**Preferences over urban and rural sites in domestic and international tourism from the tourist point of view.**

Shlomit Hon-Snir a

Sharon Teitler-Regev a

aDepartment of Economic and Management, Yezreel Valley College, Israel

shlomith@yvc.ac.il , sharont@yvc.ac.il

Keywords: Place of residence, Tourist typology, Urban tourism, Rural tourism, Preferences

Abstract

Tourism research mostly deals with management and development aspects of urban and rural destinations from the supplier point of view. The objective of this study is to better understand those issues from the demand point of view, specifically analyzes the tourists’ preferences for a mix of urban and rural destinations, at domestic and international vacations.

The results indicate that growing up in the city have effect on tourist experiences and characteristics: number of vacations, desire for novelty, interact with local community and degree of plan ahead which in turn effects the tourists urban/rural preferences.

In the world changing by the effects of COVID-19 tourism management need to rearrange the offered sites, facilities and attractions in the destinations. In the near future when international tourism is limited, urban sites may introduce the domestic tourist new experiences. In the long term, in order to redistribute the international tourists, rural sites may offer personalized and small group packages and international chains facilities.

**1. Introduction**

Tourism is one of the biggest industries that experienced a 10-year period of sustained growth since the 2009 financial crisis until the Covid-19 outbreak in 2020. In 2018 tourism accounts for 10.4 percent of global GDP (WTTC 2020), with over 1.4 billion international tourists in 2018 (World Tourism Organization 2019). At the beginning of the covid-19 outbreak, in the first quarter of 2020, there was a decrease of 67 million international tourist arrivals , 80 US$ billion lost in exports and 100% destinations with travel restrictions. This is by far the worst result in the history of international tourism since 1950 (UNWTO 2020). According to UNWTO panel of experts a start of the recovery of international demand is expected to be mostly in 2021, while the recovery of the domestic demand have started already and supposed to be faster. In the meantime, the scope of domestic tourism is expected to increase even more than before the Covid-19 due to travel restriction. In 2019 domestic tourism was the leading form of tourism representing 71.3 percent of the total global tourism spending (WTTC 2020).

The covid-19 outbreak in 2020 may change the form of tourism as well. Considering risk management aspects, a blossom in independent tourism is expected in order to avoid exposure to large groups. Tourists will look for less visited sites, small accomodations, small restuarsrants and will try to minimize unnecessary contact with large crouds on restaurant and public transportion, for example by more nature based vacations (Wen, Kozak, Yang, & Liu, 2020). The tourism development and marketing managers need to be able to balance the distribution of touirsts all over the country, spesificaly for urban and rural sites. Therefore, understanding the tourist motivation for urban and rural tourism is essntail.

UNWTO describes urban tourism as trips to cities or places with high population density. Since those trips are usually short (one to three days), urban tourism is closely linked to the short break market. Several researchers have tried to develop a framework for understanding urban tourism, which is highly important to cities' economies but also requires significant urban infrastructures. According to WTTC a research based on 73 cities found that cities are more reliant on international travel demand than wider economies. Urban tourism account of 44 percent of international tourism, with international visitor spending accounting for 45% of tourism spending, compared to 29% of the total global tourism spending in 2019 (world travel and tourism council WTTC 2020).

The terms ‘rural tourism’ and ‘countryside tourism’ are often used synonymously, and defined tourism that takes place in the countryside or a rural area. Moreover, Lane (1994) argued that rurality is the principal appeal and that as a concept can be connected to low population densities with open space and small-scale settlements, generally with less than 10,000 inhabitants. In addition, the land use is dominated by farming, forestry and natural areas.

Tourism can not be categorized as urban or rural site, as Patmor (1983 P 122) claimed that "no sharp discontinuity between urban and rural resources for recreation, but rather a complete continuum from local park to remote mountain pick". In particular, Hall and Page (2014) emphasize the concept of an urban-rural continuum as a means of establishing differing degrees of rurality and the essential qualities of ‘ruralness’.

Similarly, to the difficulty to classify tourism or destination, there is a difficult to classify the vacation type. Most tourists combine urban and rural sites during their vacation, and do not choose only urban or rural vacations. In international vacations, the tourist chooses how to allocate her time abroad between urban and rural areas. Concerning domestic vacations, the tourist usually chooses between urban or rural site for each travel.

