

DARK TOURISM

The Effects of Motivation and Environmental Attitudes on the Benefits of Experience

TURISMO NEGRO

Los efectos de la motivación y las actitudes medioambientales en los beneficios de la experiencia

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to discuss the experience model for visitors participating in Dark Tourism. The Hsialin Village relics, which were destroyed by the 2009 typhoon in Taiwan, are selected as the research subject. A total of 341 visitors to Hsialin Village Memorial Park were interviewed through a survey questionnaire. Structural equation models (SEMs) were utilized to verify the causal relationship among the visitors' Dark Tourism motivation, environmental attitudes, and benefits of experience in Dark Tourism relics. The benefits of experience in Dark Tourism are divided into social benefits, learning benefits, and pressure relief for psychological benefits in this study. The empirical results show that the higher Dark Tourism motivation could enhance the visitors' environmental attitudes towards Dark relics and further affect the acquired benefits of experience. Moreover, the stronger Dark Tourism motivation could directly influence the psychological benefits of experience such as emotional and pressure relief. The direct effects of learning and social benefits are not as strong where the benefits of experience are affected by the emotional perception of environmental attitudes. In other words, environmental attitudes present partial mediating effects. The research results provide useful reference information for the planning of Dark Tourism relics and the development of tourism activities.

KEYWORDS

Benefits of experience; Dark tourism; Dark tourism motivation; Environmental Attitudes; Hsialin Village Memorial Park.

RESUMEN

El objetivo de este estudio consiste en discutir el modelo de experiencia de los visitantes que participan en actividades de turismo negro. Como objeto de estudio se han seleccionado las ruinas del pueblo de Hsialin, Taiwán, destruido en 2009 por un tifón. Se realizaron entrevistas mediante cuestionario a 341 visitantes del Hsialin Village Memorial Park. Para comprobar la relación causal entre las motivaciones de los visitantes que realizan actividades de turismo negro, sus actitudes medioambientales y los beneficios de la experiencia en la ruinas de turismo negro se han empleado modelos de ecuaciones estructurales (SEM). En este estudio los beneficios de la experiencia de turismo negro se dividen en beneficios sociales, de aprendizaje y de alivio de la tensión psicológica. Los resultados empíricos muestran que una mayor motivación hacia el turismo negro puede mejorar las actitudes medioambientales hacia las ruinas negras y afectar en mayor medida a los beneficios de la experiencia. Además, una mayor motivación hacia el turismo negro puede influir directamente en los beneficios psicológicos de la experiencia, tales como el alivio emocional y de la tensión. Los efectos

directos sobre el aprendizaje y los beneficios sociales no son tan contundentes allí donde los beneficios de la experiencia se ven afectados por la percepción emocional de las actitudes medioambientales. En otras palabras, las actitudes medioambientales tienen efectos mediadores parciales. Los resultados de la investigación proporcionan información útil para la planificación de las ruinas de turismo negro y el desarrollo de actividades turísticas.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Beneficios de la experiencia; Hsiaolin Village Memorial Park; Motivaciones medioambientales; Motivaciones del turismo negro; Turismo negro.

INTRODUCTION

People are gradually attracted to and focus on Dark Tourism in the past decade mainly because of their strong curiosity about death (Lennon & Foley, 2000). Yuill (2003) indicated that Dark Tourism is attractive and emphasized that as people appealed to the issues of death and disaster, modern people no longer purposely neglected death but started to focus on the chaotic world (Lennon & Foley, 2000; Yuill, 2003). When current types of travel could not satisfy people's curiosity about the world, they expect to experience death and disaster in dark relics. The occurrences of natural disasters are increasing globally. The Taiwan Government established Hsiaolin Village Memorial Park near Hsiaolin Village in Kaohsiung to show the authentic disaster site to visitors, enabling visitors to perceive the power of nature, learn to respect the natural environment, and to understand the importance of peaceful coexistence between human beings and nature. In this case, when the visitors' minds and needs are realized and the design of environmental interaction and experience in dark tourist attractions are integrated, visitors could acquire introspection and inspiration from negative events. The Dark Tourism experience might yield positive benefits of physical and mental experiences and educational introspection that are emerging in the past years. Numerous disaster relics have appealed to visitors and have become popular tourist attractions. Dark Tourism is gradually agreed upon and accepted by visitors and has become a hot topic in the travel industry. Foley & Lennon (1995) defined Dark Tourism to develop places or landmarks related to historical tragedies of human beings into tourism spots. Dann & Seaton (2001) considered that events related to death, disaster, violence, tragedy, or crimes contrary to humanity could be defined as Dark Tourism. Stone (2005) indicated that pain and tragedy were the touring topics for Dark Tourism, in which real death locations or relevant exhibitions are visited. Nevertheless, Dark Tourism is still a new concept in the research on tourism. Sharpley (2005) identified the limits of consumer psychology and motives in the research on Dark Tourism. Lennon & Foley (2000) proposed that research on Dark Tourism should focus more on the social culture and psychology and emphasized that visitors' motives would benefit from the management of Dark Tourism sites (Lennon & Foley, 2003). The conceptualization of Dark Tourism is important (Avital, Yaniv & Gila, 2011), and the visit motive to Dark Tourism sites and acquired benefits are the additional significance of tourist attrac-

