Factors underlying college students' choice of home stay accommodation while travelling

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ABSTRACT: This study was based on a questionnaire about college students' choice of home stay accommodation while travelling. In order to allow this questionnaire to conform to the reliability and validity requirements of quantitative data, 380 questionnaires were issued, and 212 effective questionnaires were received. After data coding, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS for Windows XP) was used to carry out exploratory factor analysis. On the basis of the results of item analysis, nine factors were extracted, namely: 1) Activities arrangement; 2) Quality of services; 3) Scene attraction; 4) Social demands and facilities; 5) Prices; 6) Sanitation and comfort; 7) Specialty appearance; 8) Leisure and relaxation; and 9) Transportation. The total variance explained in this inventory was 78.67%. The Cronbach reliability test was carried out and the α value obtained was between 0.807 and 0.968. The α value of the overall home stay underlying selection factors of the questionnaires was 0.954. This research used Pearson's correlation analysis to obtain the significant level of related coefficients of various factor components and total (0.574 to 0.831).

INTRODUCTION

Because of Taiwan's economic prosperity, the national income of Taiwan citizens has increased in recent years. This has not only promoted increased consumption, but it has also brought attention to the fact that their quality of life and demands for leisure and recreation have been upgraded. The changes in life style and the ever-present life pressures make people aware of the importance of relaxation. Therefore, leisure travel has become part of modern people's life in order to release stresses caused by work and daily affairs. The demands for sightseeing and leisure, therefore, are eagerly sought after. However, as part of the process of tourism, catering and accommodation facilities are among their basic requirements, in addition to sightseeing. Accommodation arrangements are the most important issue for travellers staying more than two days.

Bed and Breakfast (B&B) business in Taiwan has been booming. Its proportion of all forms of accommodation has been increasing every year, and currently 3,505 companies have access to 14,707 rooms, compared with 1,165 companies and 4,747 rooms in November 2004 [1]. This indicates that the demands for B&B accommodation by Taiwanese people is increasing; therefore, it is a very important decision when selecting accommodation while travelling.

In earlier times, Taiwanese people treated B&Bs as a second preference after hotels or restaurants. However, following the popularity and the changes of business styles, Taiwan's new home stay practices are different from those of earlier stages. There are various types, such as pensions, farm stays, lodges, cottages, bed and breakfast facilities, caravan parks, cabins, family lodges, licensed public hotels, backpacker hostels, guesthouses, country inns, stately homes and mansions, ranches, and specialist accommodation. B&Bs in Taiwan's earlier stage have been transformed into today's cottages (farmhouse-style villas). An overall travel plan can be made based on local characteristics and current resources, as different features have been developed and the local living environments and management styles have been improved.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Style of Taiwan Home Stay

According to the *Management Rules of Home Stay*, promulgated in December 2001 by the Tourism Bureau, Republic of China (Taiwan), Article 3 indicates *The term* home stay facility *as referred to in these Regulations shall mean a lodging facility run as a family sideline business, using the spare rooms of a self-used residence to provide tourists with a rural living experience. Such lodging facilities usually incorporate local culture, natural landscape, ecological environment, environmental resources, and agricultural, forestry, fishery, or livestock farming activitie*s [2].

Therefore, this study categorised nine types of home stay based on their main features, i.e.:

1. Farm Home Stay;
2. Beach Home Stay;
3. Spa Home Stay;
4. Sports Home Stay;
5. Traditional Architecture Home Stay;
6. Gastronomy Home Stay;
7. Western Farm Home Stay;
8. Aboriginal Cultural Home Stay;
9. Exotic Home Stay.

However, the facilities offered by Taiwanese home stays are simpler than those of hotels, because service people come from the owner's family and can provide strong feelings of human touch and warmth. The owners also frequently interact with local community residents and community groups. Home stay accommodation does not always have a restaurant to provide country-style foods, but the majority do offer free breakfasts.

The style of rooms of Farm Home Stay is divided into:

1. Single Style: Similar to the accommodation space of a general hotel, it is with a single bedroom and bathroom, refrigerator, TV, table and chair, etc. The focus is on independent personalities and individual privacy, and it is suitable for two people.
2. Big Open-bed Style: Most of these offer Japanese *tatami* beds and flexible space, which is convenient for many people to live together, suitable for a whole family or a group of friends.
3. Family Compartment Style: The owner utilises an unused room for rent. Most are without private sanitary/bathing equipment, which must be shared.
4. Suite-style: Comes with a living room, kitchen, dining room and bath room; the living room is also used as a bedroom.
5. Apartment-style: The majority of this type of home stay has been converted from an old barn or farm. Some have a family-type B&B on each floor, and all in-door facilities are the same as the general family style. This kind of gathering home stay always has a restaurant to provide countryside foods and has business for outsiders. People who stay there may think about whether to cook for themselves or have meals outside.

