

## "SPECIAL EXPERIENCE" – INFLUENCE OF PERSONAL ENGAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY IN HOTELS

**Tamara Floričić**

### **Abstract**

**Purpose** – The aim of the research is to consider and assess sustainability and the importance of personal engagement of tourists in sustainable and socially responsible activities in hotels. How prepared are modern consumers to get personally engaged and to participate in sustainable activities in hotel and are they ready to financially support sustainable charitable initiatives? The subject of research is sustainable sensitivity that originates from modern tourism trends and influence competitiveness in the hospitality business.

**Design** – The survey involved evaluation of the readiness of youngsters, as potential consumers of hospitality services, to personally engage in sustainable activities in hotels during their tourist stay and the analysis of their behaviour compared with middle age consumers segment.

**Methodology** – The research, which has established new scientific comprehension, was conducted by using the questionnaires and interviews processed by statistical methodology of quantitative analysis (mean value, standard deviation), as well as qualitative methods such as synthesis, comparison, analysis and other scientific methods of research. The methodology includes a comparative analysis which explores personal engagement that provoke special experience and readiness for financial support, within the sustainability concept.

**Approach** – For the needs of the research, a questionnaire was devised, which explores the aspects of personal engagement of the youth segment as future tourists in socially responsible activities in hotels during their tourist stay. This segment was chosen because it is evident that the changes in society and value perception have altered; young consumers tend to seek special experiences related to personal engagement.

**Findings** – Sustainable tourism involves policies, practices and programmes which take into account the expectations of young people as future tourists in terms of sustainable activities and the involvement of hotels in sustainable social initiatives. The author's intention was to, both, assess attitudes and readiness of youth segment for personal engagement and, to explore its readiness for financial support of sustainable initiatives. The research was conducted by examining two different population segments so that the quality activities could be organised.

**Originality of contribution** – The new findings achieved through qualitative and quantitative research confirm the purpose of the paper which is oriented towards defining the importance of personal engagement which impacts special experience. The paper suggests a new approach in creation of tourism experience, partly related with some aspects of volunteering tourism which could enhance cultural understanding, tourist experience and sustainable activities.

**Keywords** personal engagement, special experience, social sustainability, youth segment

### **INTRODUCTION**

Understanding the way in which tourists on their visits can experience places, i.e. attractions, is of essential importance for the study of tourism consumption and the modern syntagm shows that to consume tourism means to consume experiences. Studies of tourism literature look at tourism experience from different perspectives, including

the factors of demand, tourist motivation, tourist typology and questions relating to authenticity. However, as tourism continued to expand in proportion and scope and as tourist needs and expectations thus became more versatile and more complex as an answer to the transformation in the dynamic socio-cultural world of tourism, the importance of experience has grown.

For every participant, the aim of travel is realisation of a desired or expected experience which, for each tourist, is individual and unique. Mossberg (2007) looks at how a tourist experience is perceived as a contrast to everyday experiences or their complete opposite (peak experience), while experiences which are a result of an extension of everyday life to tourist travel (accommodation, food, transport) are defined as an episodic consumer experience. Tourists in the destination get involved in various activities which affect their perception and enjoyment in so-called "pseudo-experiences" or, on the other hand, encourage their search for what is "authentic". Pearce (2005) and McCannell (1999) examine authenticity and argue that the tourism industry creates scenes that are "staged or fake authenticity". For each person, tourist experience is unique and personal. However, how prepared are tourists to involve themselves in the actual creation of the tourist experience? A large number of tourists are satisfied with the traditional concept of tourist service provision, but, due to new concepts of spending a holiday and to new trends, the image of tourism is being dynamically changed. Tourists show interest and willingness for personal engagement in tourism destination activities, from agricultural activities to being involved in socially responsible initiatives aimed at supporting deprived groups and different aspects of culture and heritage are affirmed.

