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Evaluating tourist satisfaction with the retail experience in a typical tourist shopping village

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ABSTRACT

The study presented in this paper explores the phenomenon of Tourist Shopping Villages (TSVs) and the dimensions that contribute to satisfying visitor experiences. TSVs are defined as small towns and villages that base their tourist appeal on retailing, often in a pleasant setting marked by historical or natural amenities. A conceptual framework was developed in an attempt to explain and understand visitor satisfaction with the tourist shopping village experience. The results indicate the village performance on providing a unique local experience, value for money and regionally distinctive products, and opportunities for entertainment and bargain hunting were the key variables which most strongly predicted whether respondents were very satisfied or not. Surprisingly, the level of enthusiasm for leisure shopping did not have a strong influence on the visitor experience or satisfaction. Tourist shopping villages provide a unique setting in which recreational or leisure shopping occurs and are under-researched, particularly from the perspective of the visitor experience.

1. Introduction

Although traditionally associated with urban tourism, shopping is now a growing tourist activity in rural regions as rural areas become more developed as service economies. The study presented in this paper explores the phenomenon of Tourist Shopping Villages (TSVs) and the dimensions that contribute to satisfying visitor experiences. TSVs are defined as "small towns and villages that base their tourist appeal on retailing, often in a pleasant setting marked by historical or natural amenities. They are found along touring routes, in destination areas and near urban centres, but are markedly different from urban business and shopping districts in terms of their small scale, specialty retailing and distinct ambience" (Getz, 2000, p. 211). Tourist shopping villages are a growing phenomenon in many destinations and can be an important tool for regional development. Jansen-Verbeke (2000), for example, identifies tourism/leisure shopping as not just one of, but often the best, development alternative for declining rural areas. Examples of shopping villages include Montville, Hahndorf and Maldon (Australia), Arrowtown and Akaroa (New Zealand), St. Jacobs and Niagara-on-the-lake (Canada), Sedona (USA), Cheddar and Broadway (England) and Kinsale and Roundstone (Ireland).

The aim of this research is to evaluate the experience of visitors to Hahndorf, Australia. In previous research by Murphy, Moscardo, Benckendorff and Pearce (2008), which explored the factors leading to the success of tourist shopping villages, MDS analyses identified Hahndorf as a typical and mainstream tourist shopping village. In particular, this research identifies segments of visitors based on their level of enthusiasm for leisure shopping and explores the experiences of these groups of 'serious' and 'not so serious' shoppers with respect to their motivations as well as importance placed on, and satisfaction with, various aspects of the retail experience in the village.

2. Review of literature

2.1. Tourist shopping

While shopping is seldom mentioned as a primary reason for travel, it is perhaps the most universal of tourist activities, and of great economic importance to local merchants. The creation of comfortable and exciting shopping districts can entice tourists and extend their stay in a region. Shopping is one of the oldest and most common activities associated with travel and it is becoming of increasing importance to tourism in terms of actual consumption of goods purchased, and as a source of enjoyment and satisfaction (Tosun, Temizkan, Timothy, & Fyall, 2007). Several authors have commented on the increasing importance of shopping as a leisure and tourism activity resulting from an increasingly materialistic and consumptive society. The act of shopping is not only utilitarian with a focus on acquiring necessities for daily needs, but has become a recreational and

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touristic experience in which clothing, souvenirs, artworks and handicrafts are purchased as reminders and momentos of travel experiences (Timothy, 2005; Timothy & Butler, 1995).

Shopping has an important economic impact on host communities as it requires the spending of money for leisure purposes (Jackson, 1996). In addition, the products purchased by tourists for different reasons may help a destination to develop a favourable image in the minds of tourists and their friends and relatives through the sharing of experiences through photos, videos and the items they have purchased during their travels (Kim & Littrell, 2001). While tourists do not necessarily set out with the intent to 'go shopping', during their wider experiences, they are likely to engage in a diversity of consumption encounters and rituals which involve interactions with vendors and service providers (Westwood, 2006).

Research into the shopping patterns and shopping behaviour of tourists provides us with useful information for tourism planning and promotion. As tourism shopping is closely related to retail trade, there is a need to foster cooperation between tourism and the retail industries. Tourism shopping should form part of the overall tourism development and marketing plan of a destination (Heung & Qu, 1998). The shopping 'experience' is a complex combination of factors that shape tourists' feelings and attitudes towards visiting and spending time in a destination. As an important component of travel, the shopping experience is a mixture of perceptions of products, services and places. Thus, service and merchandise provided by retailers and vendors are an important part of the destination experience (Tosun, et al., 2007). In this regard, shopping refers to a contemporary recreational activity involving looking, touching, browsing and buying, which helps fulfil people's need for enjoyment and relaxation and which helps tourists escape from their daily routines (Timothy, 2005).