The majority of Taiwanese Farm Home Stays are self-developed businesses run by the owner. Some are a full-time operation and some are part-time. Although there are some specific rules in law for application to become a home stay location, governments also provide relevant consulting and training courses, there is no grading system. The certificate of grade has not been systemised yet.

Characteristics of Home Stay

Authors Alastrar et al regard a home stay business as having these characteristics: the business is run by the owner; it offers limited accommodation; it has private service people; it permits good interaction with the owner; and it offers special opportunities to learn about local environments [3]. According to Pearce and Moscardo, the specialist accommodation home stay has the following characteristics [4]:

1. Uses private service-people; travellers can have some interaction with the owner.
2. Offers special opportunities to learn about the local environments or buildings.
3. Normally, managed by the owner, not a chain store type of business.
4. Provides special activities for travellers.
5. Offers less accommodation (a business unit rarely owns more than 25 rooms.)

In 1997, Zane investigated 1,400 American B&B travellers. The study found that the reasons travellers chose a B&B were: the nature of B&B's building was small and personal; the atmosphere was quiet and private; and its specialty was customised service. This survey indicated that there were 10 quality characteristics confirmed by travellers. Listed in priority order, these were: 1) Private bath room; 2) Easy to be private; 3) Quiet atmosphere; 4) Introduction of scenery and restaurant by the business owner; 5) Make guests comfortable; 6) Pay attention to personal demands; 7) Creates a homelike atmosphere; 8) Reputation for good food; 9) Choice of bed size; and 10) Provide travel guidance [5].

Starr explained that what travellers intend to obtain from restaurants includes: atmosphere, comfortable environment, cleanliness, food and beverage facilities, recreational facilities, security and shelter [6].

In 1996, Morrison et al reported that there were two aspects to consider when looking at the importance of special interest accommodation development: one was for places and the other was for travellers. These are explained as follows [7]:

- For places: a) Preservation of natural environment; b) Preservation of culture; c) Development of industry; d) Improvement of living environment; and e) Learning of knowledge and skill.
- For travellers: a) Solve the problem of accommodation; b) Know about local resources; c) Understand a region's cultural features; d) Taste area foods; and e) Experience farming life.

Stay Motivation

Crompton's *Push-Pull* Model also divided the traveller's destination selection factors into two forces: one was called *Push* - the inside driving force pushes travellers to go to some destinations for tourism activities; the other was called *Pull* - the concrete incentives attracting travellers to go to the destination [8].

Crandall reported evidence from the analysis of the leisure motivations of 2,000 people in the Chicago area. A total of 17 types of leisure motivation were obtained, covering: escape from civilisation to enjoy nature, creativity, relaxation, looking for friends, close relationships with family, altruism and to avoid boredom by passing time [9].

McIntosh and Gupta pointed out that the basic travel motivation could be classified into four types: 1) Interpersonal Motives - including make friends outside, visiting relatives, getting rid of daily work and family affairs; 2) Physical Motives - including leisure, exercises, games and cure; 3) Position and Prestige Motives - including business travel, exchanges, meeting, and personal interest and study; 4) Cultural Motives - including to understand and appreciate other nations' culture, art, customs, language and religion [10].

Dawson and Brown pointed out 11 reasons for travellers to select a B&B in their study on B&B selection motivation. Listed in priority sequence, they are: 1) Route and location; 2) Personal service; 3) Enjoy the experience of B&B; 4) Food; 5) Recommended by relatives/friends; 6) Necessary accommodation demands in the area; 7) Cheaper price or valuable; 8) Effective advertisement; 9) Local attraction; 10) Special interests in B&B; and 11) Intention to try exchangeable stay [11].

