

CONSUMPTION VALUES AND DESTINATION EVALUATION IN DESTINATION DECISION MAKING

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ABSTRACT

Consumption values have received little attention in the tourism literature, comparing to such determinants of the consumer behavior as motivations, pull and push factors, satisfaction, quality, or destination image, etc. This study attempts to analyze consumption values and their types, and the influence that they have on the destination decision making and, particularly, on the destination choice. Current work brings new insights about the role of consumption values in determining preferences toward tourist destinations. Study findings justify the multidimensional nature of the consumption value, and demonstrate that every value dimension has a certain degree of importance for a tourist, which, to a big extent, can determine the destination choice.

Keywords: Consumption Values, Value Dimension, Destination Evaluation, Destination Decision Making

JEL Classification: M31, M15, D120

1. INTRODUCTION

Great amount of studies, theoretical and empirical, have been conducted in tourism for the last decades due to an exponential growth of tourism as a socio-economic activity, that turns it into a highly profitable industry and a complex social phenomenon. Increasing popularity of tourism generates a great interest to it among social scientists and business practitioners. In order to comprehend what factors drive tourists and determine their choices requires a thorough analysis of various complicated variables of internal and external environments that embrace the tourist behavior (Hung, 2008; Sirakaya and Woodside, 2005; Kotler *et al.*, 2003).

Destination decision making is a complex multi-staged process (Sirakaya and Woodside, 2005) that usually involves many sub-decisions, and where the final choice is based on evaluative judgments (Smallman and Moore, 2010). Complexity of the destination decision making relates to the nature of tourism itself, which is experiential, relatively expensive and, often, unpredictable activity with risks taking (Sirakaya and Woodside, 2005). Tourist behavior encompasses interactions between various factors, which literature classifies onto internal - socio-psychological and demographical, and external - from the environment to which a consumer is exposed (Kotler, 2000). Among the internal factors there are few that tourism scholars emphasize the most: motivations, attitudes, preferences, and values. Destination image, on the other hand, is likely to be among the most influential factors of the external domain.

Consumption values and destination images are two constructs that this study is focused on. Researcher attempts to relate these two variables in order to explain the tourist behavior and destination preferences in particular. Pull and push factors concept refers to a tourist behavior as to a function of congruence between forces that push a tourist to take certain actions, and forces that pull actions from a tourist (Kim *et al.*, 2007; Klenosky, 2002; Crompton 1979). These interrelated and dependent factors are generally described as motivations (push factors) that drive tourists, and destination attributes (pull factors) that attract tourists and influence their decisions (Prayag and Ryan, 2011; Kim *et al.*, 2007; Baloglu and Uysal, 1996). Consequently, the researcher raises a question: "If two destinations offer similar sets of attributes, what serves as an evaluative criteria for a tourist to prefer one destination over another?"

Tourist destination is a country, an area within a country, a city or a resort (Buhalis, 2000; Lumsdon, 1997), or a place with a market-created boundaries (Kotler *et al.*, 2003) that offers attributes that are attractive for tourists. Tourist destination proposes a set of benefits accumulated within boundaries. These benefits encompass products and services, including accommodations, events, entertainments, communication, food and beverages, transportation, people, culture, nature, weather, etc. (Buhalis, 2000; Lumsdon, 1997). By interacting with destination attributes that involve physical and social aspects, products and services, a tourist allows for a greater satisfaction of his/her personal needs for physical performances, social interactions, learning, and recognizing personal self (Vogt, 1976). These interactions, or consumptions, evoke emotions and feelings (Esper *et al.*, 2010). King (2002) suggests that attributes themselves are not important to a tourist as much as experiences that they can provide, and their ability to enhance tourist's self-concept through those experiences. Traveler, arriving to a destination, expects for experiences that he/she wants to be engaged with on emotional, physical, spiritual or intellectual levels (Pine and Gilmore, 1999). These experiences are separated from products or services, and they can provide an extraordinary value to a consumer.

Hoping to fulfill own expectations at a destination, tourist relies, fully or partially, on that destination's image. It has been widely recognized in the literature that tourists' choices for a particular destination were greatly influenced by perceptions of that destination's favorable image (Kim and Perdue, 2011; Bigne *et al.*, 2001; Um and Crompton, 1990). Knowledge, impressions, prejudices, and emotional thoughts that a person holds toward something describes its image to a person (Lawson and Baud-Bovy, 1977). The better the perception of the destination image is the higher is the probability for that destination to be preferred by a tourist (Baloglu and McCleary, 1999). When deciding where to go, tourist identifies his/her own needs and their priorities, and examines various destinations assessing their likely capabilities to satisfy those needs (Fuller *et al.*, 2005; Mayo and Jarvis, 1981). Cognitive knowledge and beliefs about various destinations and their attributes, and sought for the best affective appraisal reasons the tourist's destination choice (Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; Um and Crompton, 1990). However, in order to be favorable, besides only having the higher cognitive-affective evaluation, a destination must evoke positive associations with the tourist's self-concept (Beerli *et al.*, 2007). People behave in ways that help them to maintain and enhance their self-concepts, maximize good feelings about themselves and gain social approval, and they avoid activities that are inconsistent with that (Hung, 2008). Therefore, a positive destination image has to respond to a tourist's personal perception of his/her self-concept, lifestyle and value system (Murphy *et al.*, 2007; Sirgy and Su, 2000).

