10th Annual Conference of the EuroMed Academy of Business

Global and national business theories and practice:
bridging the past with the future

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All full papers and abstracts submitted to the EMRBI Conference are subject to a peer reviewing process, using subject specialists selected because of their expert knowledge in the specific areas.

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FOREWORD

The Annual Conference of the EuroMed Academy of Business aims to provide a unique international forum to facilitate the exchange of cutting-edge information through multidisciplinary presentations on examining and building new theory and business models for success through management innovation.

It is acknowledged that the conference has established itself as one of the major conferences of its kind in the EuroMed region, in terms of size, quality of content, and standing of attendees. Many of the papers presented contribute significantly to the business knowledge base.

The conference attracts hundreds of leading scholars from leading universities and principal executives and politicians from all over the world with the participation or intervention of Presidents, Prime Ministers, Ministers, Company CEOs, Presidents of Chambers, and other leading figures.

This year the conference attracted over 270 people from over 50 different countries. Academics, practitioners, researchers and Doctoral students throughout the world submitted original papers for conference presentation and for publication in this Book. All papers and abstracts were double blind reviewed. The result of these efforts produced empirical, conceptual and methodological papers and abstracts involving all functional areas of business.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Many people and organizations are responsible for the successful outcome of the 10th Annual Conference of the EuroMed Academy of Business. Special thanks go to the Conference Co-Chairs Dr. Stefano Fontana, Dr. Silvia Solimene and Dr Daniela Couccia and the Sapienza University of Rome, in Rome, for accomplishing an excellent job.

It is acknowledged that a successful conference could not be possible without the special co-operation and care of the Track Chairs and Reviewers for reviewing the many papers that were submitted to this conference. Special thanks to the Session Chairs and Paper Discussants for taking the extra time to make this conference a real success.

The last but not the least important acknowledgment goes to all those who submitted and presented their work at the conference. Their valuable research has highly contributed to the continuous success of the conference.
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ABSTRACT

A company differentiates itself from its competitors if it offers something unique which buyers give a value that goes beyond ‘a simple offer based on low prices’ (M. E. Porter, 1980). The competitive advantage based on the differentiation is realized when the enterprise fails, by virtue of this uniqueness', to check on the market a premium price higher than the average of the market. Therefore identify capacity 'company specific sources of uniqueness' and useful only if those features have value for customers.

This example illustrates that social responsibility and sustainability is often a requirement that originates from a clear consumer demand and then moves top down. From consumer to retailers and from there further down to the food manufacturers and their suppliers of their main ingredients. The long term vision especially in a family business closely relates to the importance such companies give to social responsibility and sustainability. The main question is if these principles then also translate to customer value. Certainly in the B2B environment of the food industry, it is not easy to also translate these values to the end user, i.e. the consumer of the food product.

Innovation as a key factor in ingredients market: As in many other industries, innovation is a key criterion to develop successful business in the ingredient’s market. Nevertheless, there are specific challenges in a B2B environment. When bringing technical innovation to the market this may not always be visible for the end user and therefore these innovations do not necessarily pull their entire value through the value chain. (Tidd, Bessant, Pavitt,1977)

The social responsibility in food market: One could assume that the way innovation needs to carry through the entire value chain, that this would also be the case for social responsibility.

Consumer sensibility: In order to understand some consumer perception about the effort of the market in the direction of responsible innovation a survey was submitted in the north west of Italy, focused on young people studying at the university above all economics themes. The questionnaire was about the perceived importance of food ingredients and brands, the health and environment sensibilities and an additional expense to consider to buy safe, healthy and sustainable products.

A statistical multivariate analysis was performed, using the R statistical environment.
Keywords: Food Market, Innovation, Sustainable Differentiation, Social Responsibility, Consumer Behaviour, Empirical Survey, Multivariate Statistical Analysis.

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COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE IN AIRLINE MANAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

The airline industry is characterized by challenges in its management strategies, operating in an interesting environment.

First of all, the demand for transport of passengers and goods First, because air travel is increasing significantly: it is a growing sector. Secondly, the intervention of state authorities is strong (landing rights, flight paths, prices, ownership of capital). Most of all, the method of competition influences strategies: hub and spoke, or point-to-point routes? Finally, digital innovation is engaging audiences and improving customer experience.

The nature of the sector, in particular the fact that the plants are “mobile,” gives alliances based on shared code, marketing, terminals, airports and reservation systems. There are many alliances in this industry and their popularity is growing.

This paper analyzes the main key performance indicators for airlines, and the most important issue in Airline management.