## **1. PERSONAL EXPERIENCE AND EXPECTATIONS OF TOURISTS WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF SUSTAINABILITY**

In the past, tourists travelled to get away from their familiar surroundings and to rest in some unknown destination. In doing so, tourists were less interested in the local culture of the places they were staying in and, due to self-orientation; their primary motivation was focused on rest and relaxation. They did not care about what impression they left on the local population, as their only goal was to get away from their everyday routine. Modern tourism trends describe today's tourist as an individual, pining for knowledge and experience, who visits locations which tourists have never visited before and who wants to be "behind the scenes" or "on the scene", i.e. take part in the direct delivery of the experience.

Jurin (2016) describes modern tourists and says that they are: individual, subjective, subject to change, proactive and interactive. Tourists want to know how other people live and they visit places which tourists have not visited so far. Jurin (2016) discusses how stakeholders who plan tourist experiences need to be focused on planning of every specific detail and systematic organisation and, although improvisation is discouraged on the one hand, in the phase of delivery, but room for tourists' self-expression should be left, on the other. Tourist experience represents a total of expectations, which, within themselves, contain a particular promise and effort to deliver that promise to tourists in a specific location, hotel, at a specific time, in accordance with what had been advertised.

Apart from the main classification of experiences to 4Es: entertainment, educational, escapist and esthetic, Pine and Gilmore (1999) also discuss how sustainable competitive advantage can be achieved only if a unique and unforgettable experience is offered to a consumer. This can only be done if every work activity is treated as a "performance" and every job as a "stage".

Through tourist experience, tourists are introduced into a dimension of empathy, where they look for authenticity, a possibility of personalisation and individuality, claims Jurin and adds that, reflecting on the listed tourist typologies, it is necessary to know where and how to intrigue, delight, educate, relax and emotionally bind tourists, as well as at what point in the course of the experience delivery to do so.

Linking personal expectations and special experiences, Šuran (2016) identifies four basic types of tourists who perceive differently the experience of a tourist stay: mass tourists who leave it to mediators to organise their tourist stay, followed by tourists who visit the same or similar localities as mass tourists, but with independence and cooperation with experts in some selective niches, developing a tourist experience within those goals of organisation. As the third type, Šuran (2016) emphasises independent tourist explorers and tourist wanderers, who live completely outside tourist organised routes and who are looking for a life experience which will be entirely different from their everyday life.

Numerous authors deal with the topic area of special experiences in tourism. Kunst, I. (2008), Vitasovic, A. (2012) and Poljanec Borić, S. (2011) study the economy of experience as a distinguishing factor in achievement of competitiveness in tourism. This is an extension of the service economy; emotions have become the key aspect in tourism, so investment is needed in and promotion of projects which, as a rule, do not have any direct material or financial gain, but whose value lies in the realisation of experiences in tourists, creating a special atmosphere and memory. For this reason, claims Schmitt (1999), marketing and resources should be directed towards investment in sustainable projects of different kinds and levels, as the quality of hotels and tourist products and services in the destination are no longer sufficient and, in decision making, subjective factors of individual consumers who gravitate towards inclusion and sustainability, is predominant. Tourist destinations and tourist receptive facilities, hotels and other accommodation capacities are perceived as stages for creation and management of experiences. As a creator of experiences, tourist animation is recognised as dynamic communication within the hotel structure, giving tourist experience the function of a bearer of experience and perception of a hotel as a tourist attraction (Cerović, 1999). Furthermore, a hotel obtains a sociological connotation as a part of the destination setting and becomes a place of meeting and discovery, as well as of a new social dialogue.

Lekić (2014) discusses how experience emanates from the interaction between an individual consumer and a staged event, i.e. it depends on the consumer's state of mind in the sense of experience thematising, matching of impressions with positive characteristics, elimination of negative characteristics, and creation of experiences through souvenirs and inclusion of all 5 senses: sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste. In further consideration, Lekić emphasises the importance of reaching rhythmic satisfaction, "commitas" by means of intensively rhythmic activities: dance, singing, playing an instrument, which stimulate extraction of the hormone endorphin, the so-

called “happiness hormone” in the brain. Moreover, as an aesthetic experience of comic, humour affects artificial conversion of a part of reality and the experience of relaxation and freedom. Synergic emotions affect the feeling of satisfaction and, through consumption and the “WOM” (word of mouth) effects, they reflect on the marketing and economic aspects of a hospitality company business and competitiveness.