Values are considered to be important and influential determinants of the human behavior. Being organized along the continuum of a relative importance to each other within a set, they create a personal system of values (Rokeach, 1973). Value is one of the most ambiguous variables of the consumer behavior due to its abstract nature and difference in opinions about

it by various scholars (Rao and Monroe, 1989; Zeithaml, 1988). Many researchers define value as an enduring belief about one thing to be more desirable than another; as criteria for evaluating things; or as an utility which is acquired from experiencing consumption. Value is not something that one has, but it is what one can attach to something determining his/her personal judgment about that thing to be liked or disliked to a certain extent. And, since the consumption of products or services creates multidimensional outcomes (Sandstrom *et al.*, 2008; Holbrook, 1994; Sheth, Newman and Gross, 1991), values, attached to or acquired from them, are also multidimensional, and they are called consumption values (Williams and Soutar, 2000; Sheth *et al.*, 1991).

This research aims to contribute into the understanding of consumption values and define their role in the destination evaluation process and decision making. It seeks to answer “why tourist prefers one destination over another, and what is the ground for the evaluation of alternatives?”. Current study attempts to find the relationship between tourist’s expectations, destinations images, and destinations preferences, applying the theory of consumption values in the context of sea, sand and sun holidays.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. The Concept of Value

Literature on economics, sociology, marketing, and consumer behavior offers various concepts of value and various definitions that explain the essence of it. Several of them are as follows: (1) Values are bundles of likes and dislikes, viewpoints, rational judgments and associated patterns that determine the worldview (Spranger, 1928); (2) Value is “an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence” (Rokeach, 1973: 5); (3) “Perceived value is the consumer overall assessment of the utility based on the perceptions of what is received and what is given” (Zeithaml, 1988: 14); (4) Value is “a cognitive trade-off between perceived quality and sacrifice” (Dodds, Monroe and Grewal, 1991: 316); (5) By Sheth *et al.* (1991), value is a utility acquired from consuming products or services; (6) Gupta (1998) defines value as an intrinsic idea or goal that is attempted to be achieved in order to evoke a deep sense of fulfillment; (7) “Value is a positive function of what is received and a negative function of what is sacrificed” (Oliver, 1999: 45). One common aspect of value is the satisfaction that it brings to a person and the influence that it makes on the mode of behavior.

People usually do not think about values, but they realize them when values become relevant or activated (Verplanken and Holland, 2002). Values are factors that are important to do, follow and strive forward (McClelland, 1991). Dhar, Parashar and Tiwari (2008) state that at the macro-level values compose a meaningful set of ideas that are understood and shared in the society, and they are often culturally determined. At the micro-level values are motivating standards that allow an individual to evaluate available alternatives for further actions. Morris (1956) classifies values onto 3 different groups: ones that direct individual’s behavior (operative values); ones that are shared, culturally determined conceptions of desirable behavior (conceived values); and ones that assess the importance of objects independently of preferences and normative standards (object values). Values are based on knowledge, beliefs and attitudes, and they serve as criteria for evaluations and judgments (Rokeach, 1968). They influence human behavior and also explain it (Krishnan, 1997). Determining choices and ways to invest time and energy, they become the core of human personality (Posner and Schmidt, 1992). Rokeach (1968) emphasizes that in order to comprehend the notion of value researcher should understand human personality and

consider value as a part of a hierarchically built system. Author looks at a human personality through a prism of three distinct domains: behavioral, affective and cognitive. The cognitive domain incorporates three groups of beliefs: ones that evaluate things to be true or false, ones that evaluate things to be good or bad, and ones that evaluate things to be desirable or undesirable. Last explains values. Cognitive domain facilitates predicting and understanding affective and behavioral components of the human personality. People value as many things as they hold beliefs about them to be desirable or undesirable. Although personal values can explain human attitudes and behavior, in order to do so they must be measured all together, because values have different degrees of relative importance (Krishnan, 1997; Rokeach, 1973). It is not as much relevant to know what people value as to know which value is more favorable than the other (Krishnan, 1997). Krishnan concludes that two persons could appreciate the same set of values, but behave differently, because of different priorities assigned to same values.