Morrison et al indicated that Specialist Accommodation Establishments were more attractive to travellers than traditional accommodation facilities because of their unique characteristics. This study reported that the expectations of travellers were interaction between the host and visitors and individualised service [7]. These styles of specialist accommodation have five key qualifying criteria as defined by Morrison et al [7]:

1. Personal interaction between the guests and the owner-hosts;
2. A special opportunity or advantage to guests through location, features of the establishment, or services offered;
3. Special activities offered to guests;
4. Owner-operated; and
5. Small guest accommodation capacity (generally fewer than 25 rooms).

Zane investigated 1,400 American B&B travellers and found that the expectation of individualised service, comfortable bed, home atmosphere, privacy, cleanliness, scenery guidance/restaurant inquiry service/tourism manual provided by the owner were the key factors for selecting a B&B [5].

According to the results of Kozak's study researching the motivation of tourism activities did help to understand travellers' main motivations and purposes; it also helped the business owner to better utilise the resources and establish a specialty of destination [12].

The motivation for people to conduct some tourism activities is because of the attraction forces. Yoon and Uysal also indicated in their study that these various directions described how an individual could be attracted by different types of destination attributes and features [13].

After the studies of Dann; Dawson and Brown; Norman; Pearce; Arimond and Elfessi; Gnoth; and Goossens, the definition of B&B stay motivations were classified into two types: 1) *Push*: this is when the travellers' physical demands, e.g. to relax, to escape, to get in touch with others, are the travellers' initial motivation; 2) *Pull*: this is when the outside marketing inspiration is caused by the B&B's products or owner's service and is caused by the travellers' recognised motivation, e.g., unique bedroom, local tour guide, etc [11][14-19].

Solomon considered that the tourism motivation represented the consumer's intention to release or get rid of pressure [20]; therefore, Kozak suggested that the concept of *Push* would be beneficial to understand the inner desires of those concretised visitors better, and the concept of *Pull* would be beneficial to a better understanding of the attractions of sight-seeing destinations [12]. Therefore, the traveller's desire was a *Push* motivation and selecting a destination was a *Pull* motivation [21].

According to the literature referred to above, regarding the important factors for college students to choose the home stay option, after analysing the selections made by five college students and two professional scholars, this study has summarised the following factors: 1) Price; 2) Activities arrangement; 3) Marketing promotion; 4) Transportation;

5) Scene attraction; 6) Appearance and facilities; 7) Service quality; 8) Social demands; and 9) Leisure and relaxation. The study's pre-test questionnaires were based on these nine factors.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to understand the key factors behind college students' decisions to choose the home stay option. In addition to using the relevant research and literature data to provide the theoretical backdrop, this study also used Taiwan's college students as the research population. A questionnaire-based survey was selected as the basis for data gathering.

Pre-questionnaire Implementation

This research was limited by time, manpower and funds, and it presumes Taiwnese business management departments to be heterogeneous research objects.

Out of 380 pre-test questionnaires issued for this research project, 352 were returned. There is a reverse direction in the design of the pre-test questionnaires; therefore, after a strict selection and elimination of ineffective questionnaires, the remaining number of the effective sample size was 212. The usable rate of return was 60.2%. Gorsuch suggested that the necessary sample size should have at least five times as many variables as factors, and the minimum total number of test samples tested should not be less than one hundred persons [22]. Guadagnoli and Velicer recommended that the relationship of sample size to the stability of component patterns should have a component size greater than 4.0, and the absolute value of factor loadings should be greater than 0.40 [23]. Therefore, these effective samples showed that they can be stable when used in statistical analysis, as they conformed to the views of Gorsuch; and Guadagnoli and Velicer.

RESEARCH PROCESS

Coding of Pre-test Contents of Questionnaires and Scoring

The pre-test questionnaires were divided into nine factors, and based on these, 39 items were designed. These were 1) Three items concerned with price factors; 2) Five items concerned with activities arrangements; 3) Four items concerned with marketing promotion; 4) Two items concerned with transportation; 5) Four items concerned with scene attraction; 6) Eight items concerned with appearance and facilities; 7) Five items concerned with service quality; 8) Four items concerned with social demands; and 9) Four items concerned with leisure and relaxation.

The responses to the questionnaire used in this research were collected according to the Likert five-point scale [24].

Pre-questionnaire Statistic Analysis

The statistical data of the pre-test inventories used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS for Window XP) software to carry out the exploratory factor analysis, after deleting the items based on the elimination standards and testing the reliability and validity of the questionnaires. The explanations are as follows:

1. Item analysis: This research used the Wolman standards of the critical ratio [25][26]. Therefore, the Pearson product-moment value of the various items and total points did not obtain the 0.05 significance levels and the coefficient of correlation was below 0.30, indicating that it should be eliminated.
2. Content validity: After drafting the pre-test questionnaire used in this research, experts were asked to comment on the questionnaire, and appropriate changes were made.
3. Factor analysis.