Keywords: airline management competitive advantage, strategic alliances,

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THE TREND OF HEALTH CARE TOURISM: LITERATURE REVIEW

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3Department of Health Care, Faculty of Public Health, University “Ismail Qemali”, Vlore Albania

ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND

Health Tourism (HT) is a term used to describe the practice of travelling across international borders to obtain health care. HT one of the fastest growing segments in marketing, is becoming a worldwide multibillion-dollar industry today (Kai Ruggeri et al., 2015). According to World Health Organization (WHO), HT is a growing trend with enormous economic implications (Edward Kelley, 2013). Many countries are developing comprehensive plans to use this opportunity to improve their economy as well as the quality of medical care (Matthias Helble, 2011). Many capital-poor Third World nations in need of a profitable industry look to tourism as a solution to their economic problems. There are numerous (and often confusing) measures of the economic impact of tourism. The most important measures include tourism's impact on employment rates, GDP, and tourism's contribution to the balance of payments (i.e., repayment of foreign debts) (Harrison D, 1992). To attract more and more medical tourist from different countries the centre as well as the state government should take appropriate steps to improve all types of infrastructure facilities such as access roads, electricity, water supply, sewerage and telecommunications together with airlines, surface transport, safety, security, and accommodation. Apart from the above the government should also undertake capacity building programs to train paramedical and nonmedical staff of the service providers for cross-cultural sensitivities. The government should take steps in the role of a regulator and also as a facilitator of private investment in health care sector (Aparna Sharma et al., 2015).

OBJECTIVES

The primary objective was the review of published articles in relation to the trend of HT and identification of the main health problems associated with HT. Secondary objectives were to determine the benefits and the consequences of HT in health economy.

SEARCH METHODS
We searched the PubMed database for studies related to HT during the last 10 years. Research was independent of the three researchers. Key words were health tourism, medical tourism, trend, health economy, health problems related to HT, developing countries, health tourism marketing, as well as combination of them.

**SELECTION CRITERIA.**

The inclusion criteria were all published full articles or abstracts in English on the theme of *HT*. Review designs were not eligible for inclusion.

**DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS**

Authors independently created a list of studies found and later sort them based on the inclusion criteria, extracted data and checked them for accuracy. The categorization of studies found, was based on the authors, the year of publication, and the place where the study was conducted, the health problem associated with HT and the impact on the health economy.

**MAIN RESULTS**

More than 30 potential articles were identified, but we reviewed the results of thirteen articles related to the theme of interest. The review evidenced that the main health problems related to HT were reproductive tourism (4 articles); cosmetic surgery (3 articles); hip and knee replacements; spinal surgery, and ophthalmologic procedures (2 articles); dental tourism, renal transplantation; cardiothoracic surgery, general check-ups and medical consultations respectively with 1 article, (Table 1). The main drivers of the growth of inbound HT to developing countries were lower costs, shorter waiting periods, and better quality of care. Most studies indicate the benefits of medical tourism in developing countries and more developed countries reflect the consequences of HT.