Lai (1995) identifies two approaches to the notion of value. One considers value to be an assessment, made by a customer about the purchase, in respect to the trade-off between what was given and what was received. This concept refers to the customer value (Lai, 1995; Dodds et al, 1991). Another approach explains value as a bundle of benefits acquired from a product usage. In the literature it is called consumer value (Lai, 1995) or consumption value (Sheth et al, 1991; Holbrook and Corfman, 1985). Gallarza and Gil (2006) underline two major approaches to the value research: one focuses on a value dimensionality or value types, and another – on the influence of values on consumer behavior. In this study researcher adopts on the concept of consumption values that are acquired through the consumption experiences, and combines two approaches studying the influence of value dimensionality on tourist behavior. Consumer acquires consumption values from the interaction with products or services (Holbrook, 1999). By Holbrook, value is a preference experience of a relativistic nature: it is personal, comparative, and situational. Due to the uniqueness of each one's personality different people can perceive values differently, and that makes it personal (Gallarza and Gil, 2008; Holbrook, 1999; Zeithaml, 1988). Values can be compared to each other and to values of alternatives, which explains their comparativeness (Gallarza and Gil, 2008; Nilson, 1992; Buzzell and Gale, 1987). Situational nature of value is in its ability to be perceived differently by a person depending on circumstances of the consumption, involving time and space (Gallarza and Gil, 2008; Gabott and Hogg, 1998; Sheth *et al.*, 1991). The model of Sheth *et al.* (1991), which is central in this research, distinguishes five consumption value types (dimensions): functional, social, emotional, epistemic, and conditional.

2.2. Functional Value

Functional value relates to the functional usability of product attributes (mainly physical) and their utilitarian benefits (Sheth *et al.*, 1991). Utilitarian consumption serves to perform practical tasks (Strahilevitz and Myers 1998). It is cognitively driven, instrumental and goal oriented. According to the economic theory of utility sought, functional value is considered to be one of the major forces in decision making. In tourism it can be acquired from the consumption of destination physical aspects (natural or human made), products and services, such as souvenirs, food, various activities, etc. (Morgan *et al.*, 2010). Quality, variety, reliability, comfort, safety, prices, etc., are among the most popular destination factors that refer to the functional value.

2.3. Social Value

Social value relates to the perceived product utility that is acquired from product's positive associations with consumer's personal geographic, demographic, socioeconomic, political and

cultural dimensions, and from positive recognition of product attributes in social (reference) groups to which consumer belongs or intends to belong (Sheth *et al.*, 1991). Reference groups have a great power over consumer's decisions and products choices (Burnkrant and Cousineau, 1975). Most people need a psychological association with someone else or a group of other people (Bearden and Etzel, 1982). Assimilating oneself to the group, or even liking the group with no intentions to be associated with it, fulfills the need of social association. If one believes that certain behavior is favored or unfavored by others, whose evaluations are important, then he/she will may try to behave in a way that is likely to be desirable by that group of others (Park and Lessig, 1977). Social value plays a significant role in a formation of tourists' perceptions of their experiences (Morgan *et al.*, 2010; Williams and Soutar, 2000). It is acquired when one is socially approved, feels accepted, makes good impression on others, and improves his/her self-image (Sweeney and Soutar, 2001). In tourism some researchers relate social value to direct social interactions. People's friendliness and hospitality, respectful treatment, genuine care for customers, willingness of others to help are factors that can create social value for tourists (Noypayak, 2009). Shanka and Phau (2008) add the possibility of making friendships and meeting people with common interests.

2.4. Emotional Value

Emotional value can be acquired from the product's ability to elicit feelings and change emotional stage while consumption (Sheth *et al.*, 1991). Although any manufactured product may create the emotional value for the consumer, it is usually associated with the consumption of esthetic and hedonic products, such as tourism. Consumption of hedonic products underlines "those facets of consumer behavior that relate to the multi-sensory, fantasy and emotive aspects of one's experience with products" as this behavior is pleasure-seeking (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982: 92). Hedonic products include multisensory features and imply experiential consumption, fun, and excitement, etc. Every product can be as much hedonic as it is perceived to be by an individual (Khan *et al.*, 2004). Russell and Pratt (1980) suggest that there are four basic emotional states (pleasant, unpleasant, arousing and sleepy), that help to affectively evaluate a tourist destination to be exciting, relaxing, irritating or boring, or combination of some. Measuring the emotional value, Sweeney and Soutar (2001) deploy scale items, such as feeling relaxed, enjoying consumption and receiving pleasure. Petrick (2002) notes that in order to create emotional value consumption should make consumer feel good and delighted, give pleasure and sense of joy, and bring happiness.

2.5. Epistemic Value

Epistemic value relates to the human curiosity and natural need for the cognition (Sheth *et al.*, 1991). Inventions and innovations are driven factors that evoke desire to discover and learn, foster people to variety and novelty seeking (Zuckerman, 1994; Sheth *et al.*, 1991). Schweizer (2006) suggests that desire to seek for novelty is coded in human genes. This behavior stems from possessing particular individual neurocognitive and personality traits, such as excitability, impulsiveness, ease to get bored, disinhibition, proactivity, and curiosity. It is a key explanation for complex levels of human motivations (Berlyne, 1950). Curiosity is one of the strongest driven factors of human behavior (Loewenstain, 1994). Yet from Aristotle's time it has been of interest for many philosophers, often being referred as a love of knowledge or a passion for learning. However, in the economic theory of utility curiosity has been neglected as the influential factor, since the consumption of information or knowledge wasn't believed to provide more value than the product consumption itself. Berlyne (1954) categorizes curiosity into 4 types: (1) Perceptual - occurs as a result of a novel stimuli; and

it reduces as a stimuli continues; (2) Epistemic - relates to a human desire for knowledge; (3) Specific - occurs at the moment of a need for a particular piece of information to solve certain problem; and (4) Diversive - a need for stimulation to avoid boredom. Epistemic value is one of the core benefits expected from the tourism experience (Williams and Soutar, 2009). Experiencing new and different lifestyles and socio-cultural environments, meeting new people, trying new food, increasing knowledge, learning and discovering are among the strongest tourists' motivations (Kim *et al.*, 2007; Andreu *et al.*, 2006; Jang (Shawn) and Cai, 2002).