Furthermore, Lekić et al. (2014) present the importance of storytelling as a tool through which heritage is presented and which affects the construction of a narrative identity of a hotel, restaurant and other hospitality facilities, so-called storyline. Using further strategies, the story is set in a desired period; during its course it is managed by means of rhythm and narrative tension (timing), the tourist landmark message is accentuated as the main tourist attraction (framing) and a digital and promotional hybrid network is built, by means of which attention is drawn and marketing achieved in desirable market niches. Stories can include different heritage aspects, from ways of living and working, folklore, gastronomy, skills, myths, legends, music and dance, to plant collecting and agricultural activities, and they have to be conceived in a mutual narrative synchronicity “space of flow”. Visible and invisible elements which hide a story are also accentuated (Lekić et al., 2014): oral tradition and folk literature, cultural space – mythical landscape, historical re-enactment, customs and habits, environmental knowledge and economic knowledge.

## **2. YOUTH CONSUMERS AND SUSTAINABILITY**

The classification of youth tourism travellers includes first of all students under 26 years of age, with a high level of education who, although having a low level of income, because they are still studying, demonstrate preparedness to work and save money on their journeys and before them, in order to increase their financial solvency and over half of them identify themselves as travellers, a third as "backpackers" and around a fifth of them, as tourists (Floričić, Pavia, 2017). The Millennials, as leaders of a new generation of consumers, tend to choose hotels and destinations that develop sustainable and responsible operations and activities.

The subgroup of Millennials, Generation Z and iGeneration, as a generation of young to middle - aged travellers, are considered as a group whose demand will form the tourism of the future. Richard and Wilson (2003:2,6) analyse that trends in youth tourism in recent years are of a kind that they are favourable for rapid growth and development. Their generational common points include: self-confidence, orientation towards entrepreneurship, awareness of healthy life and they are prepared to listen to and implement changes. When buying, they are guided by image and emotions, as well as by purchase of brands which reflect their expectations and their lifestyle and, in communication, they use multi-communication channels. When travelling, they rarely travel alone; they are team-oriented and big cause supporters, with great influence on others (Jurin, 2016).

The desire to meet new cultures represents the main motivation factor, followed by the factor of excitement and entertainment and knowledge improvement, which demonstrates the desire to get acquainted with other and new cultures and implementation of technological innovations. Young travellers valorise sustainability claims Ortega in the UNWTO report (2011). Richards (2007) and Daly (2013) study modern sustainable and technological trends in youth tourism.

Sustainable development includes the change in the structure of global production and expenditure, while not disturbing eco systems. The concept was created as a counter-balance to mass, consumer and unsustainable tourism. Developing tourism in a sustainable way, or according to the sustainable development criteria, means ensuring benefits for the local community, both in the social and economic senses. The concept comprehends the optimal use of resources which constitutes the key element of the tourism development, respects social and cultural local community authenticity, ensuring a long-term economic activity for the benefit of the stakeholders. The resource management is researched in the manner that basic economic, social and aesthetic requirements are satisfied, at the same time preserving the cultural integrity, fundamental ecological processes and biodiversity, defines Berger (2008).

Sustainable tourism tends to be harmonised with the local community, i.e. the population of the locality in which tourist activity takes place (Swarbrooke, 1999; Weaver, 2006) as well as sustainable management of festivals, congresses and gatherings (Pressbury and Edwards, 2010; Musgrave, 2011). Considering the components of social sustainability, Klarić (2011) lists: changes in the structure of the population, migration movements, labour problems, change of cultural identity and quality of tourist experience. He explains that sustainable tourism development uses natural and cultural heritage to increase the number of visitors and profits, but in such a way that it is also saved for future generations.