tions in Dark Tourism. There have not been many relevant literature studies presenting research on Dark Tourism which could focus in this direction.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS

Dark Tourism motivation

Seaton (1999) pointed out the significant differences between visitors participating in Dark Tourism and the general recreation model which implied that such research on Dark Tourism was essential. There are numerous types of Dark Tourism and the visitors' tourism motives are all different. Dark Tourism can be described as the combination of history, heritage, tourism, and tragedy (Niemelä, 2010) with multi-aspect explanations that can hardly be comprehended. Visitors visit Dark Tourism sites because of their desire to understand the authenticity or their interest in death (Seaton, 1996). Ashworth (1998) considered that visitors presented curiosity on unusual tourist attractions and travel to relics for self-identity and realization. The past research identified the Dark Tourism motives of pilgrimage, looking for truth, and pursuing knowledge and social responsibility (e.g. this included the aspects of not being forgotten and of not making the same mistakes) (Ashworth & Hartmann, 2005). Ryan (2007) proposed a conceptualization for understanding the motives of war tourism and quoted 11 possible motives from Dunkley (2007), including special interest, thrill/risk seeking, validation, authenticity, self-discovery, visiting iconic sites, convenience, morbid curiosity, pilgrimage, remembrance, and empathy/contemplation. Dunkley, Morgan & Westwood (2011) proposed the motives of visiting war sites between France and Belgium, include pilgrimage, remembrance, and special interests. Mowatt & Chancellor (2011) studied the motives of visiting a slave castle in Ghana as visitors are not simply going on a trip, but they need to deeply realize the historical meaning. Biranet al. (2011) showed the motive factors which included themes such as "seeing is believing," learning and understanding, visiting famous death tourist attractions, and emotional heritage experience.

Environmental attitudes

Kotler (2000) regarded attitudes as an individual presenting a continuously favorable or unfavorable evaluation, emotional feeling, and action tendency on certain objects or concepts. Gagné & Briggs (1974) considered attitudes as the correspondent behaviors when an individual encountered various situations related to people, affairs, and objects in the environment that personal responses to external stimulus were controlled by such attitudes. Rosenberg & Hovland (1960) divided Attitude into a cognitive component, an affective component, and a conative component. Environmental Attitudes towards Dark Tourism sites are discussed in this study, where "environment" refers to any natural and

humanistic landscapes and environmental facilities, which could affect and stimulate visitors, in Hsiaolin Village Memorial section. Environmental attitudes in this study therefore refer to the visitors' continuous conation, cognition and preferences for everything in the environment.

Reviewing the relevant literature reports, an environmental attitudes scale in the questionnaire was mostly applied to ecological tours. In consideration of the research purpose, this study refers to the environmental planning in the basic design work report of Hsiaolin Village Memorial Park (2010) and the attitude model with a cognitive component, an affective component, and a conative component proposed by Rosenberg & Hovland (1960) to construct the questionnaire and design the environmental attitudes scale for exploring the visitors' environmental attitudes towards Dark Tourism sites.

Dark Tourism benefits of experience

Schmitt (1999) defined experience as an individual responding to certain stimulus and experience of the overall quality of life, which were normally formed by direct observation and participation in an event, no matter if it was real, fictional, or unreal. From the past research on recreation, Experience was defined as the physiological and psychological perception of past experiences in various recreational opportunities. These were performed by an individual generating the needs for recreation through the past and the contemporary environment which gradually formed such needs as the motives and expectations to form recreational behaviors. An individual presents the inner motive. This study therefore focuses on the tourism activities of visitors in Dark relics, i.e. the Dark Tourism experience.