2.6. Conditional Value

Conditional value occurs when product's utility depends on a particular situation or circumstances under which the product is purchased (Sheth *et al.*, 1991). For instance, wedding dress would be valued in case of an upcoming wedding, or winter jacket in a cold weather. Conditional value addresses the situational nature of it, meaning that perceived value of a product can vary from one buying situation to another (Day and Crask, 2000, Gallarza and Gil, 2006). Even within the similar situation the value might be perceived differently with time due to past experiences. Conditional value is an acquired utility derived from temporary functional or social values that appear under certain conditions (Sheth *et al.*, 1991). At the tourist destination the conditional value can be acquired from a friendliness of locals, personal safety, good value for money, and good quality of life (Shanka and Phau, 2008). It is the least influential and the most ambiguous value dimension. Because conditional value appears under certain circumstances and conditions that a decision maker faces, its existence as a distinctive value dimension becomes questionable (Sweeney and Soutar, 2001; Williams and Soutar, 2000). Authors refer to it as to a specific case of any of other values. Therefore it is not a value itself, but a condition under which any other value's significance raises. Supporting the criticism, researcher eliminates the conditional value from the study, leaving only four other mentioned values.

3. METHODOLOGY

This work aims to contribute into understanding the role of four consumption values in the destination decision making. Researcher focuses on value dimensions, their relative degrees of importance, and its influence on destination evaluation and destination preferences. Two hypotheses were proposed:

H1: When thinking of going for holidays, tourists are able to group their expectations for experiences within consumption value dimensions, and recognize the importance of every dimension by assigning priorities to them.

H2: Tourists prefer visiting a destination that is perceived to fulfill their expectations for experiences better than other alternatives, and in accordance with prioritized expectations.

The Hypothesis 1 brings attention to the value dimensionality and to a tourist's ability to distinguish and prioritize value dimensions as separate driven factors of destination decision making. The Hypothesis 2 attempts to confirm the assumption that value dimensions with their different degrees of priority for a tourist can determine his/her destination choices. Researcher suggests that the destination choice is influenced by distinct value dimensions and by how they are prioritized in a value set of a decision maker. It is essential to clarify that the meaning of the destination choice in the context of this research is limited to the revelation of tourist preferences toward destinations that were suggested by the researcher.

For the purpose of this research European Union residents of the age group 17 – 34 years old were chosen to participate in the survey. Forming a lucrative segment of the holiday travel market (Chen and Kerstetter, 1999), and growing in number of travelers (Mattila *et al.*, 2001), youth is a considerably interesting market segment to study (Litvin, 2003; Babin and Kim, 2001). Due to the lack of consistent scales that could measure consumption values in tourism in respect to tourist destinations (Noypayak, 2009), the pool of scale items that are likely to represent value dimensions has been accumulated from the literature and given to a small sample of tourists in order to identify 5 most representative items for each value dimension. After interviewing 13 young tourists of 7 different EU nationalities, 22 scale items were voted as the most representative from the pool of total 37 items. Two pairs of items have received equal support and combined together within the emotional and social value dimensions (see Table 1).

Table 1: Scale items adjusted to the current study

Value Dimension	№	Variables	Reference
Functional	1	Beautiful scenery	Noypayak (2009)
	2	Worth the money	Petrick (2002), Noypayak (2009)
	3	High quality service	Williams and Soutar (2000), Sweeney and Soutar (2001), Petrick (2002), Shanka and Phau (2008), Noypayak (2009)
	4	Cultural/historical/tourists attractions	Noypayak (2009)
	5	Economical holidays	Sweeney and Soutar (2001), Petrik (2002)
Emotional	1	Aquire emotional pleasure	Sweeney and Soutar (2001), Petrick (2002), Noypayak (2009)
	2	Relax emotionally and physically	Sweeney and Soutar (2001), Shanka and Phau (2008), Noypayak (2009)
	3	Feel secure	Noypayak (2009)
	4	Feel excited	Williams and Soutar (2001)
	5	Have fun Feel joy	Shanka and Phau (2008), Noypayak (2009) Sweeney and Soutar (2001), Petrick (2002)
Social	1	Meet friendly and hospitable people	Shanka and Phau (2008), Noypayak (2009)
	2	Meet people with common interests	Shanka and Phau (2008)
	3	Improve self-image	Sweeney and Soutar (2001)
	4	Follow recommendations	Sheth et al (1991)
	5	Be respected by others Be socially accepted	Petrick (2002), Noypayak (2009) Sweeney and Soutar (2001)
Epistemic	1	Learn about local culture and traditions	Sheth et al (1991)
	2	Experience something different	Shanka and Phau (2008), Williams and Soutar (2009)
	3	Evoke curiosity	Sheth et al (1991), Williams and Soutar (2009)
	4	Provide novelty experience	Sheth et al (1991), Zuckerman (1994), Williams and Soutar (2009)
	5	Discover something new	Sheth et al (1991)