**CONCLUSIONS**

The trend of HT, especially towards developing countries, is high. Implications for the practice in Albania, to carry out an evaluation study of how present is HT in the health economy and its impact on health and medical tourism marketing.
Table 1. A presentation of data analyses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The first author and the publishing year (health problem)</th>
<th>Objectives &amp; Methods</th>
<th>Main results &amp; conclusions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Yildiz, M. S., &amp; Khan, M. M. (2016) [reproductive tourism]</td>
<td>Comparison of cost, quality and effectiveness of in-vitro fertilization (IVF) in the USA and in Turkey. The data from Turkey were obtained from a hospital specializing in IVF services and the US data came from secondary sources.</td>
<td>Indicators of quality, cost and success rate in the Turkish hospital were found to be better than the corresponding indicators in US hospitals. It appears that cost and quality are the two most important factors affecting demand for health care services by international patients in Turkey.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Ombelet, W. (2011) [reproductive tourism]</td>
<td>The study discusses the global access to infertility care in developing countries, the differences between the developed and developing world, the access of diagnostic procedures and new reproductive technologies (ART) and different socio-cultural value surrounding procreation.</td>
<td>The great majority of infertile couples are residents of developing countries. Keystones in the successful implementation of infertility care in low-resource settings include simplification of ART procedures in order to establish accessible good quality infertility services at low cost.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Bassan, S., &amp; Michaelsen, M. A. (2013) [reproductive tourism]</td>
<td>The study analysis how the public media discern different uses of the term &quot;reproductive tourism in Israel and Germany and why patients choose HT.</td>
<td>Patients choose medical (and, as part of it reproductive) treatments abroad for different reasons: to avoid rationing, such as waiting periods in their countries of origin; to benefit from the low costs or higher quality of services overseas; to secure their privacy or to have access to services not provided in their home country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Deonandan, R. (2015) [reproductive tourism]</td>
<td>Analysis of recent trends in reproductive tourism and international surrogacy with focus in ethical considerations and challenges for policy, with the discussion of examples and case studies.</td>
<td>The international surrogacy, is one of the fastest-growing categories of cross-border reproductive care, is the act of infertile clients traveling internationally to engage the paid services of foreign surrogates to carry their babies to term. It is a multibillion-dollar global industry presenting unique legal, ethical, and risk-management challenges. Clients tend to be price-sensitive, middle-income individuals seeking services from surrogates who in the global market are thought to be of quite low socioeconomic status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Franzblau, L. E., &amp; Chung, K. C. (2013) [cosmetic surgery]</td>
<td>The examination of trends in the globalization of the cosmetic surgery market, to better understand the current situation and what plastic surgeons in the USA can expect. The article, explores both domestic and foreign factors that affect surgical tourism and the current state of this industry.</td>
<td>All research suggests that medical tourism is a growing industry. Economic forces, including supply, demand, and competition for market share, are affecting the global plastic surgery industry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Hanefeld, J. et al., (2013) [cosmetic surgery]</td>
<td>This paper reports findings from a study examining effect of inbound and outbound HT on the UK National Health System, by estimating volume of medical tourism and associated costs and benefits.</td>
<td>Findings demonstrate that contrary to some popular media reports, far from being a net importer of patients, the UK is now a clear net exporter of medical travellers. Three types of treatments for which patients commonly travel abroad are fertility treatment, cosmetic and bariatric surgery.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1. A presentation of data analyses (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The first author and the publishing year (health problem)</th>
<th>Objectives &amp; Methods</th>
<th>Main results &amp; conclusions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. Klein HJ. et al., (2017) [cosmetic surgery]</td>
<td>The study investigates the complications of cosmetic surgery tourism treated as well as to analyze arising costs for the health system. Between 2010 and 2014, retrospectively the study included all patients presenting with complications arising from cosmetic surgery abroad.</td>
<td>All patients were female with a mean age of 38.5 ± 11.3 years. Most procedures were performed in South America, Southeast or central Europe. Despite warnings regarding associated risks, cosmetic surgery tourism has become increasingly popular.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Crooks, V. A et al., (2012) [hip and knee replacements]</td>
<td>Fourteen Canadian medical tourists participated in semi-structured phone interviews, all of whom had gone abroad for hip or knee surgery to treat osteoarthritis.</td>
<td>Three distinctive attitudinal characteristics among participants were identified: comfortable health-related decision-makers; unwavering in their views about procedure necessity and urgency; and firm in their desires to maintain active lives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Turner, L. (2007) [hip and knee replacements; ophthalmologic procedures]</td>
<td>An article about medical tourism in Canada which analyses the delays for medical interventions and the international health-related travel.</td>
<td>Travel for treatment outside Canada might remain a minor, idiosyncratic option for Canadian patients. Many patients will not want to leave their family members and other loved ones to receive a hip replacement in India, for example. Some patients will prefer the frustration of waiting for treatment over whatever risk they associate with traveling abroad for care.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Al-Lamki, L. (2011). [orthopaedic conditions]</td>
<td>The study presents the results on a survey studying the medical tourism patterns of patients going abroad from the Al-Dakhilya Region of Oman.</td>
<td>10% of the respondents went for treatment plus tourism, and 2.5% were healthy. Most of the patients went to Thailand, and orthopaedic conditions were the most common indication for these patients to seek treatment abroad. There are several reasons, related to above, why patients choose to become medical tourists. For the Americans and Europeans the attraction is value, i.e. affordability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Akoh, J. A. (2012) [dental tourism, renal transplantation]</td>
<td>The study determines the state and outcome of renal transplantation associated with transplant tourism (TT) and the key challenges with such transplantation.</td>
<td>Several problems are associated with medical tourism. The most serious is the difficulty of evaluating the quality of care. Having access to detailed information about the quality of cardiac surgery programs internationally would increase the safety for patients who need cardiac care but cannot afford US prices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Jacobs, J. et al., (2013) [cardiothoracic surgery]</td>
<td>The study investigates the role of surgical tourism. The most common cardiac surgery services include coronary artery bypass, cardiac valve replacement or reconstruction, percutaneous coronary angioplasty and stenting etc.</td>
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To investigate the magnitude and characteristics of medical tourism in Thailand and the impact of such tourism on the Thai health system and economy with the check in 2010, the records of all visits to five private hospitals that are estimated to cover 63% of all foreign patient.

Of the medical tourists who attended the study hospitals, 64.8% came from the eastern Mediterranean region or Asia and 34% of them were treated for simple and uncomplicated conditions - i.e. general check-ups and medical consultations.