Avital, et al. (2011) explored the visitors' benefits of experience in Dark Tourism activities, including understanding and investing in the situation, knowledge enrichment, and personal heritage experience. Kang, et al. (2012) pointed out the visitors' benefits of experience, which includes learning, social connections, meaning, and achievement of an inner mission. Natural disasters area major topic of Dark Tourism in this study. In order to conform to the research character, the overall planning in the basic design work report of Hsiaolin Village Memorial Park (Bureau of Cultural Affairs, Kaohsiung City Government, 2010) and the above literature studies are referenced, and interviews, field observations, and in-depth interviews are applied to design and revise a suitable questionnaire for discussing the visitors' perceived benefits after the actual experience.

Relations among Dark Tourism motivation, environmental attitudes, and Dark Tourism benefits of experience

Dark Tourism was expanded from heritage tourism and the research studies on heritage tourism are considered in the framework.

Prentice(2008) concluded the types of tourism motives and the theoretical development in tourist motivation and typologies that experiences and learning were the key

motives in visiting relics. Based on such motives to reconsider the learning process, similar ideas proposed much research on tourism (Prentice 1993; Prentice, Witt, and Hamer 1998; McIntosh and Prentice 1999; Herbert 2001). Driver and Brown proposed the benefit chain of causality conceptualization, which focused on motivational attention to what tourists sought as multiple benefits formed their activities and experiences (Prentice and Light, 1994). Relative researchers transferred the idea in a benefit-based approach for the evaluation of the heritage tourism experience and the research on psychological benefits (Beeho & Prentice, 1996; Prentice, Witt, & Hamer, 1998). Based on the literature studies, various research variables further explained the relations in this study.

Relations between Dark Tourism motivation and environmental attitudes

Preee&Price (2002) determined the key tourism motives of educational learning, interest in history, and curiosity. Yuill (2003) pointed out that education and remembrance are the major motives of Dark Tourism, revealing the historical value of Dark Tourism over entertainment value and people presenting memories and condolences on past people, affairs, and objects. Furthermore, Smith & Croy (2005) studied the conceptualization of Dark Tourism and discovered that Dark Tourism Motivation depended on the perception of dark tourist attractions more than the actual characteristics. Accordingly, the motive of appealing visitors to Dark Tourism sites would affect the inner drive of personal cognition and affection.

Moreover, when explaining and predicting tourist behaviors, motives and attitudes (including cognition, affection, and conation) present certain correlations (Gnoth, 1997). When visitors appear participation motive, the evaluation and conation of the psychological perception of the tourism environment could be realized through the attitudes, and the actual behaviors could be further realized(Mohsin, 2005; Um & Crompton, 1990). It is therefore deducted that motive is the initial drive of a visitor visiting Dark Tourism sites. However, the motive and real actions could be influenced by Environmental Attitudes towards Dark Tourism sites that the visitors 'environment cognition and psychology perception and conation of Dark Tourism sites could be understood. The following hypothesis is proposed in this study.

H1: Dark Tourism motivation would positively affect the visitors' environmental attitudes towards Dark Tourism relics.

Relations between Dark Tourism motivation and Dark Tourism benefits of experience

Iso-Ahola & Allen (1982) regarded the tourism motive as the drive of people engaging in tourism activities to satisfy the social and psychological needs. The tourism motive therefore is the cause of an individual visiting a tourist attraction and expecting to engage in activities which lead visitors to proceed in relevant recreational activities. This satisfies the needs and expected purposes. Consequently, when visitors generate participation

motives, the drive would push them to the actual behaviors and satisfy the needs and purposes through the activities in the destination so as to achieve the desired benefits. Funk, Ridinger&Moorman (2003) indicated that when the drive facilitated actual behaviors after the generation of motives, the visitors' needs and purposes would be satisfied through the activities in the destination and the desired benefits would be achieved. The past research on recreation and learning motives showed positive relations with benefits. It is therefore proposed that the positive effects of the visitors' Motives of visiting Dark Tourism sites on the benefits of experience that the higher Dark tourism motivation would enhance the benefits of experience. The following hypothesis is further proposed in this study.