Turkey, Portugal and Morocco were chosen for this research as three relatively different in cultural, socioeconomic and natural aspects countries, but at the same time very popular sea, sand and sun destinations. The study survey has been conducted with help of web-based technologies through the distribution of the self-composed questionnaire, considering that it is one of the most efficient ways of collecting and managing the data (Dillman, 2007; Deutskens *et al.*, 2006; Duffy, Smith, Terhanian, and Bremer, 2005).

Survey questionnaire has been administered in English and it comprises three sections that are to help testing proposed hypothesis. Section 1 questions the likely capability of each of three given destinations to fulfill each of twenty scale items during sea, sand and sun holidays. It asks respondents to agree with twenty assumptions regarding every destination on a 5-point rating scale, anchored on (5) = “Strongly Agree” to (1) = “Strongly Disagree”. An example of one of twenty assumptions is as follows: “This is the tourist destination where I could discover something new for myself.” Section 1 intends to identify the personal perception of the destination image in respect to its likely capability to fulfill every scale item. Section 2 consists of twenty questions, each of which intends to identify the degree of importance that every scale item has for a tourist, which helps to generate a tourist’s personal set of values that comprises items with different priorities. An example of one of twenty questions is as follows: “How important is to always visit destinations where you would meet people with common interests?”. Section 2 uses a 5-point rating scale, anchored on (5) = “Very important” to (1) = “Very unimportant”. Section 3 of the questionnaire asks a respondent to rank every tourist destination on a scale from most preferred to be visited for sea, sand and sun holidays to least preferred. Section 3 also includes the part that relates to the demographics.

4. RESULTS

In total 329 questionnaires have been collected during September-October 2011, among which 314 were eligible for the data analysis. All respondents represent 24 nationalities: 20.7% are Belgian, 16.9% are Polish, and in average 7% is accounted separately for German, Spanish, Dutch, Italian, French and Slovenian nationalities. 56.1% of respondents are female and 43.9% - male. Majority of them (62.7%) belongs to the age group of 17-24 years old, and the rest to 25-34 years old.

Before conducting any analysis the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett’s tests have been applied (Table 2).

Table 2: KMO and Bartlett’s test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.767
Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1332.131
	Df	190
	Sig.	0.000

Indicators in the table positively approve the data and prepare it for the factor analysis. Factor loading, initially conducted by the principal component method and then rotated by the Varimax method, has explained 52.138% of total variance, producing in total 5 distinct components (factors), instead of 4 as it was primarily proposed in the research (Table 3).

Table 3: Rotated component matrix^a

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
Learn about local culture and traditions	0.666				
Discover something new	0.666				
Evoke curiosity	0.664				
Experience something different	0.646				
Cultural/historical/tourists attractions	0.625	0.303			-0.433
Provide novelty experience	0.525				
Feel secure		0.705			
High quality service		0.689			
Relax emotionally and physically		0.550		0.450	
Beautiful scenery	0.383	0.490		0.375	
Be respected and socially accepted			0.679		
Meet people with common interests			0.669		0.312
Meet friendly and hospitable people			0.602	0.323	
Improve self-image			0.548		0.359
Feel excited	0.374			0.624	
Acquire emotional pleasure				0.589	
Follow recommendations			0.316	-0.462	0.340
Have joy and fun			0.301	0.444	
Economical holidays					0.771
Worth the money					0.621
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. a. Rotation converged in 12 iterations.					

As it is shown in the table, the component 1 includes 6 items, 5 of which previously defined as epistemic and 1 as functional. Researcher assumes that destination’s cultural/historical/tourists attractions can be perceived by respondents as in the context of having an opportunity to cognize and learn rather than to acquire functional utility from them. For that consideration this item stays within the epistemic dimension. The component 2 includes 2 functional and 2 emotional items. Researcher allows himself to assume that the item “feel secure” can be interpreted by respondents as a perception of the destination safety – the condition that assumes the degree of protection against fraud, crime, loss, danger, etc., which is seen more as a functional attribute rather than affective one. Similar assumption has been made in regards to “relax emotionally and physically”, which, besides being directly associated to the emotional value, also may represent the opportunity to satisfy basic needs and wants of holidaymakers. Both former emotional items were included to the functional dimension. The component 3 generally complies with the predefined set of the social value, having only 1 item “follow recommendations” moved to the set of the emotional value. After analysing the component 4, the researcher has found no logical support to leave the item “follow recommendations” within the emotional value, consequently removing it from the study. Factor analysis has separated items “economical holidays” and “worth the money” from the functional value into a distinct component, named monetary. Value dimensions of a monetary nature have been also present in studies of Petrick (2002), Noypayak (2009) and Sweeney and Soutar (2001). Newly acquired data sets were analysed for their consistency and reliability by the Cronbach’s alpha test (Table 4).