Within the framework of sociological sustainability, cultural sustainability is developed, which includes the method of cultural heritage utilisation and management.

The main goals of cultural tourism include: prevention and preservation of local cultural heritage, encouragement of quality and diversity of cultural products, promotion of integrational culture and tourism policy, capitalisation of local particularities and advantages and assurance of quality of life and respect of local population's cultural identity.

Visitors have direct contact with unique social, historical and heritage characteristics of the destination they visit, as well as with its local lifestyle, which assists them with their perception of the present with a more complex understanding, discuss Pavia et.al (2014). Sustainability of cultural and tourist projects, programmes or products is based on a precise assessment of whether it is the cultural and heritage or tourist side of the partnership which prevails as strategy, i.e. managerial plan of development and its implementation will be determined accordingly. Synergic partnership among tourism and all professions dealing in protection and preservation of material and non-material cultural heritage is important for the sustainable development of cultural tourism. This also includes valorisation of folklore performances, autochthonous gastronomy,

revitalisation and renewal of traditional crafts and traditional construction, as well as the overall cultural heritage.

Developing tourism in tourist destinations raises local awareness about the financial value of natural and cultural resources. Developing tourism in a sustainable way stimulates the feeling of pride for local and traditional heritage, as well as interest in its preservation (Pavia et.al. 2014).

### **3. RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION – EFFECT OF TOURIST PERSONAL ENGAGEMENT IN THE CONCEPT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

In consideration of inclusion and participation of tourists in activities and processes which are created by either hotel experience – animation teams, DMOs or other stakeholders, personal engagement distinguishes four levels of inclusion: passive participation, absorption, active participation and inclusion.

The life of a modern and urbanised person reflects on his/her needs and tourist motivation. Modern technologies facilitate information accessibility to all tourism spheres, thus representing tourist attraction resource values, as a sensitive and reactive category. The analysis conducted by Bruns et al. (2015) indicates the increased willingness of tourists to participate in sustainable initiatives when hotels offer incentives, such as loyalty programme points for participating in environmental programmes.

The attitudes towards the perception of socio-cultural sustainable activities organised in a hotel and preparedness of tourists to be personally involved have been studied using the results of a research survey which author conducted in April 2015 in pre-season period. The results present comparative platform for better understanding and valuation of obtained results

Users of tourist offers from the areas of the town of Pula in Istria and from the Kvarner area (Opatija and Krk) were surveyed. The research was conducted on random sample and 52% of participants were female and 48% were male. The total sample numbered 196 questionnaires. The majority of the researched population were Italian, German and Austrian tourists and 55% of them were middle aged persons with formed attitudes and perceptions of sustainable activities (Pavia, Floričić and Cerović, 2015).

**Table 1: Attitudes of tourists towards the importance of sustainable initiatives in the tourist destination – Middle age population**

	S1	S2	S3	S4
Total - N	196	196	196	196
%	100	100	100	100
<b>Average grade</b>	<b>3,88</b>	<b>3,41</b>	<b>4,19</b>	<b>2,83</b>
<b>Standard dev.</b>	<b>1,88</b>	<b>1,07</b>	<b>0,87</b>	<b>1,41</b>
S1 – Knowing the fact that, by choosing a certain destination and hotel, I am contributing to nature preservation and sustainable development, it would represent added value to my tourist stay. S2 – I am willing to give a small financial donation for planned and organised activities in the destination. S3 – I would behave more responsibly than usual in a tourist destination that is developing responsibly and cares about the environment. S4 – When I have the opportunity, I personally and physically engage in sustainable activities.				

Source: Author's contribution, from: Pavia, N, Floričić, T. and Cerović, M., (2015). Sustainable Sensitivity of Tourists and Sustainable Initiatives in Tourism Destination, 3rd International Scientific Conference Tourism in Southern and Eastern Europe 2015, pp 245-259.