2.2. The leisure shopping experience

Heung and Cheng (2000) cite Martin and Mason (1987) who noted that non-essential shopping is seen by consumers as being a leisure activity, and that the retail sector has to adapt in different ways to this trend. Howard (1990, cited in Heung & Cheng, 2000) added that people have more choice on where they go shopping, making it possible for retailers to attract customers through the provision of leisure opportunities and more pleasant settings. The aim of combining leisure with shopping is 'synergy,' with the specific benefits to the retailers and tourism planners being the attraction of longer staying shoppers, higher per capita spending, more targeted customers, competitive advantages, and a marketable image.

Johnson (1990 cited in Heung and Cheng, 2000) identified three leisure shopping models. The first is called ambient leisure, which involves the creation and underpinning of a pleasant environment for shopping. The goals are to extend the duration of a shopping trip and to gain a competitive advantage over less attractive shopping areas. This approach is manifested in shopping centre design and in the proliferation of specialty shopping in historical or architecturally unique areas. The second type is the new generation mall, which lures shoppers by means of added recreational attractions (and attracts purely recreational shoppers). A third type, and most relevant to this examination of TSV's, is heritage-destination leisure, which attracts niche-position retailers and appeals to shoppers and sightseers.

Shopping in an attractive and diversified environment which can be the element that leads to a leisure experience when shopping. The Tourist Shopping Habitat (TSH) refers to the overall shopping location—the place tourists inhabit for various utilitarian and hedonic activities (Bloch, Ridgway, & Dawson, 1994; Yuksel, 2007). According to Jansen-Verbeke (1998), the qualities of an inviting shopping environment for tourists are; product variety and uniqueness; a diversity of high quality shops, supporting amenities such as restaurants, pubs and entertainment facilities in close proximity, good pedestrian access and parking facilities and multi-functionality of the environment which guarantees that the place feels 'alive'.

Yuksel (2007), notes that giving managerial attention to the exterior shopping environment is particularly important since it must be considered acceptable and pleasing before the interior of the shops is ever experienced. In the same study, Yuksel (2007) found that respondents showed a high willingness to talk to salespeople, spend more time browsing and exploring the products, and spend more money than originally planned when the climate of the TSH is perceived to be stimulating. This implies that dreary shopping districts may drive customers to other rival destinations and that those tourists who believe that the shopping district can provide them with a fun, pleasurable and enjoyable shopping experience would attach more value to that experience and be more likely to return in the future.

Heung and Cheng (2000) identified four shopping attribute dimensions; Tangibles Quality, Staff Service Quality, Product Value and Product Reliability which influenced tourist satisfaction with shopping in Hong Kong. Multiple-regression was used to determine the relative importance of the four factors in determining overall shopping satisfaction. The results show that factor 2—Staff Service Quality was the most important underlying dimension, followed by Product Value, and Product Reliability. Although the Tangibles Quality factor was not significant in influencing tourists' level of satisfaction in Hong Kong, this factor should not be neglected (Heung & Cheng, 2000). Other research has identified the importance of product selection and in-store atmosphere as influences on tourists' emotions and behaviours related to shopping (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003; Timothy, 2005). In-store environments can be enhanced by music, scents, climate, employee appearance and colour. Backstrom (2006) argues that little effort has been made to investigate the sort of influence retail environments may exert on individuals engaged in recreational shopping.

Of particular relevance to TSV's is the fact that shopping creates a significant opportunity for visitors to become exposed to the host culture, in particular, locally made handcrafts and souvenirs designed as tourist products may reflect elements of indigenous cultures. In addition to the tangible experience of purchasing souvenirs, part of the shopping experience deals with aesthetics, where tourist shoppers are able to examine, feel and think about items even if shopping is not a principal reason for their travels (Snepenger, Murphy, O'Connell, & Gregg, 2003). According to Evans (2000, cited in Timothy, 2005), the authenticity of these crafts and other retail products in relation to the local area is one of the most important elements in purchasing pursuits, as tourist shoppers are more often than not interested in locally made items that are typical or indigenous to the destination.

Turner and Reisinger (2001) emphasise the need to gain a deeper understanding of tourists' shopping behaviour and responses to shopping environments because the purchase behaviours of tourists as consumers are different from the rational decision making and ordinary purchasing at home. Backstrom (2006) has criticised previous research for not acknowledging recreational shopping as an activity that may be performed in various ways, nor has research explored the meanings ascribed to the activity by different consumers. Also criticised is the view of recreational shoppers is a homogeneous segment, sharing the same characteristics and behaving in fairly predictable ways. Potential differences among consumers within this segment have to a great extent been neglected.

Arnold and Reynolds (2003), suggest that the importance of different motivations may vary with regards to the degree of the shopper's product involvement and the particular shopping situation. Arnold and Reynolds (2003) claim that a knowledge of distinct shopper segments is useful for retailers in constructing a marketing communication strategy and designing appealing store environments. Research by Guiry, Magi, & Lutz (2006), based on level of involvement with shopping, identified three different segments of shoppers—shopping enthusiasts, normal shoppers and shopping aversives. Their study revealed that recreational shoppers vary in their level of identification with shopping, and, at the highest level of intensity may use shopping as a form of self-definition. Compared with normal shoppers, recreational shopping enthusiasts have stronger recreational shopper identities and realised higher levels of leisure experience, similar to that seen in other leisure activities. Consistent with the results of other studies on shopping involvement and motivation, (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003; Guiry, et al., 2006; Josiam, Kinley, & Kim, 2005), shopping enthusiasts were also more likely to be female.

