

The Influence of Children on Vacation Attraction Choice

By:

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Abstract

Increasingly, many organizations in the travel trade are choosing to market to children directly and indirectly. While the literature suggests many reasons for wanting to attract families with children to a tourism destination or attraction, there is disagreement with regards to why and how much influence a child/children truly has on vacation attraction choice, if any.

The purpose of this study was to answer the question: how do children influence attraction choice while on vacation? A cross-sectional, self-administered, web-based survey of 99 adult facilitators visiting one of three tourist attractions in Winnipeg, Canada with at least one child between the ages of six and 17 was used to: 1) gain insight on how groups with a child/children prefer to travel; 2) understand the reasons why groups with a child/children choose to visit a select type of attraction; 3) examine the views of adult facilitators who travel with a child/children on the child/children's participation with regards to the selection of tourist attractions; and 4) investigate which attraction characteristics adult facilitators believe provide their entire group with the most satisfying experience.

Results indicate that children have relatively little direct influence within the family or group unit on attraction choice. While the degree of influence was found to be small within each stage of the decision making process (idea initiation, search/evaluation, final decision), children were found to exert a more significant degree of influence in the idea initiation stage, both relative to the others in the group unit and relative to the other stages.

A positive correlation was revealed between the ages of the children and the respondent's perceived influence of each child in the first two stages of the decision-making process; however, the relationship was non-linear and relative influence was found to peak between the ages of seven and 13. Children were found to have indirect influence on the type of attraction chosen by the facilitators. Facilitators chose to visit certain cultural attractions because they offered opportunities for education and fun, and placed a strong importance on attraction-specific attributes such as the presence of interactive activities, a safe and secure environment, and a reasonable time required for the visit. Facilitators placed less importance on the option to purchase food/refreshments/souvenirs and on child-centered promotional materials and word of mouth testimonials.

Key Terms: tourism, leisure, family decision-making

Acknowledgments

While most scholarly acknowledgements express some form relief that the “hard work and sacrifice” is over and that “the end” has finally arrived, I am somewhat ambivalent about ending this chapter in my academic career. Many will never know the feeling of self-worth and the life-changing level of enlightenment a graduate school experience can provide. And while these outcomes are not truly appreciated by most students until long after the diploma has been conferred, I have been fortunate enough to enjoy the journey so much so that the destination is somewhat inefficacious. When I think back to my late twenties, I will fondly remember how my professional development and my leisure time were one and the same.

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents	vi
List of Tables.....	ix
List of Figures.....	xi
Chapter 1: Introduction and Purpose	1
• <i>Rationale for the Study</i>	1
• <i>Statement of the Question</i>	6
Chapter 2: Literature Review	8
• <i>Children and Vacations</i>	8
<i>Children’s Attitudes towards Vacations</i>	8
<i>Appealing to Families</i>	9
<i>What do Vacationing Children Think About Tourist Attractions?</i>	11
<i>Facilitators</i>	12
• <i>Decision Making</i>	13
<i>Family Decision Making</i>	13
<i>Children and Decision Making</i>	14
<i>The Destination Choice-Sets Model</i>	16
<i>Family Decision-Making Model of Vacation Purchases</i>	19
• <i>Cultural Attractions</i>	20
• <i>Summary and Study Hypotheses</i>	22
Chapter 3: Methods	25
• <i>Research Design</i>	25
• <i>Setting</i>	26
• <i>Sampling</i>	27
• <i>Data Collection</i>	28
• <i>Data Analysis</i>	30
• <i>Scope and Limitations</i>	33

Chapter 4: Results	35
• <i>Questionnaire Response</i>	35
• <i>Description of Respondents</i>	37
<i>Respondent Demographics</i>	37
<i>Trip Characteristics</i>	41
<i>Attraction Information</i>	43
<i>Visit Group Demographics</i>	44
<i>Visit Group Experience</i>	46
• <i>Results of Hypothesis 1: Reason for Visiting Cultural Attraction</i>	49
• <i>Results of Hypothesis 2: Important Attraction Attributes</i>	51
• <i>Results of Hypothesis 3: Timing and Relative Degree of Influence</i>	53
• <i>Results of Hypothesis 4: Influence and Age</i>	59
• <i>Discussion</i>	62
Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations	65
• <i>Implications and Recommendations</i>	65
• <i>Study Limitations and Future Research</i>	69

References	72
Appendix A: Invitation Letters to Attractions to Participate	86
Appendix B: Invitation card to sample population to Participate	90
Appendix C: Invitation Response from Upper Management at the Royal Canadian Mint	92
Appendix D: Ethics Protocol	94
Appendix E: Questionnaire	97
Appendix F: Full Results for Age and Ethnicity of Respondents	113
Appendix G: Confidence Interval Diagrams	116

