

## Review

of the *member* of the dissertation council for the dissertation of Mahmoud Ibraheam Kotb Saleh on the topic: Managing tourism resorts through destination social responsibility and information adequacy lenses: Attribution theory perspective”, submitted for the degree of *candidate* of economic sciences (*candidate* of sciences in economics) in scientific specialty 5.2.6. Management.

### A. Relevance of the dissertation topic

Industries forming the world economy go through their cycles of life, the process is uneven. Developing industries can be very attractive for businessmen due to big opportunities of business development related to their market size increasing, not necessarily high level of competitiveness and comparatively high level of profitability. There are several dimensions of industries development – expansion to new territories, appearance and implementation of new technologies, transformation of demand reflecting new markets appearance, etc. Despite of some issues (such as the COVID-19 pandemia) the tourism industry can be recognized as an intensively developing one. Currently new markets are appearing and starting developing, as some samples of them can be denominated cultural tourism, science tourism, pilgrimage tourism, etc. Looking at those markets more intensively we could conclude that the markets are based on organizing of moving through the world of some amounts/groups of people who previously traveled for their own objectives achieving. When a number of these participants (and a volume of their expenses) has achieved some level, sizes of corresponding markets become interesting for businessmen. As tourism markets are diversified, they are sensitive to different economic, natural demographic and political influences. However, some economic/marketing sources of influence can be accepted as common ones.

So, we can describe main features of contemporary development of the tourism industry as appearance of new opportunities/places inside previously existing types of tourism (for instance new destinations for beach rest such as Oman,

etc.) and new types of tourism appearance (for instance, science tourism). New technologies (first of all information technologies) put strong influence on many industries including the tourism one. Definitely, IT-methods have opened enormous perspectives in international tourism management – from a point of view of providing clients by multimedia information on traveling opportunities as well as of hotel and tickets booking. It has assisted involving in the industry big contingents of clients and that could be accepted as one of the important mechanisms of the industry growing. Probably, information technologies could distract from a big stream of clients a small part of people preferring virtual travels.

Big revenues and comparatively high profits in the tourism industry attract a number of market participants fighting for their market shares. It explains a high level of competition in the industry, the rivals use different tools for achieving their business goals – new products/services, innovative technologies and business models, information services, etc. Definitely, deeper understanding of the customer groups preferences, their decision-making criteria and models can be significantly useful for producing successful strategies.

Customers' behavior being a basis for demand and market size changing can be examined by different instruments and interpreted from a point of view of different concepts and theories. An approach used by the author of the thesis can be estimated as a fruitful one as it gives important results which can be used for further implementation into strategies produced by tourism markets players.

## **B. The novelty of the results received by the author**

We can identify the following main results of the research:

1. The author received perspective from theoretical and practical points of view results of implementing the attribution theory to examining mechanisms of possible customers' experience forming.
2. Identification of the differences in attribution mechanisms' role in different groups of customers directed to leisure, cultural and adventure tourism types.

3. Identification of role of the corporate social responsibility theory and information quality as powerful factors influencing customers' experience.
4. Expanding a group of attributes involved into the shifting mechanisms by such additional factors like tourist gender, etc.
5. Enriching of the attribution theory by a new dimension - stability and controllability – which can be taken into account when developing strategies of customers attracting.

The thesis brings an important theoretical contribution related to some parts of the attribution theory updating and its implementation in the tourism industry with some relation to the corporate social responsibility theory. A practical significance of the thesis is related to opportunities of the new results implementation when elaborating and realizing strategies directed on customers attracting as well as resorts quality improving and managing international resorts in coordination with target audiences' expectations.

### **C. The validity of scientific data**

The thesis consists of introduction, five chapters, conclusion, list of references although lists of figures/tables and two appendices.

1. The author formulated the research objectives correctly in coordination with possibilities of research methods he used in the scientific process.
2. The author based his research on several correctly formulated hypotheses which were the base for choosing research methods.
3. The author analyzed a big volume of publications of leading specialists on the scientific issues related to the topic of the thesis.
4. Examining the demographic factors' influence the author used a full-fledged list of demographic factors (pp. 54, 246).
5. The author demonstrated a careful approach to the surveys constructing and used a pre-test measurement before distributing the surveys (pp. 49-60).
6. The author demonstrated a high level of validity and reliability of the data based on Confirmatory factor analysis using (pp. 54-55).

#### **D. Critical remarks**

Despite of the high theoretical and methodological levels of the research it would be possible to give some discussing/critical remarks related to the thesis content.

1. Each research is restricted by several important factors, one of them could be a volume of the thesis. Despite of that it would be useful to outline borders of the examined objects more precisely or to explain a structure of sample of the examined objects.

2. Similarly, it would be useful to strengthen a basis a choice of the types of tourism examined (p. 12).

3. The author could pay more attention to discussing a comparative importance of the factors he examined with other factors and canals influencing the experience of the tourists and their readiness to give advices to others.

The remarks listed above do not reduce a significance of the findings presented by the author and an input of the thesis into management theories. A high general theoretical and practical level of the thesis confirms an expected professional qualification of the author.

Considering the above, I believe that Mahmoud Ibraheam Kotb Saleh's dissertation on the topic: "Managing tourism resorts through destination social responsibility and information adequacy lenses: Attribution theory perspective" meets the requirements of specialty 5.2.6. Management;

The dissertation is a scientific qualification work that resolves a scientific problem important for the development of the relevant field of science.

No violations of paragraphs 9 and 11 of the Order No.11181/1 as of November 19, 2021 "On the Procedure for Awarding Academic Degrees at St. Petersburg State University" have been detected.

The dissertation meets the criteria of dissertations for the academic degree of candidate of sciences, established by the specified Order. The dissertation is recommended for the defense at St. Petersburg State University.

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