2.3. Tourist shopping villages

According to Timothy (2005), dozens of places around the world exist as well-known tourist shopping destinations, either purposely planned to be such or by default, simply because they offered products and services that people found desirable. Shopping venues and contexts identified include: souvenir shops, department stores, malls, outlet centres, airports, railway stations and harbours, duty-free shops, museums and heritage sites, wineries and distilleries, special events and theme parks, craft villages, tourist shopping villages, street vendors and craft markets. Jansen-Verbeke emphasises that the potential to develop the image of an attractive shopping area for tourists depends more on the attractiveness of the environment than on the range of goods offered. Tourist Shopping Villages (TSV's), defined as "small towns and villages that base their tourist appeal on retailing, often in a pleasant setting marked by historical or natural amenities" (Getz, 2000, p. 211) exemplify this claim.

Based on his research in Canada, Getz (1994) identifies several atmospheric cues that signal villages as being tourist shopping oriented. These include vivid colours, specific signage, rustic and hand-crafted materials, historic buildings and distinctive regional styles, use of window and street displays, themed outdoor music, food and landscaping (e.g. street decorations, paving stones and attractive pathways). Additionally, proximity to attractions, to major touring routes and to major visitor source markets serve to define the advantageous locations for tourist shopping villages. TSV's are markedly different from urban business and shopping districts in terms of their small scale, speciality retailing and distinct ambience" (Getz, 2000). TSVs are a growing phenomenon in many destinations and can be an important tool for regional development. Murphy, Moscardo, Pearce and Benckendorff (2008) conducted a systematic evaluation of 29 tourist shopping villages in Australia, New Zealand and Canada in order to explore factors related to their perceived success. Onsite visits, rich photographic resources and the associated promotional materials offered a close inspection of the physical conditions of the settings, the activities available and the shopping styles and diversity of the villages. From this perspective, the perceived success of a tourist shopping village was determined to be strongly influenced by a well developed heritage theme combined with the presentation of the village for tourist activity and a tightly integrated shopping district. A successful village was also found to be supported by regional distinctiveness in merchandise, food and wine. Accessibility and seasonality appeared to have a minor influence on the success of shopping villages. Despite their prominence in the destination experience of many tourists, tourist shopping villages have been given minimal academic attention, particularly in terms of understanding the experience of visitors to these unique shopping destinations.

2.4. Conceptual framework and hypotheses

Based on the literature on leisure shopping, tourist shopping and tourist shopping villages, a conceptual framework was developed in an attempt to explain and understand visitor satisfaction with the tourist shopping village experience. The framework presented in Fig. 1, proposes that level of enthusiasm

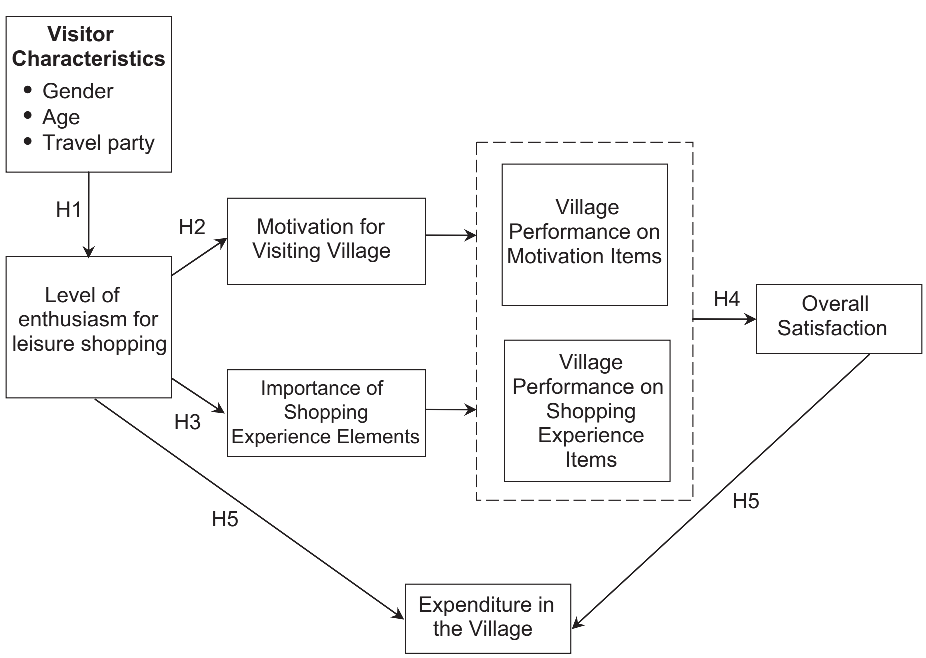

Fig. 1. Conceptual framework for understanding satisfaction with the tourist shopping village experience.

for shopping in the village would be influenced by gender, age and travel party composition, and would in turn influence the importance placed on, and satisfaction with, various motives for visiting the village and shopping experience elements. The framework then proposes that overall satisfaction is mediated by the village's perceived performance on the motivation and shopping experience items. Finally, it is proposed that level of enthusiasm for shopping, and satisfaction with the village will influence expenditure in the village.