H2: Dark Tourism motivation would positively affect the visitors' benefits of experience in Dark Tourism sites.

Relations between environmental attitudes and Dark Tourism benefits of experience

Mannell & Stynes (1991) integrated recreational benefits into a system model, i.e. the recreational benefit system model, and considered individual factors of the recreational environment, recreational activities, recreational time, and recreational attitudes in the participation in recreational activities. Such factors were further integrated through the participation experiences to generate physiological, economic, environmental, social, and psychological effects. The benefit perception through personal value and subjective judgment is called the recreational benefit experience in recreational activities, and the new value is generated from the recreational benefit experience.

Current research on environmental attitudes and benefits of experience in Dark Tourism sites are scarce. This study therefore refers to the research reports on recreational attitudes and recreational benefits to estimate the research hypothesis. It is estimated that there are positive correlations between environmental attitudes and benefits of experience after Dark Tourism activities. Visitors presenting more actively on environmental attitudes towards Dark Tourism would acquire higher benefits of experience.

H3: Visitors' perceived environmental attitudes would positively affect Dark Tourism benefits of experience.

Mediating effects of environmental attitudes on the relations between Dark Tourism motivation and benefits of experience

Henderson (2000) and Lennon & Foley (2000) regarded the educational and emotional tourism experiences in Dark Tourism, in which the past events were the mirror of information and knowledge delivery. Moreover, the activities provided visitors with emotional relief and recovery (Braithwaite & Lee, 2006). Kang et al. (2012) pointed out the elements of tourist attractions, including the tourist attractions interpretation, tourist attractions authenticity, and

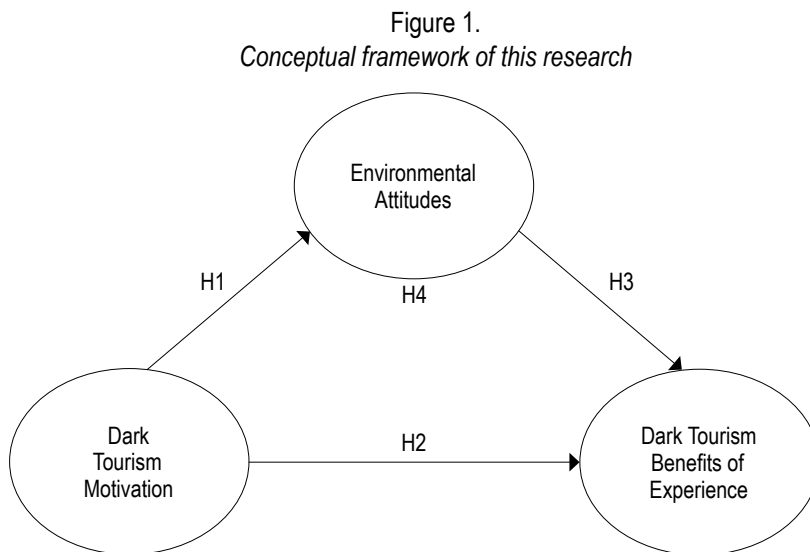
media coverage, which would further affect the visitors' experiences in Dark Tourism. It revealed that visitors would change or satisfy their psychological demands or perception by the stimulus of external environments and information. In the research on Heritage Tourism, McIntosh (1999) found out the personal attitudes of visitors towards relics, such as affection, emotion, and personality perception, and regarded visitors as subjective heritage experience constructors. Poria, Butler & Airey (2004) discussed visitor perception of Dark Tourism relics and realized the visitors' experiences through the cognition of the environment. It showed the obvious effects of visitor attitudes on the experiences. Environmental attitudes therefore are regarded as the mediating variable in this study to discuss the effects on benefits of experience. From the above research, individual attitudes would appear positive relations with benefits, and Dark Tourism motivation would positively influence the benefits of experience. It is therefore deduced that Dark Tourism motivation would generate benefits of experience through environmental attitudes.

H4: The visitors' Dark Tourism motivation would indirectly affect the benefits of experience (social benefits, learning benefits, and psychological benefits) through environmental attitudes towards relics.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research framework

According to the above literature studies, the framework is proposed in Figure 1.



