



BALIKESİR UNİVERSİTİ BANDIRMA FAKÜLTESİ İKTİSADİ VE İDARİ BİLİMLER FAKÜLTESİ

BIALYSTOK UNIVERSITY OF FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE: NEW PERSPECTIVES IN TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY

25-27 September, 2014, Burhaniye, Turkey

BOOK OF PROCEEDINGS

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ISBN : 978-975-6993-19-4

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THE SCHOLARSHIP ON THE SCHOLARLY RESEARCH OF RECREATION:

CONTEXT OF TOURISM AND OTHER RESEARCH AREAS

Doç. Dr. Göknil Nur SEVER*

Arş. Gör. Mehtap ÖZKAN BUZLU**

ABSTRACT

Recreation is a research subject for various scholarly researches. Nevertheless, the scholarship of this multidisciplinary research subject is so limited. The purpose of this study is to explore the intersections and differences between Tourism/Leisure/Hospitality/Hotel/Restaurant related scholarly researches and other social science areas. This work provides information about what is, how is, who is, where is, searched in the recreation subject so far, and help researchers for the forthcoming research design. The intersection and distinction findings demonstrate what is and consequently what is not yet studied. Researchers may consider these “what and what not” elements when designing further studies and defending their originality.

Keywords: Recreation, Scientometric, Word Clouds, Visual Data Analysis

1. INTRODUCTION

Every scientific research is expected to argue its significance. Significance is enhanced by the originality. There are several routes to create originality. Some of these routes are; diversifying searching construct, examining a previously unexplored relationship, applying a new method, verifying theory on a previously unexplored sampling frame or field. In order to defense the uniqueness of chosen route, scholarship on scholarship of searched field is a prerequisite. Reviews, meta analysis, bibliometrics and scientometric studies all provide scholarship on scholarship.

Recreation is one of the basic activities of tourism and it's also subjected by some other research fields such as health, geography, forestry, architecture, economics, and education. This makes recreation a multidisciplinary concept. Nevertheless, the scholarship of this multidiscipline research subject is so limited if any. The purpose of this study is to explore the similarities and differences between tourism/hospitality related scholarly researches and other social science areas. By doing so, multidiscipline frame of the recreation research, and the searched constructs, research approach and sampling frame will be determined. This work is expected to provide information about what is/how

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is/who is/where is searched in the recreation subject so far, and help researchers for the forthcoming research design.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The 'scholarship on the scholarship' of tourism broadly divided into five categories (Hunt, Gao and Xue, 2014:2): The first category *"focuses on the mechanisms, outcomes, and relationships related to journal ratings, rankings, and citation analyses"*. The second category *"explores the source knowledge and seminal writings in tourism"*. The third category *"delves into collaborations and social networks among tourism scholars evidenced in their publication output"*. The fourth category *"presents introspective scholarship on tourism"*. The fifth category *"explores the profound influence of Google Scholar on the content, visibility, naming, and indexing of journals"*. Their manuscript aimed to provide a snapshot into shifts in the priorities of tourism researchers over the last four decades, thus tracing the history of theoretical development in the field of tourism and they applied word clouds to visualize findings. The same approach and analysis has been adopted for some other fields (such as Ahern, 2013 and Haugerud, 2013 examined the field of anthropology).

There are also some scholarship on scholarship studies specifically concentrated on recreation subject. Such as; impacts of recreation (Sato, Wood and Lindenmayer, 2013; Steven, Pickering and Castley, 2011; Sun and Walsch, 1998; Liddle and Scorgie, 1980), valuation and recreation values (Ghermandi and Nunes, 2013; Zandersen and Tol, 2009; Brander, Van Beukering and Cesar, 2007; Shrestha and Loomis, 2001), recreational physical activity (Ashford, Edmunds and French, 2010; Kaczynski and Henderson, 2007; Olsen, Bain, Jordan, Nagle, Green, Whiteman and Webb, 2007), recreation and consumer satisfaction (Williams, 1989), research methodology (Bedini and Wu, 1994), geographic view (Jansen-Verbeke and Dietvorst, 1987), recreation experience preference (Manfredo, Driver and Tarrant, 1996), recreation programs (Bedini and Phoenix, 2001) and outdoor recreation and ethnicity (Gentin, 2011). Literature search shows that, there is a lack of scholarship on scholarship in recreation, which evolves the multidisciplinary frame of recreation and provides directions for further research.