Table 4: Reliability Cronbach's Alpha test

	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Epistemic	0.730	6
Functional	0.601	4
Social	0.603	4
Emotional	0.603	3
Costs	0.626	2

Although, in order to be significant, alpha coefficient should approximate the value of 0.7 or higher (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994), current indices were accepted by the researcher, taking into consideration the small number of items in every set and the qualitative component of the study. Descriptive analysis of the statistics data in Table 5 reveals the general perception of destinations' images in respect to their capabilities to fulfill each of five consumption values.

Table 5: Descriptive statistics - Countries' perceived images

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Epistemic_Turkey	4.155	0.610
Epistemic_Portugal	4.029	0.598
Epistemic_Morocco	4.309	0.535
Funtional_Turkey	3.635	0.578
Funtional_Portugal	4.201	0.448
Funtional_Morocco	3.454	0.611
Emotional_Turkey	3.959	0.750
Emotional_Portugal	4.328	0.594
Emotional_Morocco	3.913	0.799
Monetary_Turkey	3.773	0.752
Monetary_Portugal	3.771	0.668
Monetary_Morocco	3.779	0.761
Social_Turkey	3.350	0.609
Social_Portugal	3.948	0.538
Social_Morocco	3.254	0.617

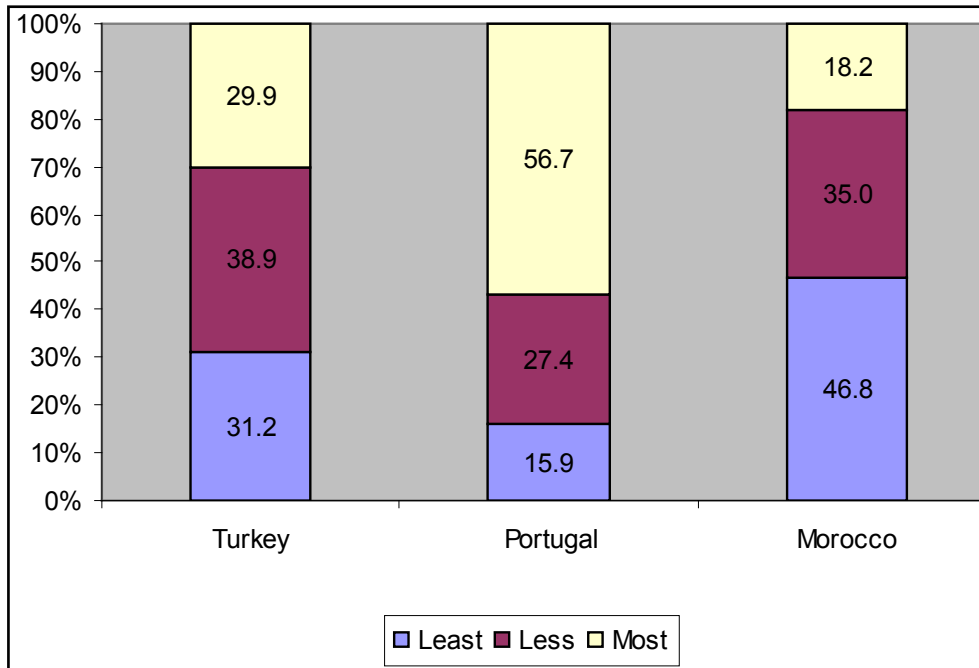
According to the table Portugal is likely to demonstrate the stronger and more favorable image of the tourist destination that fulfills emotional, functional and social values better than others. Considerably lower indices of standard deviation for Portugal explain the better consistency of its image and to some extent the better awareness of Portugal, knowing that most of respondents (61.6%) have visited this country before (Table 6).

Table 6: Descriptive statistics - Past visits

	Frequency	Percent
Turkey	35	11.2
Portugal	108	34.5
Morocco	7	2.2
Turkey and Portugal	57	18.2
Turkey and Morocco	7	2.2
Portugal and Morocco	11	3.5
All three destinations	17	5.4
None of these destinations	71	22.7
Total	313	100.0

Morocco shows its best results in fulfilling epistemic and monetary values. And although Turkey receives no best scores, its capability to fulfill emotional, functional and social values is higher than of Morocco. Study survey shows that respondents are willing to visit or re-visit Portugal the most, comparing to other two destinations (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Preferences toward Destinations



Analysing value priorities in general for the sample population, emotional value has received the highest score to be the most important value dimension that tourists expect to acquire during their sea, sand and sun holidays (Table 7).