Questionnaire design and measurement

The questionnaire scales of Dark Tourism motivation, environmental attitudes, and Dark Tourism benefits of experience are referred to by (1) Yuill (2003), Niemelä (2010), and Avital B., et al. (2011); and (2) the overall planning in the basic design work report of Hsiaolin Village Memorial Park (Bureau of Cultural Affairs, Kaohsiung City Government, 2010) and Rosenberg & Hovland (1960), and (3) Bronwyn & John (2009), Avital, et al. (2011), and Kang, et al. (2012), respectively.

Furthermore, Dark Tourism is an emerging issue where in-depth interviews are carried out for motives and benefits of experience to increase their credibility. With non-random sampling, the visitors in the park are requested for their interview intentions, and the samples cover visitors from northern, central, and southern Taiwan.

Questionnaire pretest

To ensure that the designed questionnaire scales were clearly understood by the participants so as to achieve internal consistency, a pretest was administered before the formal questionnaire survey. According to the suggestions from the pretest, the language and wording were revised in the formal questionnaire. The pretest was carried out in Hsiaolin Village Memorial Park, and 153 valid copies were retrieved (Li, 2012). In this study, Dark Tourism Motivation encompasses the dimensions of learning, affection connection, and pilgrimage. Environmental attitudes include cognition learning, emotional perception, and conation. The benefits of experience cover social benefits, learning benefits, and psychological benefits. The reliability achieves a rating of 0.77 and above.

Survey and sample data

The data were collected through a questionnaire survey and interviews. With convenience sampling, visitors to Hsiaolin Village Memorial Park were selected as the research subjects, but local citizens were removed. The survey was completed in January-October, 2013. With the agreement of visitors, they were first requested to fill in the Dark Tourism motivation scale. After the interpretation of the park, the visitors filled in the questions for environmental cognition and benefits of experience, which were further collected by the interviewers. Having removed 38 invalid samples, a total of 341 valid copies were retrieved, with a retrieval rate of 93.

EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

1. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and reliability analysis

The dimensions were first measured in the confirmatory factor analysis. The dimensions for Dark Tourism motivation, environmental attitudes, benefits of experience and the overall scale confirmed to the average variance extracted (AVE) and appeared above 0.5

as the convergent validity and the composite reliability (CR) were both above 0.7. The questions in the dimensions presented convergent validity and internal consistency.

Linear structural equation modeling for Dark Tourism motivation, environmental attitudes, and benefits of experience

Linear structural equation modeling (SEM) was utilized for analyzing the covariance among research variables. The latent independent variable was Dark Tourism motivation (ξ_1), while the latent dependent variables were environmental attitudes (η_1) and benefits of experience (η_2) in Dark Tourism. The observed variables of Dark Tourism motivation contained understanding and learning (a1), affection connection (a2), and pilgrimage (a3). Those variables of environmental attitudes covered cognition learning (b1), emotional perception (b2), and conation (b3). Those variables of Dark Tourism benefits of experience included social benefits (SB), learning benefits (LB), and psychological benefits (PB) (Figure 2.) Social benefits, learning benefits, and psychological benefits in benefits of experience were further applied to verify the mediating effects (Figure 3.)

Evaluation of overall goodness-of-fit

The overall goodness-of-fit indices for the constructed model are shown in Table 1. The test results showed the chi-square ratio=3.7, RMR=0.04, GFI=0.93, AGFI=0.87, NFI=0.98, and CFI=0.98, which achieved the required goodness-of-fit standards, re-

Table 1.
goodness-of-fit indices

Overall goodness-of-fit	Ideal value	Index value in this study
χ^2 (chi-square)	The less chi-square the better	118.69
χ^2 ratio (chi-square ratio)	Between 1-5	3.7
GFI (goodness-of-fit indices)	0.9 (and) above	0.93
AGFI (adjusted goodness-of-fit index)	0.8 (and) above	0.87
NFI (normed fit index)	0.9 (and) above	0.98
NNFI (non-normed fit index)	0.9 (and) above	0.97
CFI (comparative fit index)	0.9 (and) above	0.98
RMR (root mean square residual)	At least less than 0.05	0.043
RMSEA (root mean square error of approximation)	less than 0.1	0.066

ling that the model was acceptable. The basic fitness indices of the model are shown in Table 2, from which the error variance was positive, the dimensions reached significance, and the standard deviation was not too wide. The fitness of the model was therefore acceptable, revealing that the observed variables could effectively predict the latent variables.