More specifically the following hypotheses have been proposed:

Hypothesis 1. There is a relationship between personal characteristics (e.g. age, gender, travel and party) and the level of enthusiasm for leisure shopping while on holiday;

Hypothesis 2. The level of enthusiasm for leisure shopping while on holiday will influence the importance placed on various motives for visiting the village;

Hypothesis 3. The level of enthusiasm for leisure shopping while on holiday will influence the importance placed on various shopping experience elements in the village;

Hypothesis 4. Overall satisfaction will be influenced by the degree to which the village satisfies respondents on the motivation and shopping items on which they place importance; and finally;

Hypothesis 5. Overall expenditure in the village is positively correlated with both level of interest in shopping while on holiday and overall satisfaction with the village.

3. Method

3.1. Hahndorf

The German heritage themed village of Hahndorf is the main attraction in the Adelaide Hills Tourism region, a short drive from the city of Adelaide in South Australia, and possesses the characteristics of a typical tourist shopping village according to Getz's definition (2000). With a population of approximately 1800 people, Hahndorf is well known for its fresh food and produce. In 2007, the Adelaide Hills region attracted an estimated 109,000 overnight visitors, but the region is primarily a day trip destination, with 767,000 day visits by domestic visitors alone (South Australian Tourism Commission, 2008). Tourism Research Australia (2008), conducted a survey of 206 visitors to Hahndorf in September and October 2007. As expected, the majority of respondents were domestic (88%) and day visitors (89%). The results indicated the top two reasons for visiting Hahndorf were German food, beer and heritage and the variety of things to see and do. The visitor experience consisted primarily of: walking the main street (92% of respondents), browsing shops (78%), visiting coffee/tea shops (63%), going shopping (59%), general sightseeing (57%) and eating out (53%). Of respondents, 84% were satisfied with their visit, particularly with the opportunity to tour around and explore, to spend quality time with their partner/family/friends, and to enjoy food and wine experiences.

3.2. Survey instrument

A structured questionnaire was developed based on an extensive review of the tourism and retail shopping literature. The questionnaire consisted of three Sections. Section A focused on the shopping experience and included importance and performance ratings scales relating to reasons for visiting (i.e. motivation) and shopping experience characteristics adapted from Heung & Cheng (2000). Respondents were also asked to rate the appeal of various village themes or styles identified in previous research as common in successful tourist shopping villages (Murphy, et al., 2008). Finally, respondents were asked to; choose from a list of 18 items six that are most essential for a village to attract tourists, rate how satisfied they were with their experience in Hahndorf on a 7 point scale, and in open-ended questions, to describe the two best things and two things which could be improved about Hahndorf. Section B focused on shopping and expenditure and included questions on length of stay, expenditure in various categories, types of products purchased and likelihood of purchasing local products once back home. Finally, Section C was labelled 'About You' and gathered respondents demographic and trip-related information, as well as including questions on respondents general enjoyment of shopping in various places/settings while on holiday, the importance of shopping as a reason for travel and frequency of shopping for leisure in everyday life.

3.3. Sample

Six research assistants were employed to distribute questionnaires to visitors on the main street of Hahndorf from 20 September to 1 October 2008. Surveys were distributed both on weekdays and weekends, between 10:00 am and 4:00 pm. The research assistants positioned themselves at various locations along the main street throughout the sampling period. Potential respondents were approached and asked to participate in the survey if they were not local residents. A total of 506 questionnaires were completed, with a response rate of 42%.

4. Results

4.1. Profile of respondents

The majority of respondents were female (65.4%), with an average age of 45 (see Table 1). The vast majority of respondents were domestic visitors (84.3%), almost one-half of which were from the metropolitan Adelaide area (46.3%). The local nature of the market is reflected by the fact that 62.9% of respondents had previously visited Hahndorf, 42.6% were on a day trip to the village, and 44.8% were planning to visit again within the next 12 months. With respect to this visit, most respondents were travelling with their spouse or partner (39.4%) or with family members, including children (25.3%).

4.2. Level of enthusiasm for leisure shopping

The majority of respondents indicated that shopping was not a major part of their travel decisions but that they enjoyed shopping while on holidays (66.5%). Only 3.5% indicated that opportunities to shop are a main reason for travelling, while 15.9% were not interested in shopping while on holidays, and 4.8% avoid shopping while on holidays. Of respondents, 11% indicated that, when at home, they shopped more than 4 times a month for leisure, 23.7% shopped 2–4 times and 44.2% shopped once a month. Just over 21% indicated that during a month they never shopped for leisure (Table 2). The responses to these two questions were combined to compute an overall measure of 'level of enthusiasm for leisure shopping'. The lowest possible score on this measure was 2 (the opportunity to shop is the main reason I travel+shop for leisure more than 4 times per month) to 9 (avoid shopping on holidays+never shop for leisure). Respondents with a score of 4 and below were labelled as shopping enthusiasts (15.9% of respondents), those with a score of 5 or 6 as shopping neutral (54.9%), and those with a score of 7 and above as non-shoppers

Table 1
Demographic profile of respondents.

