with friends
- Not for destination but would for two nights
- Depends on why they are traveling-prefer hotels for leisure travel, hostels for other types of travel
- Yes, to save money to do other things
- Yes, if doing site seeing
- No, if traveling for work or business
- Yes, to save money
- No, if with children
- Need room to set up Pac N' Play, etc.

Comments about hostels

- Would have to research more
- Unlike branded hotel chains
- Wouldn't actively look for information
- If someone would promote it on the street, I would look into it more
- Don't actively market hostels

Appendix D-Survey

Question 1 required ****

Approximately how many times per year do you stay in a hotel or motel?

- 0 to 1
- 2 to 3
- 4 to 5
- 6 to 7
- 8 to 9
- 10 to 11
- More than 11

Question 2 required ****

How long is your typical length of stay? (Average of all stays)

- 1 day
- 2 days
- 3 days
- 4 days
- 5 days
- 6 days
- More than 6 days

Question 3 required ****

How much does the cost of lodging affect your typical length of stay?

- Very Insignificantly
- Insignificantly
- Somewhat Insignificantly
- Neutral
- Somewhat Significantly
- Significantly
- Very Significantly

Question 4 required ****

How much do you typically spend per night at a hotel or motel?

- Less than \$50
- \$50 to \$60

- \$61 to \$70
- \$71 to \$80
- \$81 to \$90
- \$91 to \$100
- More than \$100

Question 5 required ****

With whom do you normally travel?

- Family
- Spouse
- Friends
- Alone
- Tour Group
- Other

Question 6 required ****

Please rate how you feel about the following.

1 - Dislike Very Much | 2 - Dislike | 3 - Somewhat Dislike

4 - Neutral | 5 - Somewhat Like | 6 - Like | 7 - Like Very Much

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.1 The current cost of lodging	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6.2 The availability of affordable lodging	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Question 7 required ****

Before this survey, did you know what a hostel was?

- Yes
- No

Fill out this page only if you answered:

- **Yes** on question 7. **Before this survey, did you know...on page 2 .**

Question 8 required ****

How did you learn about hostels? (Select all that apply).

- From experience (have stayed in one)
- From friends or family
- From school (class project, etc.)
- From media (TV, Internet, etc.)
- Other

Fill out this page only if you answered:

- **No** OR **Yes** on question 7. **Before this survey, did you know...** on page 2 .

Question 9 required ****

Have you ever stayed in a hostel?

- Yes
- No

Fill out this page only if you answered:

- **Yes** on question 9. **Have you ever stayed in a hostel?** On page 4 .

Question 10 required ****

Approximately how long was your typical stay in a hostel?

- 1 to 2 nights
- 3 to 4 nights
- 5 to 6 nights
- 7 to 8 nights
- 9 to 10 nights
- 11 to 12 nights
- More than 12 nights

Question 11 required ****

Approximately how many times have you stayed at a hostel (number of times staying at a hostel, not number of nights stayed)?

- < 2
- 2 to 3
- 4 to 5
- 6 to 7
- 8 to 9
- 10 to 11
- > 11

Fill out this page only if you answered:

- **No OR Yes on question 9. Have you ever stayed in a hostel? On page 4.**

Question 12 required ****

Please rate how you feel about hostels.

- Very Negative
- Negative
- Somewhat Negative
- Neutral
- Somewhat Positive
- Positive
- Very Positive

Question 13 required ****

Please rate the following characteristics of hostels based on your perceptions.

1 - Dislike Very Much | 2 - Dislike | 3 - Somewhat Dislike

4 - Neutral | 5 - Somewhat Like | 6 - Like | 7 - Like Very Much

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13.1 Single sex dormitory type rooms	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.2 Mixed sex dormitory type rooms	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.3 Private rooms	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.4 Rooming with others unfamiliar to you	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13.5 Rooming with others familiar to you	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.6 Common/shared bathrooms (one for men and one for women)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.7 Private bathroom	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.8 A common room to relax and hang out	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.9 Common/shared kitchen for guest use	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.10 Opportunity for food preparation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.11 On-site cafeteria	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.12 Free breakfast	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.13 Snack shop	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.14 Socializing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.15 Meeting new people	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.16 Establishing friendships	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.17 Inexpensive accommodation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.18 Additional costs for items such as bed linens	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.19 Extended travel period (traveling for more than a few days)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.20 Activities (recreational activities, games, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.21 Experiencing the local culture	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.22 Location of hostel near transportation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.23 Location of hostel near areas of interest	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.24 Location of hostel in a safe part of town	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.25 Safety	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.26 Room security (lockers, safes, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.27 Hostel security (locks on doors, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.28 24/7 front desk service	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.29 Internet	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.30 Television	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.31 Laundry facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13.32 Cleanliness of hostel

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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Question 14 required ****

1 - Very Unlikely | 2 - Unlikely | 3 - Somewhat Unlikely

4 - Neutral | 5 - Somewhat Likely | 6 - Likely | 7 - Very Likely

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14.1 What is the likelihood that you would stay in a hostel?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Question 15 required ****

What is your sex?

- Male
- Female

Question 16 required ****

How old are you?

- < 18
- 18 to 25
- 26 to 35
- 36 to 45
- 46 to 55
- 56 to 65
- > 65

Question 17 required ****

What is your annual income?