Table 2.
Basic fitness indices

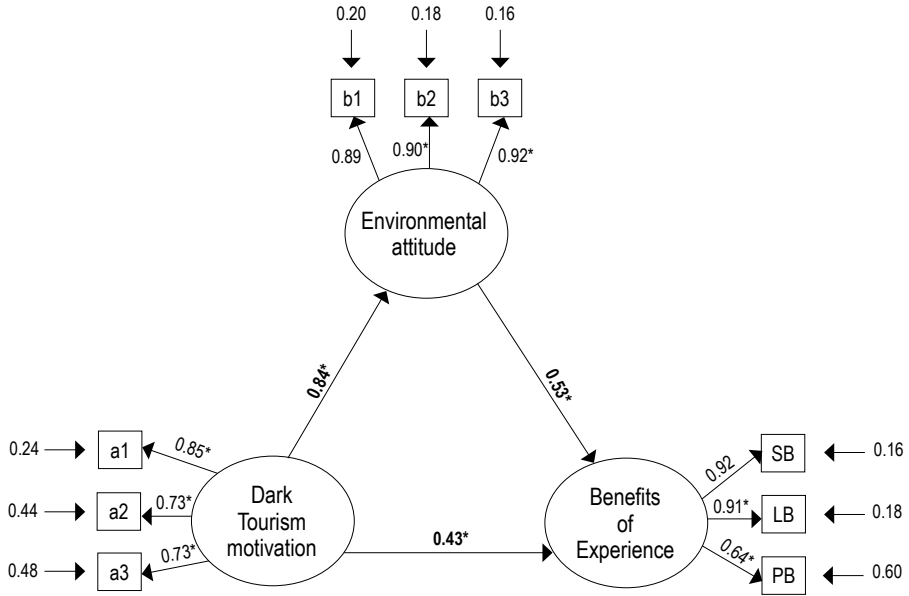
Parameter	Estimated value	t-Value	SD	Error of variance	Error of variance t-Value	Individual reliability
a1→Dark Tourism motivation	0.85	18.68	0.046	0.27	8.49	0.73
a2→Dark Tourism motivation	0.73	15.06	0.049	0.46	11.19	0.54
a3→Dark Tourism motivation	0.73	15.00	0.049	0.47	11.22	0.53
b1→ Environmental attitudes	0.89	--	--	0.20	9.88	0.80
b2→ Environmental attitudes	0.90	25.23	0.036	0.18	9.36	0.82
b3→ Environmental attitudes	0.92	26.05	0.035	0.16	8.68	0.84
SB →Benefits of Experience	0.92	--	--	0.16	8.14	0.84
LB →Benefits of Experience	0.91	26.58	0.034	0.18	8.75	0.82
PB →Benefits of Experience	0.64	13.72	0.046	0.60	12.45	0.40

Validation of research hypothesis in the model

With empirical analyses and statistics, the relations among Dark Tourism motivation, environmental attitudes, and Dark Tourism benefits of experience were verified. The results, Figure 2, showed the path coefficient ($\gamma=0.84$, $t=15.49$, $p<0.001$) of Dark Tourism motivation toward environmental attitudes, the path coefficient ($\gamma=0.43$, $t=6.88$, $p<0.01$) of Dark Tourism motivation toward benefits of experience, and the path coefficient ($\gamma=0.53$, $t=8.19$, $p<0.01$) of Environmental attitudes toward benefits of experience in Dark Tourism where the relations were significant. Hypotheses 1, 2 & 3 were supported.

Furthermore, the direct and indirect effects of the correlation path in the mediating model are organized in Table 3. From an overall perspective, environmental attitudes yielded partial mediating effects that were supported by Hypothesis 4.