Characteristic	
Gender (n=462)	
Male	34.6%
Female	65.4%
Age (n=467)	
Mean	44.6
Median	45
Origin (n=483)	
Australian	84.3%
International	15.7%
Australia (n=350)	
Adelaide and suburbs	46.3%
Other SA	4.3%
Victoria	16.0%
Queensland	13.1%
New South Wales/ACT	10.3%
Western Australia	6.9%
Other	3.1%
International (n=76)	
New Zealand	15.0%
Germany	11.2%
Other European	28.7%
UK/Ireland	10.0%
USA	8.8%
Asia	19.8%
Other	6.3%
% who have visited previously (*n*=469)	62.9%
Length of trip (n=467)	
Day trip	42.6%
2–3 days	14.7%
4–7 days	17.9%
More than 7 days	32.1%
% planning to visit again (n=469)	
Yes, within 12 months	44.8%
Yes, within 5 years	21.1%
Yes but not sure when	22.4%
Not sure	9.0%
No	2.8%
Travel party (n=466)	
Alone	3.8%
With spouse or partner	39.7%
With family members	25.3%
With a group of friends	16.4%
In another type of group	4.1%

Table 2
Level of enthusiasm for shopping.

Characteristic	%
Importance of shopping opportunities when travelling (n=460)	
1. The opportunity to shop is the main reason I travel	3.5
2. The opportunity to shop plays an important part in my travel decisions	9.3
3. Opportunities to shop are not a major part of my travel decisions but I enjoy shopping when on holiday	66.5
4. I am not interested in shopping while on holidays	15.9
5. I avoid shopping while on holidays	4.8
Number of times a month leisure shop at home (n=464)	
1. More than 4 times per month	11.0
2. 2–4 times per month	23.7
3. Once per month	44.2
4. Never	21.1
Level of enthusiasm for leisure shopping (n=452)	
Shopping enthusiast	15.9
Shopping neutral	54.9
Non-shopper	29.2

Table 3
Differences in shopping enjoyment according to level of enthusiasm for leisure shopping.

Places to shop on holiday	Shopping enthusiasts (n=72)	Shopping neutral (n=248)	Non-shoppers (n=132)	F-value
Duty free shops	3.02	2.67	2.12	10.413*
Shops in and around attractions	4.00	3.60	2.88	26.013*
Urban shopping precincts	3.44	3.05	2.29	25.256*
Shopping malls and centres	3.55	2.79	2.29	24.769*
Markets	4.44	4.31	3.92	8.591*
Small towns and villages	4.40	4.34	3.94	9.800*
Direct outlet shopping	3.53	3.02	2.20	24.003*

* Significant at .05.

(29.2%). Not surprisingly, shopping enthusiasts had the highest level of enjoyment for all forms of shopping while on holiday, and non-shoppers the lowest. The most enjoyable places to shop for all 3 groups were markets, small towns and villages and shops in and around attractions (Table 3). This result can be viewed as a check on the consistency and face validity of the questions used in the survey.

Also not surprising, is the fact that shopping enthusiasts were significantly more likely to be female (85.5%), when compared to the shopping neutral group (68.7%) and, in particular, non-shoppers (48%) (chi square=30.128, $p<.05$). Age also differed significantly across the three shopper groups, with shopping enthusiasts (37.6 years) significantly younger than shopping neutral respondents (43.2 years), and non-shoppers (48.7 years) ($F=12.33$, $p<.05$). Finally, shopping enthusiasts were less likely to be visiting with a spouse/partner (31.4%) and more likely to be visiting with family members (40%) when compared to shopping neutrals (46.5% and 28.4%, respectively) and non-shoppers (45.2% and 19%, respectively) (chi square=21.968, $p<.05$).

4.3. *The shopping village experience*

The most important reasons for visiting Hahndorf were to experience the village atmosphere (4.32 on a 5-point scale), to relax (4.23) and for the opportunity to buy local products (4.15). Hahndorf's performance ratings on these aspects were consistent with importance (Table 4). In terms of the shopping experience, the most important aspects for respondents were the attitude of sales staff (4.59), the efficiency of sales staff, the neatness and cleanliness of shops (4.38) and the availability of regionally distinctive products (4.37). While the average village performance ratings on these items were all above 4 on the 5 point scale, they were significantly lower than the importance ratings, an indication that expectations were not totally met (Table 5). Importantly, one-way ANOVA tests revealed that there were virtually no differences across the shopping groups with respect to the importance of reasons for visiting Hahndorf and the shopping experience characteristics. The only statistically significant differences were that shopping enthusiasts (3.99) and shopping neutrals (3.75) placed more importance on seeing local products being made than did non-shoppers (3.45) as a reason for visiting the village ($F=5.504$, $p<.05$). Also important to note is the fact that there were no differences across the shopper groups in the village performance ratings on any of the items or on overall satisfaction with the village experience. Overall satisfaction with the village was very high (1.52 on a scale where 1=very satisfied and 7=very dissatisfied).