Evaluation of results shown that 42% of respondents were aware of the fact that their decision to choose a particular tourism destination and hotel, which contributes to the preservation and sustainable development, would represent added value to their tourist stay, 24% of them were fully aware of the fact of what such a decision entails, while 30% of respondents were of the opinion that such awareness partially affects their decision. Only 4% of respondents show disagreement. Evaluating S2, it is learnt that 16% of respondents expressed their full readiness to make a donation for a planned and organised sustainable activity, 32% of them were prepared to make a donation, 30% of respondents partially expressed their willingness to make a donation, while 18% of respondents did not agree with making a donation. Strong disagreement shown 4% of replies. 41% of respondents answered that they would also behave more responsibly than usual in a tourism destination which develops responsibly and takes care of the environment and 41% of respondents accepted that statement, while 14% of them partially accepted that statement and 4% disagreed with it. 28% of respondents personally and physically fully agreed with, when they can, being involved in sustainable activities, 26% of respondents agreed, while 18% of respondents partially agreed with their involvement, 16% did not accept it and 12% of respondents did not accept at all their involvement in sustainable activities.

Secondly, the results of the author's primary, original research which analysed the attitudes of potential tourists and their perception of organised sustainable activities in the tourism destination, as well as readiness to get involved in them, are presented.

Research was conducted in January 2018, in the tourism cluster of South Istria which includes destinations mostly Pula (89 replies), Medulin (7 replies), Ližnjan, Barban, Marčana Vodnjan and Fažana, (altogether 6 replies) on a random sample of 102 young potential tourism product consumers. Data has been gathered by personal communication and filled questionnaire which was available in paper format. The data were processed with scientific methodology which included both types of methods, quantitative such as statistical evaluation and qualitative methods: analysis, synthesis, description, generalisation, specialisation, historic method and others. The research is indicative in the sense of examination of levels of education of the Croatian society youth population and their preparedness to self-sacrifice and engage themselves.

**Table 2: General characteristics of examinees – Youth population random sample**

Age characteristics	%	Under 19	%	20-25	%	Over 26	%
N = 102	100	28	27	67	66	7	7
Gender characteristics	%	Male population		Female population			
		N	%	N	%		
N=102	100	40	39,2	62	60,8		
Educational status	%	Students		Non- students			
		N	%	N	%		
N=102	100	87	85,3	15	14,7		

Source: Author's research

The questions which the respondents were asked were based on the postulates of socio-cultural sustainability and on the theses of experiences and special experiences due to personal engagement in sustainable activities which can be organised at the hotel accommodation facilities. The attitudes were examined using level of agreement Likert scale (a scale up to grade 5), where the highest grade represents the highest level of agreement. The research results are shown in table 3 below.

**Table 3: Attitude and preferences of youth consumers – Personal engagement and sustainability**

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7
Grade 5 - N	35	20	15	7	20	28	16
%	34.3	19.6	14.7	6.9	19.6	27.5	15.7
Grade 4 - N	35	27	30	26	17	39	38
%	34.3	26.5	29.4	25.5	16.7	38.2	37.3
Grade 3 - N	29	32	29	30	27	17	25
%	28.4	31.4	28.4	29.4	26.5	16.7	24.5
Grade 2 - N	1	15	16	22	17	27	10
%	1.0	14.7	15.7	21.6	16.7	26.5	9.8
Grade 1 - N	2	8	12	17	21	11	13