Figure 2.
Structural equation model results of this study

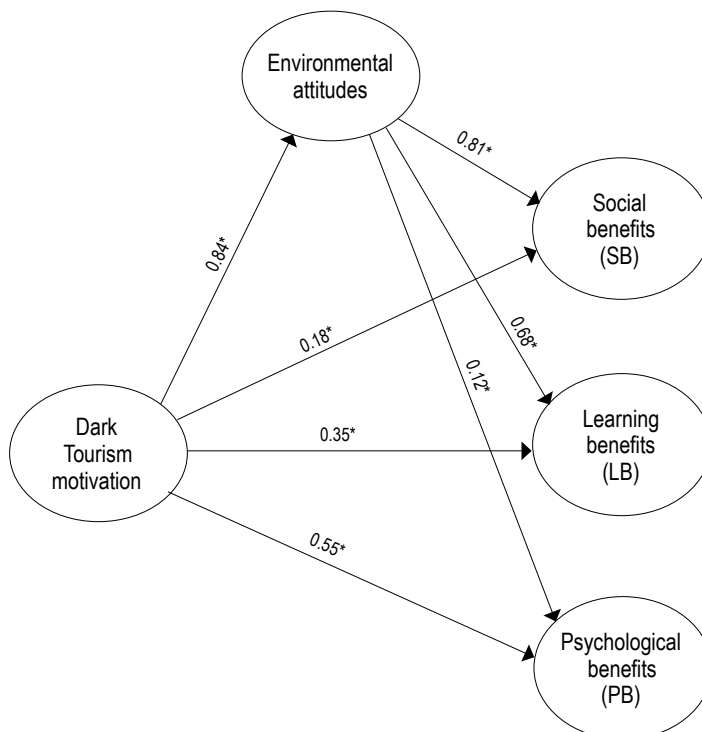


$\chi^2 = 118.69$, $df = 32$, $GFI = 0.93$, $RMSEA = 0.066$

Table 3
Effect value in mediating effects (direct effect, indirect effect, and total effect)

Influence path	Direct effect	Indirect effect	Total effect
Dark Tourism motivation → Environmental attitudes	0.84	-	0.84
Dark Tourism motivation → Social benefits	0.18	-	0.18
Dark Tourism motivation → Learning benefits	0.35	-	0.35
Dark Tourism motivation → Psychological benefits	0.55	-	0.55
Environmental attitudes → Social benefits	0.81	-	0.81
Environmental attitudes → Learning benefits	0.68	-	0.68
Environmental attitudes → Psychological benefits	0.12	-	0.12
Dark Tourism motivation → Environmental attitudes → Social benefits	0.18	0.68	0.86
Dark Tourism motivation → Environmental attitudes → Learning benefits	0.35	0.57	0.92
Dark Tourism motivation → Environmental attitudes → Psychological benefits	0.55	0.10	0.65

Figure 3.
Mediating model results of the dark tourism experiential benefits model



CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions and discussions

The quantitative evaluation model of the relations among Dark Tourism motivation, environmental attitudes, and Dark Tourism benefits of experience is analyzed and verified. The analyses and the relations among variables as well as the suggestions for the management of Dark Tourism sites and future research are described below.

First, the results show the visitors' tourism motives to Dark Relics present positive effects on the perceived environmental attitudes after interacting with the tourism environment. Most visitors show the motives of learning & understanding and affection & empathy, while some reveal curiosity and pilgrimage. In this case, the enhancement of environmental education and design ideas and the meaning of the park cannot be neglected by the management sectors.

Moreover, the expected benefits of experience in Dark Tourism sites are diversified as individual attitudes towards tourist attractions are distinct. Some people consider tourist attractions showing personal existence and meaningful knowledge learning, others visit for recreation, and the others tend to enhance their affection with partners. Such results yield similar research conclusions as those documented by vital et al. (2011). Also, Dark Tourism motivation would directly affect the acquired benefits of experience. It also verifies the conceptualization of the benefit chain of causality developed by Driver & Brown (1991). Visitors visiting Dark Tourism sites with definite objectives and motives would acquire satisfactory experiences. As a result, visitors who participate in Dark Tourism to achieve the desired needs ultimately expect to acquire suitable and satisfactory experiences.

Consequently, allowing visitors to generate emotional reflection on the environmental facilities and services in Hsiaolin Village Memorial Park would affect deep observations for the social and educational benefits of experience in cherishing the families and environmental protection. For instance, the rocks washed to the valley by a typhoon are piled up into a 9m-high and 8m-diameter memorial, representing the rebirth of Hsiaolin Village after the disaster on the 9th of August. From the authenticity in the park and the relics of Hsiaolin Village, people could further realize and enhance their knowledge about the event after the interpretation so as to generate the benefit of learning. As in the previous research results, environmental attitudes would positively affect the benefits of experience in Dark Tourism. Even though Dark Tourism environments are disaster-damaged sites, Hsiaolin Village Memorial Park could be an environmental education and recreational place for visitors to release their pressures, relax their moods, and generate positive introspection. The reinforcement of environmental perception and event meaning and the integration of environmental interaction and experience design allow visitors to acquire the positive benefits of physical, mental, and spiritual experiences as well as educational introspection.