Table 4
Reasons for visiting the village.

Reason	**Importance** (1=not at all important and 5=very important)	**Village performance** (1=very poor and 5=exceptional)	**Mean difference** (performance–importance)	**t-value**
Village atmosphere (n=475)	4.32	4.24	−.0800	1.84
Somewhere to relax (n=462)	4.23	4.22	−.0173	.416
Local products to buy (n=460)	4.15	4.15	−.0000	.000
A good place to be with family and friends (n=460)	4.09	4.17	.0783	−1.852
Products unique to the region (n=461)	4.08	4.08	−.0043	.088
Escape the city (n=460)	4.06	4.31	.2500	−5.116*
Quiet day out (n=463)	3.76	3.90	.1382	−2.82*
To see local products being made (n=458)	3.72	3.64	−.0742	1.365
Learn about the place (n=457)	3.65	3.89	.2407	−4.443*
See a particular attraction (n=448)	3.44	3.70	.2522	−5.182*
Meet local people (n=456)	3.41	3.66	.2544	−4.939*
Show others around (n=432)	3.35	3.77	.4213	−7.305*
Special events (n=443)	3.32	3.67	.3544	−6.449*
Cheap prices (n=444)	3.20	3.21	.0113	−.169

* Significant at p=.05.

Table 5
Village shopping characteristics.

Characteristic	**Importance** (1=not at all important and 5=very important)	**Village performance** (1=very poor and 5=exceptional)	**Mean difference** (performance–importance)	**t-value**
Attitude of sales staff (n=441)	4.59	4.28	−.3039	7.267*
Efficiency of sales staff (n=439)	4.42	4.23	−.1936	4.561*
Neatness and cleanliness of shops (n=448)	4.38	4.23	−.1451	3.350*
Avail. of regionally distinctive product (n=438)	4.37	4.17	−.1941	4.341*
Value for money (n=441)	4.34	3.89	−.4535	9.756*
Variety of product selection (n=441)	4.27	4.13	−.1406	3.423*
Price of products (n=440)	4.20	3.82	−.3750	7.675*
Opening hours of shops (n=430)	4.09	3.79	−.2977	5.365*
Choice of payment methods (n=435)	4.03	4.13	.0989	−1.980*
Window displays (n=441)	4.02	3.97	−.0522	1.093
Language ability of staff (n=435)	3.93	4.16	.2299	−4.263*
Physical layout of shops (n=443)	3.89	4.03	.1422	−2.83*

* Significant at p=.05.

Overall the most ‘essential’ items for all three shopper groups were well preserved heritage buildings, variety of shops and variety of places to eat (respondents were asked to choose six from a list of 18). There were some differences across the shopper groups with respect to the remaining items. Non-shoppers (45.5%) were less likely to indicate that ‘easy to park’ was an essential item when compared to shopping neutrals (58.9%) and shopping enthusiasts (56.9%). Shopping enthusiasts (22.2%) were least likely to indicate that it was essential for a village to be pedestrian friendly when compared to shopping neutrals (38.7%) and non-shoppers (37.1%). They were also least likely to choose ‘visually appealing architecture (25%), which was significantly more important for non-shoppers (55.3%). Finally, shopping enthusiasts (22.2%) were somewhat more likely to choose attractions as being essential, when compared to shopping neutrals (16.9%) and non-shoppers (12.9%) (Table 6).

Finally, it is interesting to note that the shopping neutral group ($80.27) had the highest average expenditure on shopping, food and drink in the village, and that the shopping enthusiasts ($60.48) did not spend significantly more than the non-shoppers ($56.19) ($F$=3.120, $p<.05$). For all three groups highest expenditure was on food and drink.

4.4. Determinants of overall satisfaction

Given that the level of enthusiasm for shopping had no influence on respondents ratings for the performance of the village on key visitor and shopping experience characteristics, or on overall satisfaction, further analysis is needed to understand what does most strongly influence visitor satisfaction with the village experience. To this end ‘performance’ scores, as presented in Tables 4 and 5 were calculated for the reasons for visiting and shopping experience item ratings by computing the mean difference between the performance of the village on these items and the perceived of importance each (i.e. performance–importance). A negative score means that the item’s performance is below the importance rating, which would indicate a level of dissatisfaction. A positive score indicates that the village performance is rated above the importance placed on the item. In contrast to the approach employed by Heung & Cheng (2000) who used factors derived from importance ratings, the mean difference ratings weighted by importance (i.e. [performance–importance] $*$ importance) were used as the inputs into the factor analysis, as it was hypothesised that satisfaction with these individual elements would mediate the influence of their importance on overall satisfaction. The mean differences were weighted by importance to reflect the fact that satisfaction/dissatisfaction with an item that is of high importance to a respondent is likely to have greater influence on overall satisfaction than is satisfaction/dissatisfaction with an item that is not as important to the respondent. Factor analysis with varimax rotation was conducted to identify a smaller set of dimensions, or factors, which explained most of the variance between the original attributes. Table 7 presents the

Table 6
Items essential to a village for attracting visitors.