	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7
%	2.0	7.8	11.8	16.7	20.6	10.8	12.7
Total - N	102	102	102	102	102	102	102
%	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<b>Average grade</b>	<b>3.97</b>	<b>3.32</b>	<b>3.19</b>	<b>2.82</b>	<b>2.97</b>	<b>3.61</b>	<b>3.30</b>
<b>Standard dev.</b>	<b>0,92</b>	<b>1,18</b>	<b>1,23</b>	<b>1,18</b>	<b>1,41</b>	<b>1,26</b>	<b>1,23</b>
S1 – For me it is important that the hotel I am staying in conducts sustainable operations. S2 – I would like to personally join in sustainable activities in the hotel. S3 – I would like to personally join in an educational workshop in the hotel about socio-cultural values. S4 – I would be ready to pay more for my accommodation if I knew that this hotel supports sustainable activities in the destination. S5 – I would be willing to personally donate some money through a humanitarian campaign organised in the hotel I am staying in. S6 – I believe that multiculturalism and multi-ethnicity of personnel at the hotel presents values which are important for the development of a quality offer. S7 – For me, multiculturalism and multi-ethnicity of other hotel guests are important and I appreciate it.							

Source: Authors' research

The research results point out that young people recognise the importance of staying in hotels as accommodation facilities which contribute to the community through implementation of sustainable activities which was the case for 68.6% of them, while 28.4% expressed indifference. 46.1% of respondents expressed their willingness to personally get involved in sustainable activities at the hotel, while 22.5% did not agree with this statement. When considering the possibilities of involvement in education workshops at the hotel, 44.1% of respondents expressed their interest in getting personally engaged, 28.3% expressed their neutral attitude and 27.5% of them were not prepared to learn about the values and culture of the destination through personal involvement in educational and cultural activities. When examining the financial aspect, a relatively low level of agreement and preparedness was evidenced to pay higher prices, with awareness of the fact that a part of the said finances is allocated to supporting humanitarian and other socially responsible activities in the destination, through which socially deprived groups are helped (32.4%), 29.4% of them did not have a defined attitude about it, while 38.3% of respondents were not prepared to take part financially in socially responsible activities. The intensity of disagreement was even higher concerning the statement related to preparedness to make direct financial donations, by means of which socially responsible activities in the tourism destination would be supported (37.3%). Although there were 26.5% of respondents with an indifferent attitude, the share of persons who would, by their direct financial donation, support sustainable initiatives is still higher. Examination of multiculturalism and multiethnicity at the hotel, both of guests and personnel was another of research. 65.7% of respondents believe that multiculturalism and multiethnicity contribute to the development of the hotel offer quality. Also, 53% of respondents believe that, through sustainable activities,

multiculturality and multiethnicity of other guests at the hotel contribute to the exchange of knowledge, cultures and tolerance.

Further, for the purposes of a comparative testing of the attitudes, the mean grade has been calculated for certain statements, which points to the strength and influence of them in the behaviour of tourists, as a demand segment. For deeper examination and verification of result the dispersion is tested and standard deviation calculated. In evaluation of attitudes of middle age tourists towards the importance of sustainable initiatives in the tourist destination, the results show that average values adequately represent obtained results, especially the statements related with personal financial contribution (STDEV: 1,07) and modified personal behaviour in accordance with sustainable initiative and comportment of stakeholders and other tourists in accommodation facility and destination (STDEV: 0,87).

Observed from the aspect of different market segments, the mean values of the quoted two statements including willingness for personal engagement and the financial aspects which evaluate the readiness of tourists for financial donation and help, are observed and discussed. Parameters taken in consideration are the mean values that directly show preparedness of consumers for sustainable activities and personal engagement taken in consideration and compared with evenly distributed expected frequencies.

Comparing the data on future tourists' statements (3.32), i.e. the youth population, in the sense of personal engagement in sustainable activities with the grade of middle-age population tourists staying in hotels (2.83), the conclusion is highlighted that the younger population is more prepared to personally take part in sustainable activities and socially responsible interaction. On the other hand, through donations, the middle-age population is more prepared to contribute financially, providing direct help to socially deprived groups (3.41) as opposed to the youth segment, which, when it comes to financial expenditure, expressed the lowest level of readiness in the ranking of overall attitudes (2.97). The results could be discussed within acknowledgment that young people dispose with limited budgets and obtained value is a result of limited financial funds that they compensate with stronger initiative and willingness for personal engagement.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Today's travellers, participants in tourist migrations, wish to enrich their stay with experience and authentic events, inspiration and stories which they will enthusiastically recount to their families, friends and colleagues. They wish to experience the local culture and, through it, a spirit of autochthony and traditional values, something unique and original, which will stick in their mind and achieve recognisability of the tourist stay in the destination outside the uniform frameworks of impersonal offers.