MANAGEMENT OF DARK TOURISM SITES

The research findings show the positive effects of Dark Tourism motivation on environmental attitudes and benefits of experience, revealing that visitors with strong motives to Dark Tourism sites would perceive stronger environmental attitudes and benefits of experience. It is therefore suggested that the management sector of Hsiaolin Village could enhance their promotion for increasing visitors' impressions on the reconstruction after a disaster and reinforce the establishment of signs with relative package tours for increasing the visitors' Tourism motives and satisfy various visitors to the park. The favorable experiences would enhance the environmental attitudes and benefits of experience.

The background of visitors could present distinct understanding and familiarity with tourist attractions as well as different opinions and ideas about the demonstration of tourist attractions (Goulding, 2000; Waitt, 2000). Moreover, the demonstrated meaning and

explanation of tourist attractions could influence visitors' preferences. From a qualitative interview, some visitors are interested in the place in order to look for learning benefits, while others tend to seek out affective, spiritual, or memorial experiences. It is found that many visitors show better satisfactory experiences because they visit the place with families. In this case, various experience demands should be considered in environment planning so as to develop the most effective facilities.

Visitors are enhanced by the benefits of experience in Dark Tourism sites through the mediating effect of environmental attitudes. Accordingly, it is an important issue for the management sectors of Dark Tourism sites enhancing visitors' environment affection and conation to further build an interactive environment. The research results show the environmental atmosphere in the park could effectively affect the inner emotions of visitors and promote the perception of benefits of experience. It reveals that Hsiaolin Village bears a tragic meaning, but the topic, story, and special atmosphere in the park is presented through environmental construction, in which the original relics remain. The function and color of the space and the visual effects of scenery are taken into account. The two-way interaction allows visitors to spend more time on exploring and learning so as to understand the original appearance of the typhoon and experience the importance of fortune and family by participating in the activities. In addition to enhancing the attraction, visitors would show deeper psychological agreement with the environment and more easily reap the benefits of experience.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Dark Tourists often purposively seek out new experiences or new adventures for acquiring knowledge and understanding what they do not know (Sharpley & Stone, 2009). In this case, interpretation plays a critical role in experiences. Without interpretation, most tourist attractions would be dull with no text background (Frew, 2012). Moscardo & Ballantyne(2008) also mentioned that interpretation was the key element in tourism experiences. Hsiaolin Village Memorial Park was newly constructed in 2012 and it was the first visit for most visitors. To have visitors understand and be aware of the event in Hsiaolin Village, the interpretation is preceded by a questionnaire survey and interviews. Moreover, in order to not affect the visitors' benefits of experience and environment cognition with interpretation, the interpretation is pre-designed and the relative training is carried out. During the questionnaire survey, the visitors are first requested to fill in a Dark Tourism motivation scale in the questionnaire. After the interpretation, the visitors would fill in the questions for environmental attitudes and benefits of experience. Such a design would avoid common method variance (CMV). The data are collected separately so that the participants could fill in the questionnaire at different times and places before and after the interpretation. The common method variance issue in this study is therefore not serious.

Moreover, when the interpretation effects and the interviewer bias are taken into account and the interpretation is regarded as the control variable, a purified structural

equation model is utilized for verifying the causal relationship of the theory. However, visitors who do not need interpretation could not understand the opinions and factors. In other words, the visitors might have distinct benefits of experience in interpretation. It is therefore suggested that successive research could treat interpretation as a moderator and compare distinct visitors to explore the effects of visitors' background and knowledge experiences on benefits of experience.

Speaking overall, this study discusses the visitors' experiences in Dark Tourism relics, from the aspect of visitors. With the example of Hsiaolin Village Memorial Park, visitors' experience processes are explored and studied to clarify the key variables in the theoretical model and the influence to integrate critical factors into suggestions for park management and planning. Nonetheless, it is also found that the point of Dark Tourism is not necessarily the heritage, but the influence or the transference (Podoshen, 2013). Particularly, the research findings show an important factor of emotional perception in individual benefits of experience. Having visitors empathetically connect with emotional contagion could affect the demands for tourism activities. For this reason, the successive research could combine sociology, recreational behavior theory, and tourism marketing theory to enhance visitors' in-depth experiences and learning in Dark Tourism.

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