3. METHOD, ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

There are various methodologies to explore scholarship on scholarship (Hunt, Gao ve Xue (2014) such as bibliometrics, reviews, meta analysis and scientometrics. All these methodologies provide unique outcomes but also consists some deficits. For example, bibliometrics can be used for the evaluation of research performance and the study of science as a knowledge-generating and communication system and its interaction with technology (Van Raan, 2005:50), but insufficient in providing clues about further research designs. Reviews and meta analysis may provide valuable outcomes for the further research designs. Corresponding to purpose; a scientometric study was

performed by applying a word cloud analysis. A scientometric approach provides an opportunity for analyzing scientific fields according to research interests and make comparisons (e.g. Leydesdorff and Gauthier, 1996; Glanzel and Schubert, 2003; Konur, 2011, 2012a, 2012b; Montoya, Montoya, Gomez, Manzano-Agugliaro and Alameda-Hernández, 2014).

Scope of the sampling frame of this study consists of thesis and dissertations published in the Proquest data base. Data collected in March 2014, comprise 664 thesis/dissertations which contain the word “recreation” within title. 664 thesis/dissertations produced by 163 different scientific departments. Out of 664 thesis/dissertations; 98 are produced by tourism, leisure, hospitality, hotel, restaurant related scientific departments, and the 521 are produced by other scientific departments. Major department have not been mentioned for 45 thesis/dissertations and this data dismissed from the analysis. Analyzed 619 titles are published between the years 1917-2013 and 267 of them are thesis and 397 of them are dissertations.

Content analysis has been generated by using ‘word clouds’ (www.wordle.net) which is one of the visual data analysis techniques. A word cloud is a tool for visualizing how frequently words exist in a body of text (Hunt et al., 2014: 2). Words or terms that are most prominent in a text are represented with larger font and sometimes highlighted with a different font color (Riggs and Hu, 2003: 522). While preserving the anonymity of the subjects, they show immediately what common themes and phrases appear in the text, providing an excellent starting point for analysis and coding of qualitative data and even more, word clouds (or tag clouds) are popular, fun ways to display text data in graphical form and they can also be useful tools in assessment while “*A picture is worth a thousand words*” (DePaulo and Wilkonson, 2014: 38-44).

A few minor adjustments were made on the text data to fit the visual analysis. All the words were changed to their upper cases. Due to its frequency the word ‘recreation’, ‘recreational’ and ‘study’ was dismissed from the analysis. Additionally, prepositions and punctuations were removed. The resulting text was used to create the word clouds.

Figure 1 represents the major departments which recreation studies (thesis and dissertations) produced. Cloud represented in Figure 1 shows that recreation is a multidisciplinary field. Education, Physical Education, Health, Tourism, Economics, Agricultural Economics, Rural Economy, Resources Development, Resources (Tourism / Natural / Forest), Forestry, Geography, Management (Tourism / Recreation / Resource and Environmental), Administration (Park / Educational / Tourism / Business / Recreation / Public), Leisure Studies, Agriculture, Environmental Design and Planning, Sociology, History, Kinesiology, Sport, Landscape Architecture, Psychology are the main research areas produced work about recreation. Cloud shows that Education, Health, Management and Tourism departments are the most interested ones.

Figure 1 : The Main Research Areas Interested in Recreation (n=619)

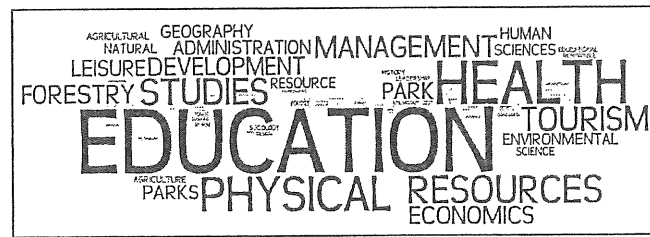


Figure 2 and Figure 3 represents the themes mentioned in the titles of thesis/dissertations'.