When this research used the exploratory factor analysis, it considered a few questions that must be heeded, such as:

1. Bartlett's test of this questionnaire was similar to the Chi-square value, which was 8586.23. There were 703 degrees of freedom, which showed that the questionnaire obtained the significant level, $p<0.000$. After statistical calculations, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy value was 0.818 and conformed to the determining principle of the Kaiser (1970) KMO statistical scale [27]. This belonged to the meritorious grade and represented the appropriateness to carry out factor analysis.
2. It used the research of Kaiser; Bryman and Cramer, while the varimax of the orthogonal rotations method was used in SPSS statistical software [28][29]. This research, based on Kaiser's statement, retains the factors in which the eigen values are more than 1. This research used principal component analysis to estimate factor loading. According to Cattell and Jaspers; Browne; and Linn, with the quantity of items less than or equal to 40, the commonality should be greater than 40 [30-32]. The extracted commonality value of each item of the pre-test questionnaires in this study is shown as Table 1.
3. From the home stay underlying selection factors of pre-test questionnaires, nine factors were extracted through the rotation sums of squared loadings. The accumulated explanation of the total variance explained was 78.674%, and

this showed that the questionnaire of this research conformed to the determination standards of Tabachnick and Fidell [33]. The components matrix of the rotation of each item is in very good condition and is shown as Table 1.

Reliability Analysis

This research carried out Cronbach's reliability test [34]. Factor 1 showed 0.867, Factor 2 showed 0.968, Factor 3 showed 0.921, Factor 4 showed 0.865, Factor 5 showed 0.932, Factor 6 showed 0.872, Factor 7 showed 0.807, Factor 8 showed 0.872, and Factor 9 showed 0.902. The α value of the overall home stay underlying selection factors inventory was 0.954. This showed that the reliability of the various factors of the pre-test questionnaire obtained the excellent grade of the estimation standards of George and Mallery [35]. According to Camines and Zeller; Gay; and Loo, in their studies, an outstanding education test, the estimated value of internal consistency should possess a reliability coefficient of at least 0.80; therefore, it indicates that the reliability degree of this measurement is very good [36-38]. Finally, every factor was reviewed and renamed by three professionals as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Analysis summary list of item analysis, factor analysis and reliability test of Cronbach.

New Items No.	Items No.	Item Analysis		Yes(O)	Factor Loadings of Communalities' Extraction	Components Matrix by Rotation Method	Factor Name	Cronbach α
1	7	5.129*	0.509*	O	0.793	0.815	Factor 1. Activities arrange-ment	0.867
2	5	8.122*	0.573*	O	0.737	0.768		
3	6	9.381*	0.613*	O	0.741	0.750		
4	4	7.232*	0.583*	O	0.718	0.690		
5	8	5.148*	0.526*	O	0.584	0.676		
6	28	13.860*	0.778*	O	0.918	0.822	Factor 2. Service quality	0.968
7	27	14.266*	0.803*	O	0.947	0.821		
8	29	12.295*	0.777*	O	0.861	0.768		
9	31	13.803*	0.820*	O	0.886	0.724		
10	17	7.860*	0.584*	O	0.847	0.844	Factor 3. Scene attraction	0.921
11	15	8.992*	0.617*	O	0.865	0.815		
12	16	11.001*	0.643*	O	0.909	0.801		
13	18	8.260*	0.547*	O	0.809	0.754		
14	24	4.498*	0.478*	O	0.797	0.836	Factor 4. Social demands and facilities	0.865
15	34	8.208*	0.665*	O	0.810	0.740		
16	32	4.685*	0.421*	O	0.712	0.738		
17	23	5.784*	0.517*	O	0.723	0.708		
18	33	6.709*	0.635*	O	0.682	0.472		
19	3	13.114*	0.769*	O	0.889	0.767	Factor 5. Price	0.932
20	2	13.053*	0.797*	O	0.890	0.736		
21	11	11.522*	0.743*	O	0.839	0.719		
22	1	11.277*	0.698*	O	0.803	0.708		
23	21	8.298*	0.634*	O	0.821	0.794	Factor 6. Sanitary and comfort	0.872
24	22	5.291*	0.597*	O	0.786	0.775		
25	12	6.857*	0.572*	O	0.726	0.715		
26	30	6.523*	0.661*	O	0.772	0.692		
27	26	7.663*	0.434*	O	0.727	0.775	Factor 7. Nice appearance and feature	0.807
28	20	10.577*	0.469*	O	0.783	0.746		
29	19	8.092*	0.416*	O	0.673	0.702		
30	25	8.450*	0.468*	O	0.715	0.651		
31	9	7.385*	0.377*	O	0.710	0.567		
32	36	5.966*	0.507*	O	0.804	0.830	Factor 8. Leisure and relaxation	0.872
33	37	8.787*	0.674*	O	0.743	0.680		
34	38	10.953*	0.763*	O	0.751	0.563		
35	39	10.929*	0.768*	O	0.804	0.554		
36	35	4.738*	0.501*	O	0.706	0.545		
37	14	8.919*	0.643*	O	0.780	0.628	Factor 9. Transport-ation	0.902
38	13	11.402*	0.733*	O	0.836	0.575		
39	10	1.364	0.096	X				
							Total Cronbach α value is 0.954	