This can be realised in several ways: in a form of activities or sightseeing, tasting of local specialities prepared with autochthonous ingredients, helping and donating financial means to the local community and through personal engagement and participation in different activities in the accommodation facility or tourism destination. Through various

activities, workshops, excursions and initiatives, the local culture becomes an inspiration for special experiences.

The results of the conducted research point to the readiness of younger population tourists to get personally engaged in sustainable and responsible activities in the sense of meeting of their needs for self-actualisation, assertion and achievement of a feeling of pride due to personal contribution or engagement. On the other hand, the research on the attitudes of young people towards financial donations, on helping sensitive social groups and on paying higher prices, out of which a part of funds would be allocated for sustainable activities, shows that the younger population of tourists is not prepared to do so. The answer can be found in the poorer financial strength of young people, who were mostly students. However, by comparative research on the attitudes of the younger and older populations, a stronger disproportion is evident in evaluation of this aspect, as well as in evaluation of the level of readiness itself for personal engagement. In conclusion, knowledge is highlighted that the youth segment involves itself more readily in personal engagement than the middle-aged population, while the attitude towards and preparedness for financial donations is opposite.

The characteristics of the sample, when considering it as potential consumers segment, present possible limitation of research because it does not guarantee that the consumers will actually behave in the way they expressed their attitudes. The research points to the solution of another analysis of youth tourists' behaviour, of those who actually visit destination and are involved in sustainable activities in tourist destination. The comparative research could present platform of deeper analysis of emissive and receptive markets and attitudes of youth segment.

Hotel companies recognise the importance of implementation of interactive programmes and creative workshops in a hotel's special offer. By means of organised hotel animation, programmes and activities are developed, which acquaint tourists with the values of non-material heritage related to the culture of living and working and other socio-cultural tourism resources. However, given the fragility of the authenticity and the market impulse for modification of authenticity, programmes should be created in line with the concept of sustainable development with affirmation of market competitiveness and attractiveness, taking into consideration the demand trends, interests and models of behaviour. In the same way, it is possible to influence the offer competitiveness and achievement of synergic effects of socio-cultural and economic sustainability.

## REFERENCES

- Berger R. (2008), Strategy Consultants: *Studija o konceptu održivog razvoja – Hrvatska i svijet*, Zagreb.
- Bruns-Smith A., Choy, A., Chong, H., Verma, R., (2015), "Environmental Sustainability in the Hospitality Industry: Best Practices, Guest Participation, and Customer Satisfaction", *Cornell University Study*, Vol. 15, No. 3, Cornell University, USA, pp. 6-16.
- Cerović, Z. (1999), Animacija u hotelijersko-turističkoj ponudi, HUH, Opatija, [http://www.atlas-euro.org/pages/pdf/FINAL\\_Industry\\_Report.pdf](http://www.atlas-euro.org/pages/pdf/FINAL_Industry_Report.pdf), [accessed on 07.01.18].
- Floričić, T., Pavia, N. (2017), "Innovations as drivers of hotel attractiveness", *Proceedings of IMES 2017 Conference*, University of economics Prague, Czech Republic, pp. 231-248.
- Jurin, E. (2016), *Priručnik-PCE-i-premium-ponude*, Croatian Tourism Board - Hrvatska turistička zajednica, Zagreb.