Figure 2: Thesis/Dissertations' Themes Produced by Tourism/Leisure/Hospitality/Hotel/Restaurant related scientific departments (n=98)

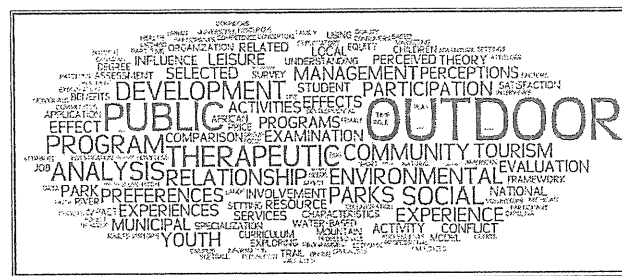
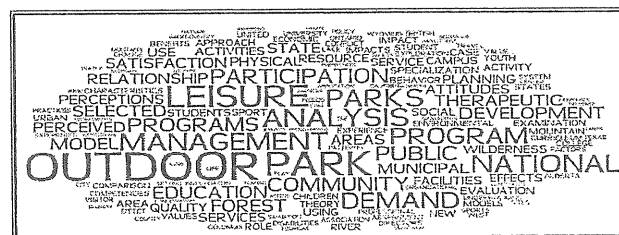


Figure 3: Thesis/Dissertations' Themes Produced by Other Social Research Departments
(n=521)



A synthesis of clouds represented Figure 2 and Figure 3 has been performed for evolving the recreation research content, scope and perspective. The synthesis has been constructed according categories of: searched variables (what), research scope (where), sampling frame (who), research perspective (how), method, time implication (when), searched activity. Table 1 represents the syntheses:

Table 1: Synthesis of Cloud 2 and Cloud 3

	Other Social Research Areas (Figure 3)	Tourism/Leisure/Hospitality /Hotel/Restaurant Related Areas (Figure 2)
Searched Variables (What)	Participation, Satisfaction, Activities, Quality, Perceptions, Demand, Attitudes, Competencies, Behavior, Benefits, Value(s), Utility, Preferences, Experience, Conflict, Welfare, Needs, Risk, Specialization, Characteristics, Cost, Constraints, Identity.	Needs, Participation, Preferences, Experiences, Characteristics, Conflict, Involvement, Activities, Perceptions, Benefits, Acceptance, Competence, Price, Quality, Satisfaction, Attitudes, Attribute, Choices, Specialization, Behavior, Equity, Enjoyment, Collaboration.
Research Scope (Where)	Outdoor, Parks, Areas, County, University, Municipal, National, Forest, Lake, River, Sites, Lands, California, Ontario, Mountain, Nature, Wilderness(areas), Urban, British Columbia, Alberta, Michigan, Association, Backcountry, Wyoming, Center, College, Texas, United States, Montana, Campus, Agencies, Departments, Institutions, Setting, State, Organizational, Facilities, City.	Outdoor, Parks, Mountain, Michigan, Carolina, Forest, Illinois, River, Universities, Campus, Lands, Water-Based, Urban, Settings, Local, Municipal, National, Organization, Trail, Corridors.
Sampling Frame (Who)	Community, Individuals, Directors, Student, Visitor, Adolescents, Children, Public, Youth, Disabilities.	Public, African, Visitors, American, Volunteers, Male, Adults, Participants, Community(ies), Professionals, Female, Adolescent, Youth, Children, Homeless, Canadian, Family, Individuals, Specialists, Student, Employees, Consumers, Minorities, Staff.
Research Perspective (How)	Analysis, Evaluation, Comparison, Assessment/Assessing, Exploration, Application, Investigation, Influence, Relationship, Understanding, Role, Effects, Impacts, Factors, Examination, Approach, Valuation.	Analysis, Relationship, Evaluation, Comparison, Application, Influence, Effect/Affect, Impact, Exploratory/Exploring/Exploration, Examination, Understanding, Role, Investigation, Assessment, Conceptual, Survey, Guide, Factors, Framework.
Time Implication (When)	Leisure*	Leisure*, Part-time.
Searched Activity	Management, Services, Physical, Education, Delivery, Practices, Play, Therapeutic, Conservation, Planning, Programming, Training, Tourism, Policy, Health, Travel/Access, Sport, Economic, Implications, Leisure*	Play, Management, Marketing, Economic, Sport, Tourism, Physical, Leisure*, Services, Online, Programming, Health, Adventure, Therapeutic, Softball, Treatment, Slow-Pitch.
Method	Case, Theory, Models.	Theory, Model, Focus Group Interviews.
Disregarded Words in the Syntheses	Environmental, Water, New, Use, Using, Selected, System, Curriculum, West, Professional, Programs, Social, Life, Time, Resource, Patterns, Development, Perceived, Change.	Environmental, Based, Data, Resource, Development, Using, Curriculum, Related, Social, Natural, Professional, Programs, Developmental, Selected, Time, Patterns, Perceived, Types, Use, Job, Inputs, Method, Focus, Perspective, Degree, Dog, Validated, Information, Gathering, Demonstrated.