In the literature, there are diversity of perspective and approaches related to tourist destination choice. The relevant research can be grouped into a. decision process, b. motivation factors c. Influence of personality characteristics on destination choice d. Influence of information and communication on destination choice (Sunao Saito & Iara Strehlau, 2018).

Research concerning personality characteristics found that income and religious has a significant effect on destination selection (Cruz, et al. 2018), and national culture is an internal variable affecting destination choice (Patel 2013). Culture drives differences in travel motivations, which in turn affect tourist destination selection generally, and the specific feature within the destination (Stylos et al 2016). In addition, personality is used as one part of the person self-concept and it has a significant part in shaping tourists’ motivation, perception and behavior (Stokburger-Sauer, N. E. 2011). Sirgy & Su (2000) apply the self-congruity theory within the context of tourism destinations, and claimed that the greater the match between the destination personality and the visitor’s self-concept, the more likely it is that the visitor will have a favorable attitude toward that destination. This attitude might result in a visit or word of mouth. Early life experiences have dominant influence on the personality and according to the continuity theory early-life experiences can bridge between individual past, present and future (Atchley, 1999). In the sense of rural tourism, frequent contact with nature in the early years have an influence on interaction and attitudes toward the environments (Tapps & Fink, 2009; Thompson et al., 2008).

Another well-established approach regarding tourist personality in general is Cohen's typology (Cohen 1972). The typology includes four groups of tourists: organised mass tourists, independent mass tourists, explorers, and drifters.

 The organized mass tourist include tourists that looks for familiar destinations, travels on package tours, desire for familiar things while travelling (such as international hotel chains), and have no inreaction with the local community. Anothergroup is the independent mass tourists. These tourists travel to the regular tourist routes, while making their own arrangements and travel individually. The third group includes the explorers who travel to lesser-known destinations and explore local culture, but do not get very involved with the local population. The last group of tourists includes the drifters who travel to less developed and less known destinations, stay with local residents, eat local food, and try to learn as much as they can about the culture.Mo. Havitz and Howard (1994) developed a scale and a questionnaire, which implement Cohen typology.

Some research concerning destination choice distinguish between the decisions to travel domestically and to travel abroad. Eugenio-Martin and Campos-Soria (2011) found that willingness to travel is not only related to income level but also to the characteristics of the tourist's region of residence like climate, size and tourist attractions. They found that those that leave in larger communities travel more, probably, according to their explanation because of the larger variety of transportation. When age increases so does the likelihood to travel internationally, however when the number of kids increase the likelihood to travel domestically increases. According to that research international and domestic traveling are substitute with a preference to international traveling when income increases.

Machinda, Serirat and Gulid (2009) showed that domestic and international tourists are different in all the motivations to choose the destination and in the perception of the destination. For example, domestic tourists were attracted to the destination because of the nature and the climate while the international tourists choose the destination because of the friendliness of the local people. In addition, visits of domestic tourist to the destination are more frequent, but their length of stay and level of expanse is lower.

This research is the first attempt to analyze the preference for a mix of urban and rural sites from the tourist point of view. The study examine the contribution of tourist experiences, and personality characteristics to the tourist preference of a mixture of urban and rural sites on international and domestic travel. The study propose a new model that examine the direct and indirect effect of these variables, and shade more lights on differences in the background sociodemographic variables. More specifically, the research examine whether the association between childhood city residence, and rural and urban preference is mediated by desire for novelty, to interact with the local community, spontaneously and number of vacations experiences. Understanding this mechanize has an economic and tourism benefit in properly development and marketing of urban and rural destinations, especially in these days when the tourism industry experiencing a major shakeout and need to rearrange.

**3. Methods**

**3.1 Sample**

We conducted a quantitative cross-sectional study among 269 Israeli participants, 225 travel internationally with an average of 1.56 vacations per year and 239 made domestic tours with an average of 4.4 vacations per year (vacation includes day trips).

Prior to distributing the self-administered questionnaires, we briefly explained the purpose of the study and indicated that participation was voluntary. Participants were informed that the survey is anonymous, and the results would only be used for research purposes.