1.*p<0.05
2. Extraction method: principal component analysis.
3. Rotation method: the varimax of the orthogonal rotations.

Product-Moment Correlation

To avoid over-reliance on a single Cronbach's α coefficient, this research added Item-total Correlation as a test of reliability during the official test. This research used Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient to calculate the relationship. The correlation coefficient was between 0.574 and 0.831, and showed a significant level of statistics between the various factors and item-total correlation of the questionnaires. All dimensions and item-total correlations are listed as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Significance between the various factors and item-total correlation.

Components	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6	Factor 7	Factor 8	Factor 9	Total
Factor 1	1									
Factor 2	0.500*	1								
Factor 3	0.431*	0.486*	1							
Factor 4	0.515*	0.476*	0.259*	1						
Factor 5	0.459*	0.690*	0.518*	0.358*	1					
Factor 6	0.361*	0.573*	0.418*	0.437*	0.566*	1				
Factor 7	0.189*	0.486*	0.357*	0.237*	0.492*	0.466*	1			
Factor 8	0.475*	0.545*	0.421*	0.617*	0.587*	0.499*	0.273*	1		
Factor 9	0.523*	0.571*	0.540*	0.381*	0.618*	0.536*	0.388*	0.444*	1	
Total	0.692*	0.831*	0.665*	0.669*	0.826*	0.724*	0.574*	0.775*	0.722*	1

*$p < 0.05$

CONCLUSIONS

After conducting reliability and validity tests as described above, this research completed an official measurement on the selection factors used by college students when choosing the B&B home stay option. College students' selection factors when choosing a B&B in this research have been divided into nine dimensions, explained below:

1. Activities Arrangement: a total of five items covering local industry experience activity, cultural and folk experience activities, services of guiding explanations on history or customs, local specialty restaurants and tours.
2. Service Quality: a total of four items covering enthusiastic and caring services, providing good services and high quality accommodation.
3. Scene Attraction: a total of four items covering local nature and special resources of the destination itself and its surroundings.
4. Social Demands and Facilities: a total of five items covering leisure and exercise facilities, interpersonal exchanges, making new friends, improving relationships among relatives and friends.
5. Price: a total of four items covering B&B restaurant charges and overall facilities/service charges, high quality and B&B promotion sales.
6. Sanitation and Comfort: a total of four items covering bed comfort, kitchen hygiene, sanitation of environment and good appraisal in networks.
7. Special Appearance: a total of five items covering specially-designed appearance of gardens, architecture, internal decorations, innovations, and media reports through newspapers, TV, radio and advertisements.
8. Leisure and Relaxation: a total of five items covering location away from urban areas and crowds, desire for leisure and a relaxing life, release from pressure and experience of B&B.
9. Transportation: a total of two items covering convenience and distance.

To summarise the above factors, the reasons for which business management college students choose the B&B home stay option are mainly based on the expectation of the B&B's combined function of natural landscape and local folk customs. However, their decisions also included the reasonable price, clean and comfortable accommodation and high quality service, and also the scene resources, convenient transportation, special and innovated appearance, good leisure facilities with functions of interpersonal exchange and relaxation. By having these factors, the B&B home stay option provides consumers with accommodation choices different from general hotels.

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