Essential village elements	Shopping enthu-siasts (n=72) (%)	Shopping neutral (n=248) (%)	Non-shoppers (n=132) (%)	Chi square value
Easy to get to	41.7	40.7	40.2	.978
Easy to park	56.9	58.9	45.5	6.439*
Easy to find my way around when I get there	36.1	32.3	30.3	.719
Pedestrian friendly	22.2	38.7	37.1	6.798*
Pleasant landscaping	22.2	27.4	22.0	1.717
Variety of shops	59.7	51.2	50.8	1.831
Visually appealing architecture	25.0	37.9	55.3	19.776*
Attractions	27.8	16.9	12.9	7.282*
Not too crowded	30.6	27.8	31.1	.513
Well preserved heritage buildings	55.6	56.5	61.4	1.02
Conveniently located public toilets	22.2	28.2	26.5	1.032
Free entertainment	25.0	21.4	31.8	5.015
Information about the place	31.9	26.6	26.5	.876
Variety of places to eat	52.8	52.4	58.3	1.284
Safe places for kids to play	19.4	11.7	12.1	3.096
Places to rest	23.6	21.8	15.9	2.388
Festivals	16.7	8.9	9.8	3.700
Markets	40.3	31.5	35.6	2.131

* Significant at $p=.05$.

Table 7
Rotated factor matrix for reasons for visiting (motivation) performance scores.

Reason for visiting	Factors[a]			
	1	2	3	4
Unique products	.818	.014	.170	.151
Local products	.704	.042	.178	.252
Learn about the place	.570	.387	.048	.013
Meeting local people	.467	.421	.084	−.125
Special events	.069	.669	.410	−.180
Escape the city	.179	.625	−.096	.461
Somewhere to relax	.191	.569	.016	.436
Show others around	.023	.567	.260	.261
Cheap prices	.006	.074	.818	.195
See local products being made	.423	.053	.642	.073
See a particular attraction	.192	.250	.455	.071
Quiet day out	−.002	.086	.118	.735
Village atmosphere	.205	.081	.156	.628
Eigenvalue	3.815	1.258	1.077	1.017
Cronbach's alpha	.671	.679	.527	.463

[a] 55% of variance explained.

Table 8
Rotated factor matrix for shopping experience satisfaction scores.

Characteristic	Factors[a]		
	1	2	3
Window display	.755	.131	.213
Physical layout of shops	.741	.237	.241
Neatness and cleanliness of shops	.699	.417	.143
Opening hours of shops	.668	.117	.268
Variety of product selection	.544	.244	.348
Efficiency of sales staff	.147	.768	.372
Attitude of sales staff	.088	.740	.430
Language ability of sales staff	.263	.729	.040
Choice of payment methods	.383	.613	.045
Value for money	.255	.161	.855
Price	.269	.170	.818
Regionally distinctive products	.303	.215	.568
Eigenvalue	5.499	1.117	1.041
Cronbach's alpha	.820	.785	.790

[a] 63.8% of variance explained.

results of the factor analysis on the 'reasons for visiting' weighted performance scores. Four factors were retained with eigenvalues greater than one, explaining 55% of the variance. It is important to note that the item 'a good place to be with family and friends' was not included in the final factor analysis as it did not load strongly on any one factor (highest loading was .356), therefore, the item was eliminated and the factor analysis re-run. Cronbach's alpha values for all 4 of the final factors were satisfactory. Factor 1 has been labelled 'unique local experience' as it contains the following items; products unique to the region, local products, learning about the place and meeting local people. Factor 2 has been labelled 'pleasant day out' as it includes the escape and relax items, as well as showing others around and special events. Factor 3 has been labelled 'bargains and entertainment' as it includes the items seeing local products being made, cheap prices and attractions. Finally, Factor 4 has been labelled 'rural village atmosphere' and contains the items quiet day out and village atmosphere.

The factor analysis of the shopping experience weighted performance scores resulted in the retention of 3 factors with eigenvalues greater than one, explaining 63.8% of the variance (Table 8). The Cronbach's alpha values for all three factors were greater than 0.7. The first factor has been labelled 'Store Attributes' as it includes the items relating to shop layout, neatness, hours, window displays and product variety. The second factor has been labelled 'Service' as it includes the attitude, efficiency and language ability items, as well as choice of payment methods. The final factor was labelled 'Products' as it consists of items relating to product price, value and regional distinctiveness.