The study was conducted from April to June 2018 recruited by convenience sampling. The sample is comprised, 74 percent who grow up in a city and 26 percent who grow up in other type of settlement. Table 1 represent the participants' demographic characteristics.

**Table 1: Descriptive statistics**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Variable |  | N | Percentage[[1]](#footnote-1) |
| Gender | Male  | 124 | 46.3% |
|  | Female | 144 | 53.7% |
| Marital statues | Single | 204 | 79.3% |
|  | Married | 53  | 20.7% |
| Religion | Jewish | 213 | 81.3% |
| Non-Jewish | 49 | 18.7% |
| Income | Below Average  | 128  | 51.6% |
|  | Average and above | 120 | 48.4 |
| Education | High school or diploma | 117 | 44.2% |
|  | Academic degree | 148 | 55.8% |

**3.2 Procedure**

The research questionnaire was partially based on the questionnaire developed by Mo. Havitz and Howard (1994) translated into Hebrew by one of the authors and back-translated by the other author. The institutional Ethics Committee of the higher education institution with which the authors are affiliated approved this study.

**3.3 Questionnaire**

The questionnaire was partially based on Mo at el (1994) which included three dimensions. *The 'Destination Oriented Dimension' (DOD),* considers the tourist's preference with regard to novelty and familiarity in the destination. The Likert-scale was 1 to 5 (1 – familiarity, and 5 – novelty). *The second dimension, 'Social Contact dimension' (SCD),* examines the degree to which tourists want to observe local culture and community from the outside or whether they instead want to become involved in it, ranked on a 5-point Likert-scale (1 – observe locals, and 5 – involved with local culture).While the third dimension*, 'Travel Service Dimension' (TSD),* looks at the degree to which tourists seek organized tourism services and planning ahead. Since, this dimension concern two different aspects: travel agent services and planning ahead it lead to inconsistency reliability based on Alfa Cronbach, and therefore this paper defined the Organized plans dimension (OP) that looks at the level of making plans before the vacations ranked on a 5-point Likert-scale (1 – makes plans ahead and 5 – Do not make plans), and the third part dimension (TP) than measure the degree f getting help from travel agent or other third party ranked on a 5-point Likert-scale (1 – use third party and 5 – Do not use third party). For each one of the dimensions, a combined score was calculated based on the average of responses for the questions related to this dimension.

The questionnaire included the following sections:

1) *Socio-demographic details and vacation details*, including gender, age, education, childhood type of residence settlement (noted as CCR and coded by 1- city, 0 other), number of domestic vacations (noted by #VACd ) and number of international vacations, etc.

 2) *Tourist* characteristics *on international vacations*: Subjects were asked questions based on Mo at el (1994), to measure their international tourists characteristics which noted by DODi, SCDi, OPi, TPi on a Likert-scale of 1 to 5 (1 – very much agree, and 5 – Do not agree) .

3) *Tourist* characteristics *on domestic vacations*: Subjects were asked questions in based on Mo at el (1994), to measure their domestic tourists characteristics which noted by DODd, SCDd, OPd, TPd ranked on a 5-point Likert-scale (1 – very much agree, and 5 – Do not agree).

4) *Tourist preference in international and domestic vacations*, the mixture of urban and rural site in a vacation, ranked on a 5-point Likert-scale (1-urban only, 2- more urban than rural, 3- urban and rural equally, 4 -more rural than urban to 5 -rural only). The preferences are noted by URi URd for international and domestic vacations respectively.

**3.4 Data Analysis**

The statistical package SPSS 25 was used for statistical analysis of the data. International vs. domestic differences were examined by paired t-tests for independent samples. This research tested total effect and direct effect to determine whether the effect of the childhood city residence (CCR) on the tourist preferences for a mix of rural and urban destination is completely/partially/inconsistently mediated by tourists experiences and characteristics. Partial mediation occurs when the indirect effect and the corresponding direct effect are of the same sign. Complete mediation occurs when the indirect effect is nonzero and the direct effect is zero. Inconsistent mediation (sometimes called suppression) occurs when the indirect effect and the direct effect are nonzero but have opposite signs (Maassen & Bakker, 2001; MacKinnon, Krull, & Lockwood, 2000). Pearson's correlations examined direct effects and PROCESS macro examined mediation effects for the hierarchical multiple regression. The significance of the mediation effects was examined by calculating 5,000 bootstrapped samples to estimate the 95% bias-corrected and accelerated confidence intervals (CIs) of indirect effects of the predictor on the outcome through the mediator (A.F. Hayes, 2013).