- Less than \$5,000
- \$5,000 to \$10,000
- \$10,001 to \$15,000
- \$15,001 to \$20,000
- \$20,001 to \$25,000
- \$25,001 to \$30,000
- More than \$30,000

Question 18 required ****

What race/ethnicity do you most identify with?

- White (Caucasian)
- Black or African American
- Asian
- Hispanic or Latino
- Native American or Pacific Islander
- Other

Question 19 required ****

What is your current status as a student at Kansas State University?

- Freshman (Less than 30 credit hours)
- Sophomore (30 to 59 credit hours)
- Junior (60 to 89 credit hours)
- Senior (90+ credit hours)
- Graduate (Master's)
- Graduate (Doctoral)
- Other

Question 20 required ****

To which college do you belong?

- College of Agriculture
- College of Architecture, Planning and Design
- College of Arts and Sciences
- College of Business Administration
- College of Education
- College of Engineering
- College of Human Ecology
- College of Technology and Aviation
- College of Veterinary Medicine

Appendix E-Email Cover Letter for Survey

Email Cover Letter for Survey

Dear K-State Student,

I am conducting a survey on College Students' Knowledge of and Intent to Stay in a Hostel. There is little research on hostels, yet it is a viable option for college students who travel. I would appreciate your assistance in helping me better understand college students' perceptions of hostels. Please know that all information provided will be anonymous. You will never be identified by name and all data will be reported as group data.

I would appreciate your help very much. In return for your cooperation, you will have the chance to win one of five \$20 gift cards to Starbucks.

By clicking on the link below I understand that this project is research, and that my participation is completely voluntary. I also understand that if I decide to participate in this study, I may withdraw my consent at any time, and stop participating at any time without explanation, penalty, or loss of benefits, or academic standing to which I may otherwise be entitled.

If you have any questions or problems, you may contact the individuals listed below.

Thank you,

-Gavin Edwards-
Graduate Student
Hospitality Management & Dietetics
gavine@ksu.edu

CONTACT NAME AND PHONE FOR ANY PROBLEMS/QUESTIONS:

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203 Fairchild Hall
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Manhattan, KS 66506
(785) 532-3224

Appendix F-Reminder Email

Reminder Email

Dear K-State Student,

I am conducting a survey on College Students' Knowledge of and Intent to Stay in a Hostel. You received an email a week ago with a link to my survey. This is just a reminder, asking for your help so that I can better understand college students' perceptions of hostels. Please know that all information provided will be anonymous. You will never be identified by name and all data will be reported as group data.

I would appreciate your help very much. In return for your cooperation, you will have the chance to win one of five \$20 gift cards to Starbucks.

By clicking on the link below I understand that this project is research, and that my participation is completely voluntary. I also understand that if I decide to participate in this study, I may withdraw my consent at any time, and stop participating at any time without explanation, penalty, or loss of benefits, or academic standing to which I may otherwise be entitled.

If you have any questions or problems, you may contact the individuals listed below.

Thank you,

-Gavin Edwards-
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**Appendix G-Factor Loadings for Exploratory Factor Analysis with Varimax
Rotation of Hostel Preference Items and Scales**

Factor Loadings for Exploratory Factor Analysis with Varimax Rotation of Hostel Preference Items and Scales

Characteristic	Component		
	Safety and Amenities	Location and Socializing	Accommodation
Internet	0.79	0.11	0.06
24/7 front desk service	0.77	0.21	0.01
Room security (lockers, safes, etc.)	0.75	0.23	-0.05
Hostel security (locks on doors, etc.)	0.75	0.31	-0.09
Safety	0.73	0.35	-0.16
Laundry facilities	0.71	0.13	0.14
Cleanliness of hostel	0.71	0.22	-0.10
Television	0.70	-0.18	0.10
Location of hostel in a safe part of town	0.59	0.53	-0.21
Free breakfast	0.56	0.47	0.00
Snack Shop	0.56	0.30	0.17
Private bathroom	0.46	0.44	-0.26
On-site cafeteria	0.42	0.47	0.20
Location of hostel near areas of interest	0.37	0.66	-0.04
Location of hostel near transportation	0.32	0.73	-0.03
Opportunity for food preparation	0.31	0.54	0.36
Activities (recreational activities, etc.)	0.30	0.44	0.35
Socializing	0.28	0.57	0.51
Establishing friendships	0.27	0.58	0.51
Meeting new people	0.22	0.60	0.55
Common/shared kitchen for guest use	0.20	0.46	0.48
Experiencing the local culture	0.20	0.73	0.12
Inexpensive accommodation	0.19	0.62	0.12
A common room to relax and hang out	0.18	0.61	0.46
Rooming with others familiar to you	0.16	0.61	-0.07
Extended travel period (traveling for more than a few days)	0.12	0.57	0.20
Mixed sex dormitory type rooms	0.04	-0.04	0.52
Additional costs for items such as linens	-0.02	-0.03	0.47
Single sex dormitory type room	-0.06	0.47	0.05
Common/shared bathrooms (one for men and one for women)	-0.16	0.29	0.48
Rooming with others unfamiliar to you	-0.26	0.17	0.54