- Jurin, E. (2016), *Priručnik o doživljajima*, Hrvatska turistička zajednica, Zagreb.
- Klarić, Z. (2011), *Elementi održivosti u turizmu*. Institut za turizam, Zagreb.
- Kušen, E. (2002), *Turistička atrakcijska osnova*, Institut za turizam, Zagreb.
- Lekić, R., Trezner, Ž., Mance, N. (2014), "DMC as creator of memorable experience in tourist destination", *Trends in Tourism and Hospitality Management*, Conference proceedings, Perić, Jože (ur.), Opatija, Croatia: Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management, Opatija.
- MacCannell, D. (1999), *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class*, University of California Press, Berkeley & Los Angeles.
- Mossberg, L. (2007), "A Marketing Approach to the Tourist Experience", *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, Vol. 7, Issue 1, pp. 59-74.
- Musgrave, J. (2011), "Moving towards responsible events management", *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes*, 3 (3), pp. 258-274.
- Pavia, N. and Floričić, T. and Cerović, M. (2015), "Sustainable Sensitivity of Tourists and Sustainable Initiatives in Tourism Destination", *3rd International Scientific Conference Tourism in Southern and Eastern Europe*, pp. 245-258.
- Pavia, N., Gržinić, J., Floričić, T. (2014), "The perception of gastronomic events within the framework of sustainable tourism development", *Sustainable Tourism VI*, Brebbia, C.A., Favro, S., Pineda, F.D. (ur.), Boston: WIT Press, pp. 277-289.
- Pearce, L. P. (2005), *Tourist Behaviour, Themes and Conceptual Schemes Aspects of Tourism*, Channel View Publications.
- Pine, B.J., Gilmore, J.H. (1999), *The Experience Economy*, Harvard Business Press.
- Poljanec-Borić, S. (2011), *Hrvatsko društvo i turizam*, naklada Jesenski i Turk, Zagreb.
- Presbury, R. and Edwards, D. (2010), "Managing Sustainable Festivals, Meetings and Events", in: Liburd J.J. and Edwards D. (eds). *Understanding the Sustainable Development of Tourism*, Goodfellow Publishers Ltd., Oxford, pp. 163-187.
- Richards, G. and Wilson, J. (2003), "Today's Youth Travellers: Tomorrow's Global Nomads - New Horizons in Independent Youth and Student Travel", *Student Travel Confederation* [ONLINE], Available at: [http://www.atlas-euro.org/pages/pdf/FINAL\\_Full\\_Report.pdf](http://www.atlas-euro.org/pages/pdf/FINAL_Full_Report.pdf)
- Schmitt, B. (1999), *Experiential Marketing: How to Get Customers to Sense, Feel, Think, Act and Relate to Your Company and Brands*, Free Press.
- Shaw, C. (2005), *Revolutionize Your Customer Experience*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke.
- Swarbrooke, J. (1999), *Sustainable Tourism Management*, CABI publishing, Wallingford.
- Šuran, F. (2016), *Slobodno vrijeme, putovanje i turizam: Sociološki pristup*, Sveučilište Jurja Dobrila u Puli, Pula.
- Vitasović, A. (2012), *Ekonomija doživljaja i konkurentnost hrvatske turističke ponude*, PhD dissertation, Fakultet za ekonomiju i turizam "Dr. Mijo Mirković, Juraj Dobrila University of Pula.
- Weaver, D. (2006), *Sustainable tourism: Theory and practice*, Elsevier, Oxford.
- World Tourism Organisation and WYSE Confederation, Ortega, U. (2011), The power of youth travel. *Affiliate Members Global Report*, Vol. 13. Amsterdam, 3.
- World Tourism Organisation and WYSE Confederation, Ortega, U. (2011), The power of youth travel. *Affiliate Members Global Report*, Vol. 13. Amsterdam, 3.
- WYSE Travel Confederation. (2013), Youth travel accommodation usage. Daly L.(ed.). *New Horizon III Survey*. Amsterdam, 5.

**Tamara Floričić**, PhD, Assistant Professor  
Juraj Dobrila University of Pula,  
Faculty of Economics and Tourism "Dr.Mijo Mirković"  
Preradovićeva 1, 52100 Pula, Croatia  
Tel.: 00 385 52 377029  
E-mail: tfloricic@unipu.hr