**4. Results**

The tourist characteristics for international and domestic vacations and the reliability and correlation between them are represented by tables 2a and 2b[[2]](#footnote-2).

**Table 2**a

Major International tourist variables and correlations between them

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Variables |  |  | Correlations |
|  | M (SD) | Range | Cronbach's alpha | N | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1. URi
 | 2.86(0.82) |  1-5 | - | 219 | - | 0.20\*\* | 0.33\*\*\* | -0.06 | -0.09 |
| 1. SCDi
 | 2.93 (0.92) |  1–5 | 0.902 | 225 |  | - | 0.30\*\*\* | 0.45\*\*\* | -0.04 |
| 1. DODi
 | 3.44 (0.76) | 1–4.9  | 0.869 | 225 |  |  | - | 0.18\*\* | -0.11 |
| 1. OPi
 | 2.46 (1.14) | 1–5 | 0.872 | 225 |  |  |  | - | -0.07 |
| 1. CCR
 | 0.76(0.43) |  |  | 225 |  |  |  |  | - |

\*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001

Table 2a indicates that SCDi and DODi were positively associated with the chosen mixture of urban and rural international sites, while OPi and type of childhood city residence have no significant correlations with it. In addition, SCDi, DODi, and OPi are positively associated.

**Table 2**b

Domestic tourist variables and correlations of the study variables

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Variables |  |  | Correlations |
|  | M (SD) | Range | Cronbach's alpha | N | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1. URd
 | 3.2(1.05) |  1-5 | - | 234 | - | -0.08 | 0.21\*\*\* | 0.23\*\*\* | -0.13\* |
| 1. SCDd
 | 2.61 (1.03) |  1–5 | 0.911 | 233 |  | - | -0.16\* | 0.09 | -0.01 |
| 1. DODd
 | 3.04 (0.96) | 1–5 | 0.709 | 236 |  |  | - | 0.04 | -0.01 |
| 1. #VACd
 | 4.36 (5.76) | 0.33–50 | - | 239 |  |  |  | - | -0.25\*\*\* |
| 1. CCR
 | 0.74(0.44) |  |  | 239 |  |  |  |  | - |

\* p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001

Table 2b indicates that DODd and the number of domestic vacations were positively associated with the chosen mixture of urban and rural sites in domestic vacation while SCDd have no significant correlation with it. Moreover, growing in a city is associated with preferring urban sites. SCDd is positively associated with DODi.

Table 3 compares the characteristics and preferences of the tourist in international and domestic vacations.

**Table 3**

International vs. domestic differences in tourist characteristics and preferences [[3]](#footnote-3)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  International | Domestic | t-test(df) |  |
|  | M (SD) | M (SD) |  |  |
| SCD  | 2.95 (0.92) | 2.54 (1.0) | 5.649(202)\*\*\* |  |
| DOD | 3.42 (0.74) | 3.12 (0.94) | 5.12(203)\*\*\* |  |
| Urban/Rural  | 2.85 (0.84) | 3.24 (1.02) | -5.78(199)\*\*\* |  |

\*p<0.05; \*\*p<0.01; \*\*\*p<0.001

The above results indicate that on international vacations the tourists are looking for more novelty and contacts with the local people than on domestic vacations. The mixture of urban and rural sites differ between international and domestic vacations. The preference over rural sites is stronger in domestic vacations than in international vacations.

To examine the association between tourists experiences (number of vacations) personally aspects (CCR, DOD, SCD, OP, TP) with control of the sociodemographic variable (education, income, religion, and gender ) several hierarchical multiple regression models were tested.

The best fit for international tourism, is illustrated by figure 1a and summarized in table 4a including DODi, SCDi and OPi as mediators variables and gender as covariate.