Keywords: healthcare tourism, trend, health economy, medical tourism marketing

REFERENCES

ONLINE BUYING INTENTIONS OF WINE CONSUMERS: THE ROLE OF KNOWLEDGE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

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ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The influence of social media in buying behaviour is attracting increasing interest from marketing scholars (Berthon et al., 2012; Hajli, 2014; Heinonen, 2008; Krishnamurthy e Dou, 2008). This influence is particularly important for complex products, such as wine. For these products, whose quality cannot be assessed before consumption, social media may represent an important external clue in driving consumers buying behaviour (Laverie et al., 2011; Szolnoki et al., 2014; Wilson and Quinton, 2012).

Extant research notes that social media may affect the several phases of the buying process, such as need recognition, information research, evaluation, buying and post-buying phases (Gatautis & Kazakevičiūtė, 2012), but scant attention has been deserved to the online buying intention. On the contrary, being able to depict if and to what extent social media may influence consumers online buying intention is crucial in developing new marketing strategies.

The aim of this study is to understand if and how using social media influences online buying intention of wine consumers. In particular, the study focuses on the moderating role of consumers’ knowledge. Knowledge is particularly important in consumer behaviour literature. Previous studies distinguish between objective and subjective knowledge (Aurier and N’gobo, 1999; Brucks, 1985; Dodd et al., 2005; Johnson and Bastian, 2007; Perrouy et al., 2008): objective knowledge refers to what a consumer actually knows, while subjective knowledge refers to “how much an individual thinks he knows about a product” (Johnson and Bastian, 2007: 186). We advance two hypotheses. First, the use of social media in information searching positively influences online buying intention (HP1). Second, objective and subjective knowledge moderates the social media-buying intention behaviour (HP2).

METHODOLOGY, DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

A total sample of 2597 wine consumers is used: 2202 responses are collected via an online survey (administered between January and June 2016) and 395 responses are collected offline (control
The dependent variable (Wine_online_buying_intention) refers to online wine buying behaviour and it assumes 5 values (never; less than once/month; occasionally: 3-4 times/months; regularly: more than once/week; all days). The independent variable refers to the use of social media and it is represented by a 4-items construct that look at the degree of use of social media (on a Likert scale) for searching wine information. The items are drawn from Bruwer e Wood (2005), Chen et al. (2011), Quinton e Harridge-March (2008), Thach (2009), Reyneke et al. (2011), Wilson e Quinton (2012). The moderating variable refers to the objective and subjective knowledge and they are measured by multi-items (Likert scale) based on Dodd et al. (2005) and Vigar-Ellis et al. (2015). On the basis of objective and subjective knowledge we identify 4 clusters of respondents: “Experts” (high subjective and high objective knowledge - HH), “Self-overevaluated” (high subjective and low objective knowledge - HL), “Modest” (low subjective and high objective knowledge - LH) and “Aware” (low subjective and low objective knowledge – LL). Control variables (age, gender, salary, educational level, frequency of online sales, wine consumption frequency, wine buying frequency, wine average price) are considered in the final model. Convergent and discriminant validities are performed for all multi-items constructs.

A multinomial logistic model is used. This model is preferred to the ordinal logistic regression since the parallel regression assumption is violated. Table 1 presents the results.

From the analysis, both hypothesis 1 and hypothesis 2 are supported. Consequently, the use of social media in information searching positively influences online buying intention. (Objective and subjective) knowledge moderates the social media-buying intention behaviour. The higher effect is for “Experts” consumers, i.e. those with high subjective and high objective knowledge, while the lowest effect is for “Aware” consumers, i.e. low subjective and low objective knowledge. The analysis shows that when knowledge grows, the influence of social media on buying intention grows. The post-hoc analysis also shows that the social media-buying intention relationship is influenced by sociodemographic factors (age and gender) and consumption-related factors (e.g. average price).

CONCLUSIONS

This study advances extant research on the influence of social media on online buying intentions, showing how social media use positively influences the online buying intentions. In particular, it extends previous studies in analysing the moderating role of subjective and objective knowledge. Managerial implications are threefold. First, despite e-commerce still does not represent the main acquiring channel according to the sampled respondents, social media may influence this choice. Second, from the data collected it seems that consumers who tend to acquire online are Experts, who are looking for medium-high or high wine quality. Consequently, wine marketing strategies could aim...
at increasing knowledge levels through information sharing on social media. Lastly, the study suggests that age has a quadratic effects and it is particularly important for those consumers who use social media. Future studies should further investigate the relationship between age, social media and use of online channels.

Keywords: online, wine, buying intentions, social media

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