*In some thesis and dissertations; leisure mentioned as ‘leisure time’ and in some others mentioned as ‘leisure participation’. Consequently leisure is placed both in ‘searched activity’ and ‘time implication’.

Conclusion presenting multidisciplinary frame of recreation studies and implications are discussed in the further section.

4. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

In this work; we examined studies subjected recreation within the scope of thesis and dissertations published in Proquest database and explored the “searched variables, research scope, sampling frame, research perspective, searched activity, method and time implication” for the purpose of exploring multidisciplinary frame of recreation. As conclusion, the similarities and differences have

been explored (presented in figures 4-5-6-7-8-9-10) between Tourism, Leisure, Hospitality, Hotel, Restaurant related research and research produced by other social science areas. Right circles in the figures present the Tourism, Leisure, Hospitality, Hotel, Restaurant related areas and left circles in present the other social research areas. The intersection areas represent the mutual interests of all fields.

Figure 4: The Multi-Disciplinary Frame of “Searched Variables” in Recreation Subjected Research

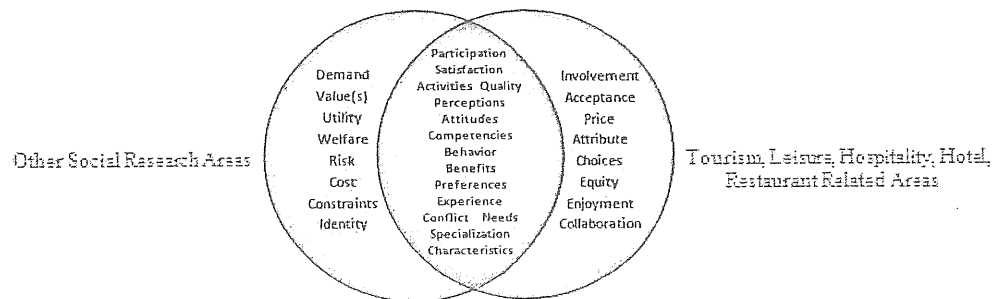


Figure 5: The Multi-Disciplinary Frame of “Research Scope” in Recreation Subjected Research

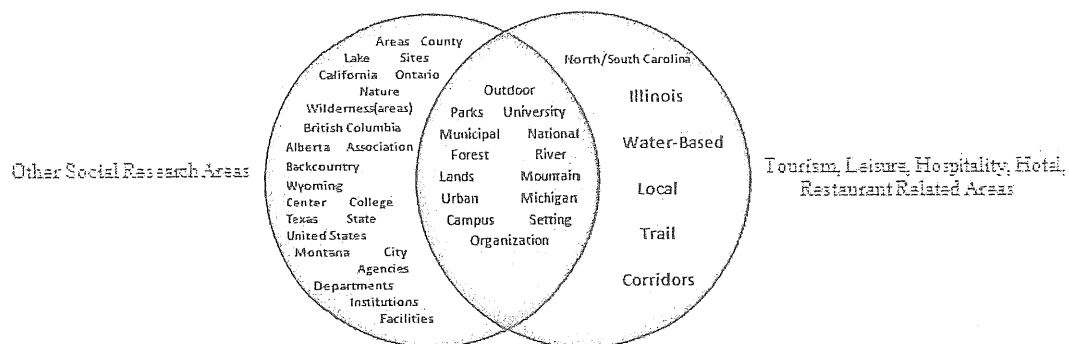


Figure 6: The Multi-Disciplinary Frame of “Research Sample” in Recreation Subjected Research

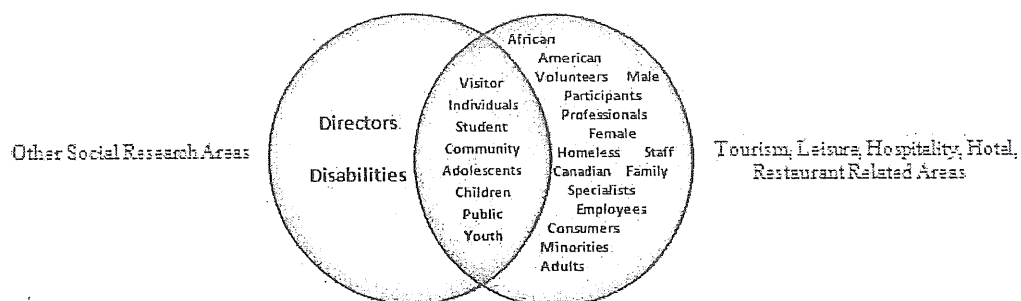


Figure 7: The Multi-Disciplinary Frame of “Research Perspectives” in Recreation Subjected Research