**Figure 1a**

The study model: The association between childhood city residence (CCR) and international urban and rural preferences mediated by: DODi, SCDi, OPi and a covariate variable: gender.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | a1=-0.24\* | DODi | b1=0.31\*\*\* |  |
| CCR | c=-0.14 c'=-0.19  |  |  | URi**R2=0.1553**\*\*\* |
|  | a2=-0.02 | SCDi | b2=0.18\*\* |  |
|  | a3=-0.17 |  | b3=-0.14\*\* |  |
|  |  | OPi |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

\*p<0.05; \*\*p<0.01; \*\*\*p<0.001

Table 4a shows the results of the analytical model for international tourism.

**Table 4a: Regression analysis: Factors affecting the preferences for a mix of urban and rural destinations on international vacations. N=219**

Total, direct, and indirect effects of childhood city residence (CCR) on preferences for a mix of urban and rural destinations on international vacations through DODi, SCDi and OPi

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Predictor | B | SE | T | LLCI,ULCI |
|  | Dependent variable: URi |
| CCR (path c=total effect) | -0.19 | 0.13 | -1.44 | -0.45, -0.07 |
|  | Mediator: DODi  |
| CCR (path a1) | -0.24 | 0.12 | -2.00 | -0.48, -0.01 |
| Gender | 0.01 |  0.10 | 0.07 | -0.19,0.21 |
|  | Mediator: SCDi |
| CCR (path a2) | -0.02 | 0.15 | -0.12 | -0.31, 0.27 |
| Gender | -0.37 | 0.12 | -2.97 | -0.61,-0.12 |
|  |  | Mediator: OPi |  |
| CCR (path a3) | -0.17 | 0.18 | -0.97 | -0.53, 0.18 |
| Gender | -0.44 | 0.15 | -2.86 | -0.74,-0.14 |
|  | Dependent variable: URi |
| DODi (path b1) | 0.31 | 0.07 | 4.31 | 0.17, 0.46 |
| SCDi (path b2) | 0.18 | 0.07 | 2.72 | 0.05, 0.31 |
| OPi(Path b3) | -0.14 | 0.05 | -2.80 | -0.25, -0.04 |
| CCR(path c'=direct effect) | -0.14 | 0.12 | -1.09 | -0.38, 0.01 |
| DODi(path a1b1=indirect effect) | -0.08 | 0.04 |  | -0.17, -0.01 |
| SCDi(path a2b2=indirect effect) | -0.003 | 0.03 |  | -0.06, 0.06 |
| OPi(path a3b3=indirect effect) | 0.03 | 0.03 |  | -0.03, 0.09 |
| Gender | 0.05 | 0.11 | 0.49 | -0.16,0.26 |

B=unstandardized beta;

SE=standard error for the unstandardized beta (boot standard error);

T=t test statistic;

LLCI–ULCI=lower limit of the confidence interval–upper limit of the confidence interval (boot LLCI–ULCI).

The results indicated that Women and men are significantly differ concerning SCDi and OPi. Men prefer to have more contact with the local community than women, in addition men tourists behavior is more spontaneously compare to women. The preferences for a mix of urban and rural destinations significantly depend on DODi, SCDi, OPi (paths b1, b2, b3 respectively). Tourist that tend to create connection with the local people or desire for novelty in their international vacations choose more sites that are rural. Tourists that travel with less plans will prefer more urban sites.

In addition, growing up in the city has indirect effect on the preferences for a mix of urban and rural destinations through the DODi (path a1b1). Tourist that grow up in the city prefer more urban sites. There is no direct effect of growing up in the city (path c'). The effect of growing up in the city on the preferences for a mix of urban and rural destinations is completely mediated. The overall model was significant p=0.000, R2=0.1553, F(5,213)=7.8334.

The best fit model for domestic tourism, is illustrated by figure 1b and table 4b includs DODd, SCDd and number of domestic vacations as mediators variables.

**Figure 1b**

The study model: The association between childhood city residence (CCR) and domestic urban and rural preferences mediated by DODd, SCDd and number of domestic vacations.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | a1=0.03 | DODd | b1=0.15\* |  |
| CCR | c=-0.25 c'=-0.13  |  |  | URd**R2=0.090**\*\*\* |
|  | a2=0.05 | SCDd | b2=-0.07 |  |
|  | a3=-3.10\*\*\* |  | b3=0.04\*\*\* |  |
|  |  | #VACd |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

\*p<0.05; \*\*p<0.01; \*\*\*p<0.001

Table 4b shows the results of the analytical model for domestic tourism.