Given the highly skewed distribution of the satisfaction scores (92% of respondents rated 1 or 2 on the scale), regression or structural equation modelling analyses were not appropriate as there was not enough variability in responses. Therefore, the decision was made to group respondents into two groups based on satisfaction—very satisfied ($n=257$) and everyone else ($n=199$) and to run a discriminant analysis to determine which of the key variables most strongly predicts group membership. In addition to the motivation and shopping performance factors, and after checking for multi co-linearity, level of shopping enthusiasm (raw score), age and gender (recoded as a dummy variable where 0=female and 1=male) were included as independent variables in discriminant analysis, with the two satisfaction groups (1=very satisfied and 2=everyone else) as the dependent variable. The discriminant function (Table 9) produced a significant Wilks' Lambda (.920, $p=009$) and the results indicate that village performance on providing a unique local experience (motivation factor 1), product performance (i.e. value for money and regional distinctiveness) and the opportunities for entertainment and bargain hunting (motivation factor 3), were the key variables which most strongly predicted whether respondents were categorised as very satisfied or not.

Finally, when overall satisfaction and level of enthusiasm for shopping (raw scores) were regressed on total shopping expenditure, the results indicated that these two variables have no influence on expenditure ($R=055$, $R^2=003$, $F=549$, $p=578$).

Table 9
Discriminant analysis—relationship between key variables and visitor satisfaction.

Dimensions	Structure matrix **Satisfaction groups** (1=very satisfied and 7=everyone else) **Pooled within-groups correlations**
Motivation factor 1—unique local experience	.541
Shopping factor 3—product performance	.448
Motivation factor 3—bargains and entertainment	.421
Motivation factor 2—relaxing day out	.360
Shopping factor 1—store performance	.315
gender	−.295
Shopping factor 2—service performance	.264
Motivation factor 4—rural village atmosphere	−.176
Level of shopping enthusiasm[a]	−.143
Age	.111
Eigenvalue	.087
Canonical correlation	.282
Wilks' Lambda	.920
Chi-square	23.515
Significance	.009

[a] *Note*: the raw score was used not the 3 created shopper categories.

5. Discussion and conclusions

This study explored the experience of visitors to a tourist shopping village. Tourist shopping villages provide a unique setting in which recreational or leisure shopping occurs and are under-researched, particularly from the perspective of the visitor experience. A series of hypotheses were proposed based on a conceptual framework of visitor satisfaction with the tourist shopping village experience. Firstly, it was hypothesised that visitor characteristics would influence the level of enthusiasm for leisure shopping. The results supported this hypothesis, indicating that shopping enthusiasts were younger, more likely to be female and more likely to be travelling with family members, including children. Hypotheses 2 and 3, that level of enthusiasm for leisure shopping would influence the importance placed on reasons for visiting and shopping experience characteristics, were not supported, with only one motivation item – to see local products being made – significantly more important for shopping enthusiasts and neutrals when compared to non-shoppers. Importantly, perceptions of the village's performance on these items did not differ across shopper groups. Hypothesis 4 was partially supported, in that the village's perceived performance on the provision of a unique and entertaining local experience and the provision of regionally distinctive, value for money products, were predictors of overall satisfaction. Finally, Hypothesis 5 was not supported in that there was no relationship between overall satisfaction and level of enthusiasm for leisure shopping with expenditure in the village. This result is consistent with Josiam, et al. (2005) who found that level of shopping involvement was not linked to time and money spent in a shopping mall.

The fact that visitors to the village who are adverse to leisure shopping are equally satisfied with their experience is revealing and highlights the importance of the complementary elements of the village experience, in particular the provision of a unique and entertaining local experience. The provision of quality dining opportunities and visually appealing heritage architecture and streetscapes is also important. This is supported by the fact that, in response to the open-ended question regarding the best aspects of the village experience, non-shoppers appeared to be more likely to mention the heritage streetscape and buildings and food and drink experiences (no statistical tests were conducted because this was a multiple-response variable). It is this heritage environment and quality food and drink (especially if based on local food and produce) which set TSV's apart from other retail settings, such as shopping malls or direct outlet shopping and facilitates the delivery of a satisfactory experience to shoppers and non-shoppers alike. Regionally distinctive products which provide value for money are key to visitor satisfaction. The fact that shopping enthusiasts did not out-spend the visitors who were less-focused on shopping is interesting and highlights the challenge for retailers to convert 'browsing' into expenditure. This is a key issue that is worthy of further investigation. It may be that the experience of looking and browsing can satisfy 'shopping enthusiasts' without necessarily purchasing products. The importance of expenditure on food and drink in generating revenue for the villages from all shopper groups is highlighted.

Overall, the results of this study tend to indicate that, as shopping destinations, tourist shopping villages are unique and do need to focus on the entire 'leisure experience' offered in order to attract and satisfy visitors. Importantly, the discriminant analysis results indicate that there are aspects of the visitor experience which were not included in this analysis that may also influence satisfaction. Further research is needed to explore what these variables might be. For example, this study did not elicit information specific information on what other activities visitors engaged in beyond shopping and eating and drinking. Another possible explanation that would require further research because only one member of a travel party participated the survey, is whether the 'shoppers' who were more likely to be travelling with family members are making compromises for the family group and in fact for them the experience is more of a family outing than a typical 'shopping expedition.' Likewise, non-shoppers may have been travelling with shoppers and therefore also making compromises in their behaviour. In addition, it is important to recognise that this study focused on one village only, and that this village's positioning is based on an ethnic theme—its German heritage. Results may differ in villages in other locations and with other key themes or attractions.

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