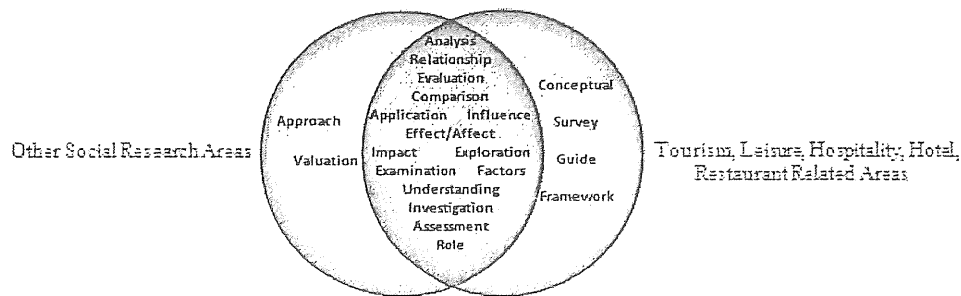


Figure 8: The Multi-Disciplinary Frame of “Searched Activities” in Recreation Subjected Research

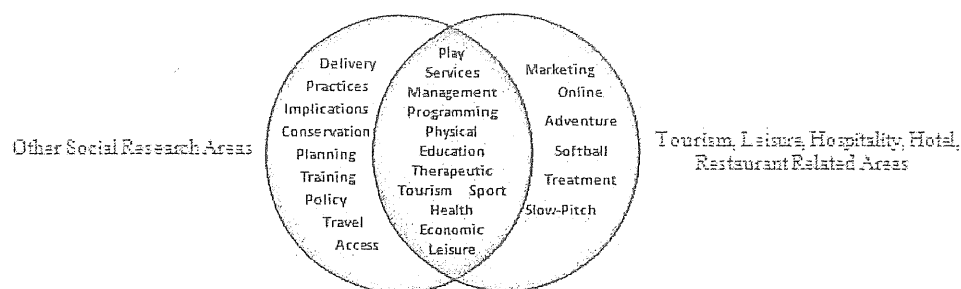


Figure 9: The Multi-Disciplinary Frame of “Time Implications” in Recreation Subjected Research

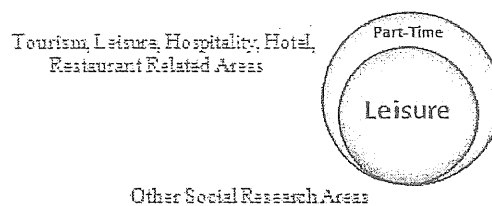
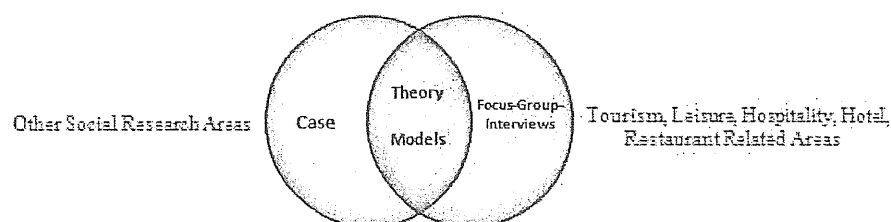


Figure 10: The Multi-Disciplinary Frame of “Method Approaches” in Recreation Subjected Research



This work provides a snapshot into variables searched, research scope, sampling frame, research perspective, method, time implication and searched activity of dissertations and thesis related to recreation. This snapshot may contribute to further research designs in several ways.

The intersection and distinction figures demonstrate what is and consequently what is not yet studied. Researchers may consider these “what and what not” elements when designing further studies and defending the originality. For example; as figure 4 presenting “The Multi-Disciplinary Frame of Searched Variables in Recreation Subjected Research” examined, we notice that some basic constructs such as trust, image has not been studied yet.

Word clouds has been implied as a very practical tool for analyzing qualitative data and a useful option for visualization (e.g., DePaolo and Wilkonson, 2014; Hunt et. al., 2014; Ahearn, 2013; Haugerud, 2013) and we think researchers who work on scholarship on scholarship or who perform any content analysis may benefit from this tool and this study may be taken as an example.

The scope of this study is limited to Thesis and Dissertations published in Proquest data base. Examining journal articles may provide a more comprehensive view.

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