**Table 4b: Regression analysis: Factors affecting the preferences for a mix of urban and rural destinations on domestic vacations. N=229**

Total, direct, and indirect effects of childhood city residence (CCR) on preferences for a mix of urban and rural destinations on domestic vacations through DODd, SCDd and number of domestic vacations.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Predictor | B | SE | T | LLCI, ULCI |
|  | Dependent variable: URd |
| CCR (path c=total effect) | -0.25 | 0.15 | -1.65 | -0.55, 0.05  |
|  | Mediator: DODd  |
| CCR (path a1) | 0.03 | 0.14 | 0.20 | -0.25, 0.31 |
|  | Mediator: SCDd |
| CCR (path a2) | 0.05 | 0.15 | 0.35 | -0.25, 0.36 |
|  |  | Mediator: No of domestic vacations  |  |
| CCR (path a3) | -3.10 | 0.85 | -3.67 | -4.77, -1.44 |
|  | Dependent variable: URd |
| DODd (path b1) | 0.15 | 0.07 | 2.18 | 0.02, 0.29 |
| SCDd (path b2) | -0.07 | 0.06 | -1.08 | -0.2, 0.06 |
| No of domestic vacations (Path b3) | 0.04 | 0.01 | 3.48 | 0.02, 0.06 |
| CCR(path c'=direct effect) | -0.13 | 0.15 | -0.84 | -0.42, 0.17 |
| DODd(path a1b1=indirect effect) | 0.004 | 0.02 |  | -0.04, 0.06 |
| SCDd(path a2b2=indirect effect) | -0.004 | 0.02 |  | -0.04, 0.03 |
| No of domestic vacations (path a3b3=indirect effect) | -0.13 | 0.05 |  | -0.23, -0.05 |

B=unstandardized beta;

SE=standard error for the unstandardized beta (boot standard error);

T=t test statistic;

LLCI–ULCI=lower limit of the confidence interval–upper limit of the confidence interval (boot LLCI–ULCI).

The results indicate that the preferences for a mix of urban and rural destinations in domestic vacations significantly depend on DODd and the Number of domestic vacations (paths b1, b3 respectively). Travelers that take more domestic vacations or desire for novelty in the domestic vacations choose more vacations for rural sites. Growing up in the city has indirect effect on the preferences for a mix of urban and rural destinations through number of domestic vacations (path a3b3). Tourists that grow up in the city tend to travel less domestically and therefore prefer more vacations to urban sites. There is no direct effect of growing up in the city on preferences for a mix of urban and rural destinations (path c'). Therefore, the effect of growing up in the city on the preference is completely mediated. The overall model was significant p=0.000, R2=0.0119, F (4,224)=0.09.

**Discussion and conclusions**

Traditionally, tourism was one of the leading industries in the world with a large contribution to the country's GDP. The Covid-19 pandemic has brought the industry to a shut down and nowadays the countries experience a start of a recovery. Due to the Covid-19, tourism management and development face new challenges considering health and risk aspects and especially the requirement for the social distancing. Tourism management literature usually concern the flow of tourism in the country from the supply point of view while, this research shade light on the selection process from the tourist point of view. Specifically, it examines the contribution of tourist experiences and personality characteristics (childhood city residence and Mo's dimensions to measure Cohen's typology) to the tourist preference of a mixture of urban and rural sites on international and domestic travel. The study propose a new model that examine the direct and indirect effect of these variables, and shade more lights on differences in the background sociodemographic variables (like gender, religion, income, education, number of vacations, marital status). Moreover, the effect of the childhood city residence on Mo's dimensions to measure Cohen's typology is tested as well.