Table 7: Descriptive statistics - Consumption values preferences

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Emotional	4.202	0.535
Epistemic	4.000	0.519
Functional	3.889	0.592
Monetary	3.881	0.775
Social	3.326	0.631

Table 7 demonstrates that tourists are able to distinguish five consumption values assigning to them different priorities on a scale from most important to least important. In order to test and support the hypothesis 1 researcher decides to confirm this general finding by analyzing every respondent separately. Table 8 shows how many survey participants were able to distinguish every value dimension and assign priority to it. It also shows that 86.6% of respondents are able to assign different priorities to at least four consumption value dimensions. This amount is big enough that do not require conducting the Binominal test in order to support the hypothesis 1. Applied Monte Carlo test shows no significant differences between genders or age groups in that matter ($p = 0.782$ and $p = 0.786$ respectively).

Table 8: Hypothesis 1

		Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5 dimensions	137	43.6	43.6
	4 dimensions	135	43.0	86.6
	3 dimensions	20	6.4	93.0
	2 dimensions	9	2.9	95.9
	1 dimension	12	3.8	99.7
	Any dimension	1	.3	100.0
	Total	314	100.0	

Hypothesis 2 infers that a tourist prefers to visit a destination, image of which is perceived to better fulfill consumption values in accordance to their degrees of importance for that tourist. Researcher assumes that in order to attract a tourist a destination must be perceived as a place where all consumption values can be acquired, but taking into account that some of values are more important than others. Testing the hypothesis 2 requires a personal approach to every participant of the study and involves simple mathematical formulas. At first each value dimension finds its relative weight of importance within the set of five values by assigning the weight coefficient to it (see the Formula 1).

$$W \tilde{N} = \dot{v} \div V_{\max}, \tag{1}$$

where $W \tilde{N}$ is a value weight coefficient, \dot{v} is a degree of importance that the value dimension has obtained (defined as a mean of value items), and V_{\max} is a maximum possible degree of importance, which is “5.0000” by default. The section 1 of the questionnaire has collected the data about every tourist’s perceptions of destinations images. It helped to identify five destination sub-images where each of one relates to a separate value dimension and has a numerical expression that represents the degree of capability of that destination to fulfill a consumption value. The second step is to define the total beneficial utility of a destination, by multiplying every Value Weight Coefficient (VWC) by the respective Degree of Value Fulfillment (see Formula 2) and then summing up the results (see Formula 3).

$$VBU = VWC \times DVF, \tag{2}$$

where VBU is a beneficial utility that a destination brings in respect to a certain value, and DVF is a degree of destination’s capability to fulfill a certain consumption value.

$$TDBU = \sum VBU, \tag{3}$$

where $TDBU$ is a total beneficial utility of a destination. Researcher assumes that the destination that receives the highest value of $TDBU$ corresponds to the destination that has been chosen as the most preferred to be visited by a respondent.

Questionnaires with no answer or in which respondents have chosen more than one destination as the most preferred were ineligible, leaving 301 questionnaires validated for testing the hypothesis 2. All the calculation were made in a semi-manual manner and presented in Table 9.

Table 9: Hypothesis 2 ($p = 0.000$)

		Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	105	34.9	34.9
	Agree	196	65.1	100.0
	Total	301	100.0	
Total		314		

Table 9 demonstrates that from 301 questionnaires only 105 reveal disapproving results and the rest 196 questionnaires, which accounts for 65.1% of respondents, support the hypothesis 2. Applied Binominal test, based on Z approximation, shows that the difference between two proportions is significant enough, which statistically supports the hypothesis 2 with the confidence level 99% (Table 10).

Table 10: Binomial Test_Hypothesis 2

		Category	N	Observed Prop.	Test Prop.	Asymp. Sig. (1-tailed)
H2	Group 1	Agree	196	0.651	0.349	0.000 ^a
	Group 2	Disagree	105	0.349		
	Total		301	1.000		

a. Based on Z Approximation.

5. DISCUSSION

To comprehend the process of destination decision making is one of the greatest challenges for tourism marketers due to the complexity of interactions between various factors that influence tourists' behavior. Many researches and field studies have been undertaken to explore determining components of destination decision making, and yet very few have investigated the principal role of consumption values in the evaluation of destinations and in decision making per se. This study contributes into the understanding of consumption values and their influence on the destination evaluation and the destination choice. "Why two or more tourist destinations that, generally speaking, seem to offer relatively similar sets of attributes are differently evaluated by tourists? And do the destination image and the personal set of consumption values serve as interrelated grounds for the destination evaluation?" These were main questions of the researcher's concern.

According to Rokeach (2006) and Shwartz (2006) values serve as the only standards for the evaluation and determination of what is good or bad, positive or negative. In the market situation values acquire consumptional nature and refer to consumption values (Sheth *et al.*, 1991). Consumption values are various and they tend to be grouped within dimensions that explain them. Consuming any product, a person acquires certain utility that fulfills needs of different domains with different degrees of relevance. This concept of value differs from the one that presents value through the prism of a benefit-cost trade-off. Current research initially deploys the model of consumption values suggested by Sheth *et al.*, however, excluding the conditional value due to its ambiguous and uncertain nature (Sweeney and Soutar, 2001; Williams and Soutar, 2000), and then adding the monetary value as a result of factor analysis.

Study findings may greatly contribute to the destination marketing theory, allowing for more tips in planning marketing communications. One of the main questions that this research is focused on concerns the value dimensionality and the ability of tourists to distinguish and prioritize consumption values during their holiday plannings. Analysis

shows that along with four value dimensions, previously adopted for the study, respondents have also identified the fifth dimension of a monetary nature, separating it from a functional value. The opportunity for having economical holidays and receiving good value for money has proven to be an independent driven factor in destination decision making, which supports previously developed models of Noypayak (2009), Petrick (2002) and Sweeney and Soutar (2001). Monetary value receives second from the last degree of importance among the rest of consumption values, which emphasizes the hedonic nature of tourism and demonstrates the tourists' willingness to pay money for desired holiday experiences. At the same time, however, it shows the importance of receiving a fair deal. Data analysis supports the hypothesis 1 and confirms that consumption value is multidimensional, and every of its dimension can be assigned with a different degree of importance for every tourist. An absolute majority of survey participants were able to distinguish and prioritize different consumption values that they would like to acquire on holidays. Study findings reveal that emotional expectations are of the greatest importance for destination decision makers. Emotional value happens to be the factor that drives tourist's behavior the most, allowing for another recognition of the hedonic nature of tourism. Epistemic value appears as the second most important and, therefore, influential factor in destination decision making. Sequentially on the scale of importance the epistemic value is followed by the functional, monetary and social values. Employing the concept of value dimensionality may help to improve destination marketing communication and positioning strategy. This study shows the relevance of targeting tourists' needs and communicating values, instead of targeting various demographic groups and communicating destination attributes. It suggests that marketing message appeals to the emotional state of a person and also evokes the feeling of curiosity.

By supporting the hypothesis 2 this research brings more lights on the role of consumption values in destination decision making. Study findings demonstrate the importance of priorities assigned to every consumption value within the personal system of values. In this context it is being proposed that system of values not only defines the man's personality, but it also serves as a criteria for the evaluation of things to be desirable or not according to that personality. Participants of this study reveal their abilities to evaluate and prioritize their holiday expectations, to assess the likely capability of a destination to fulfill those expectations, and to make a destination choice that is proved to be the most beneficial in that respective matter. It infers that any destination attribute becomes relevant to communicate if only the consumption of it creates value for a tourist. What a destination can offer is as much important to know as to find out what tourists need to be offered. Marketing message should communicate benefits and experiences acquired from consumption of destination attributes, and emphasize utilities that are worthwhile and promising enough to accommodate possible constraints. Due to the raising competition in the tourism industry it becomes harder to brand a destination, differentiate it, and communicate its uniqueness. Because tourist destination is complex and it comprises many products and services of different domains, demographic measures and behavioral segmentation become insufficient in defining right marketing communication and targeting strategy. This study shows that the tourist's perception of a destination is as much multidimensional as the consumption value is.

Basing on the study findings it is suggested that Portugal has the strongest and more favorable perception of the tourist destination image, comparing to Turkey and Morocco. Portugal is likely to fulfill emotional, functional and social values better than other two destinations, whereas Morocco is perceived to have better chances in fulfilling epistemic and monetary values. Although Turkey has not shown the dominance in any value dimension, its capability to fulfill emotional, functional and social values is higher than of Morocco.

Consequently it makes Turkey to be the second most preferred destination for sea, sand and sun holidays. Knowing that only 61.6% of all respondents had visited Portugal before the survey, 37% had been to Turkey, and only 13.3% were in Morocco, allows to make an assumption that tourists' perceptions of these destination images have been formed on beliefs, rumors, prejudices, marketing communications, etc., and not to a great extent on the personal experiences.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Study findings have demonstrated the support for both proposed hypotheses and made conclusions regarding the consumption value dimensions and their role in the destination decision making.

Several limitations related to this study can be pointed out. One of them concerns the sampling method and sample representation. Survey questionnaires have been distributed over the e-mail services and social networking sites only, therefore, eliminating people that were not social media users or internet-friendly. Study survey has been administered in English, ignoring those who had no sufficient language skills. The survey sample shows unequal distribution of demographics, having 62.7% of respondents of the age group 17 - 24 years old. Residents of Belgium (20.7%) and Poland (16.9%) notably dominate in number among all survey participants. The rest 22 nationalities do not exceed 7% of respondents each. Other research limitations concern the conceptual part of the research. This study focuses mainly on consumption values in destination decision making, avoiding to consider many other important factors that influence the tourist behavior. The meaning of the destination choice in the context of this research is only limited to the revelation of tourist preferences, which is not a demonstration of intentions to visit any of given destination. At last, this study suffers from a certain degree of subjective thinking in regards to some particular conceptual issues. Thus, further research should be undertaken, expanding the covered object of study with the involvement of situational constraints, seasonality, travel particularities, and other external/internal factors that influence tourist behavior.

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