The current models expands the continuity theory and the self-congruity theory and expand Tapps & Fink, (2009); Thompson et al., (2008); Sirgy & Su, (2000); Stokburger-Sauer, N. E. (2011) implication concerning tourism which argued that childhood experience affect tourism behavior. More specifically, Tourists that grow up in the city tend to prefer urban sites over rural sites. Although the results for international and domestic vacations are in the same line, the reasons of each one of them are different. In international vacations, travelers who grow up in the city desire more familiarity in their vacations, which in turn cause the preference of urban sites. On the other hand, for domestic vacations the preference of urban sites is caused by the number of domestic vacations; Tourist that grow up in the city tend to travel less. The connection between tourist region of residence and number of vacations is opposite to those found by Eugenio-Martin and Campos-Soria (2011) . A justification for this paper results may be found in Stylos et al (2016) and Patel (2013) that suggested that culture differences (in this research caused by childhood type of residence) lead to a differences in the selection of mixture of rural and urban vacations.

Concerning international vacations, all of Mo's dimensions has a significant effect on the mix of urban and rural destinations preference, while for domestic vacations only the DOD has a significant effect. Traveler who desires novelty prefer rural sites over urban site for both international and domestic vacation. On international vacations tourist who would like to be involved in the local culture prefer more rural site, on the other hand tourists that carefully plan their vacation in advance prefer urban sites.

The tourist gender has a significant effect on the mix of urban and rural destinations preferences in international vacations, i.e, men (compare to women) prefer to have more contact with the local community and are more spontaneously, which in turn cause higher preference to rural sites.

 Number of domestic or international vacations has no effect on international preferences, while the number of domestic vacations has a significant effect on the mix of urban and rural destinations preferences concerning domestic vacations. Tourists that takes more domestic vacations prefer rural sites.

The tourist characteristics are different for international and domestic vacations. In international vacations, the tourist desires more novelty and more social interaction than in domestic ones. In addition, in the domestic vacations the tourist preferences to rural sites is stronger than those in international vacations are. Machinda, Serirat and Gulid (2009) represented differences between international and domestic tourists which may be explained by the current paper results . The tourist characteristics may not change due to Covid -19 but the tourist behavior may change following the health and risk aspect and local restrictions.

Tourism mangers and developments may concern the differences between the international and domestic tourist preferences. This issue is more relevant nowadays when the tourism is starting to recover, and most of the tourists are the domestic ones. Due to the Covid-19 some potential tourist prefer to stay at home, and those who travel prefer less crowded destinations (rural sites). In order to encourage domestic tourism even for those that otherwise avoid it or prefer urban sites, rural sites in addition may offer familiarity facilities and attractions similiar to ones usulay offered in urban places (e.g. music and shows performances, foodtrucks of interantional chains). For those who prefer novelty they may develop segments and products focuses on nature and culture: small groups sports facilities, history tours, bird-watching tourism and traditional roads. Urban sites may introduce the domestic tourist who look for novelity (those who prefer rural sites) new experiences (e.g. guided tour by storytelling, cooking and crafting workshop, local people hospitality). Offering annual pass which combine rural and urban attraction may be suitable for those that travel more and will ecncourage them to travel to city as well.

In the long run, the international tourism will recover. Those tourists who prefer urban sites, will desire familiarity, no connection with the local people and pre-plan the vacation, even more than before, due to the health risk management. Therefore, it is important for urban site to offer: international chains of hotels, restaurants and shops, tools to plan in advance and purchase with no contact the vacation and attractions and real time support and recommendation for the travelers. Rural sites that market as an extension to urban site vacation for international tourist, or that plan to be the escape destination for the crowds in the city may supply some international chains of hotels and restaurants as well. In addition, such rural sites may offer a full-organized package adjusted for small groups from the city to their place with standard facilities and attractions (women only tours may be considered as well). Rural sites, which can stand alone as an international vacation destination may focuses on the novelty and social connection.

The research focus on the tourist preference for a mix of urban and rural destination and consider the effect of the personality aspects on them. Further research may consider the preferences in some other aspects of tourism including destination choice, motivation factors and specific niches tourism like wellness tourism, ecotourism, culinary/food tourism, religious tourism.

In addition, the research was made on a relatively small sample and in a specific location; future research should include a larger sample from different countries in order to validate the results.

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1. Of those that answered the question. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The tables includes only variables which included in the final models. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Calculated for those who travel both abroad and domestic. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)