List of Tables:

	<u>Page</u>
Table 1: Visitor statistics at participating cultural attractions	36
Table 2: Breakdown of visiting adults with a child/children	36
Table 3: Invitation response rates	37
Table 4: Age of the respondents (condensed)	37
Table 5: Marital status of the respondents	38
Table 6: Respondent – child/children relationship	38
Table 7: Highest level of education achieved by the respondents	39
Table 8: Current annual household income levels of the respondents	40
Table 9: Ethnic or cultural groups of the respondents	40
Table 10: Current place of residence of the respondents	41
Table 11: Length of the entire trip which included the visit to the attraction	41
Table 12: Main purpose of the visit to the Winnipeg area	42
Table 13: Method of travel to Winnipeg	42
Table 14: Number of times the respondents have visited Winnipeg	43
Table 15: First visit to the attraction	43
Table 16: How respondents heard about the attraction	44
Table 17: Number of people in visit group	45
Table 18: Number of children under 18 in visit group	45
Table 19: Sex of children in visit groups	45
Table 20: Who paid for the admission to the attraction	47
Table 21: Who made a purchase at the attraction’s gift shop	47
Table 22: Perceptions about the attraction experience	48
Table 23: Vacationing with children patterns	48
Table 24: Timing of decision to visit the attraction	49
Table 25: Importance of reasons for visiting the attraction with child/children	50
Table 26: Importance of attraction attributes for visiting the attraction with child/children	52
Table 27: Results of tests for homogeneity of variance and normality of residuals with respect to the use of ANOVA to compare the mean scores	54
Table 28: Results of Mood’s Median Test to compare influence of decision makers in the decision making process	55
Table 29: Total scores attributed to the respondents, spouses, children, and other persons for the three stages in the decision making process	57

Table 30: Results of Z tests for comparison of the proportions of the total scores attributed to the children for the three stages in the decision making process	58
Table 31: Correlation coefficients between ages of children and percentage scores	59

List of Figures:

	<u>Page</u>
Figure 1: Attraction advertising in Winnipeg Free Press (2009)	2
Figure 2: Attraction advertising in Winnipeg Free Press (2010)	2
Figure 3: The family destination choice-sets model	18
Figure 4: Frequency distribution histogram of the ages of the children visiting the attraction	46
Figure 5: Relationship between the age of the child and the percentage attributed to who initiated the idea to visit the attraction	60
Figure 6: Relationship between the age of the child and the percentage attributed to the time spent researching what the attraction had to offer	61
Figure 7: The family participation vacation attraction choice model	68

Chapter 1: Introduction and Purpose

Rationale for the Study

Over thirty years ago the 1975 Broadcast Advertisers' Report declared total spending of 86 million dollars by commercial advertisers to communicate their messages directly to children (Mehrotra, Torges, Needham, Harper, & Steers, 1977). Expenditures in food-related products marketing intended for children reached 15 billion dollars in 2002, up from 6.9 billion dollars in 1992 (Spake, 2003). Boyer and Viallon (1996) found that an increasing amount of holiday promotional material was being designed to appear familiar to children. The growing trend of spending marketing dollars exclusively for the eyes and minds of children is not just happening in the United States. Examples can be found all over the world and germane to the study are the emergence of Canadian family travel destination and activity meta-search websites (e.g., www.kidznsnow.com, www.kidfriendlycanada.com, www.hotelfun4kids.com, www.findfamilyfun.com), child-specific activity museums (e.g. Manitoba Children's Museum, established 1983, and the Niagara Children's Museum, established 1999), and an ever-increasing amount of promotional material seemingly designed to engage children, their facilitators, or both.

Figure 1 and 2 show a representation of advertising materials all appearing in either the February 14th and March 21st, 2009 (Figure 1) or January 9th, 2010 (Figure 2) editions of the Winnipeg Free Press (Copyright advertisements used with permission by the attractions: The Manitoba Museum, The Royal Canadian Mint, and The Winnipeg Art Gallery).

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STEP INTO THE MINT!
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PASSEZ À LA MONNAIE!**

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Profitez du meilleur de l'hiver canadien cette année au Festival du Voyageur en venant découvrir les trésors de la boutique et des visites guidées de la Monnaie royale canadienne. Dénichez le parfait trésor, celui à la portée de votre bourse. De plus, votre Macaron Voyageur vous donne droit à **DEUX VISITES POUR LE PRIX D'UNE**. Du chocolat sera offert aux enfants présents à la visite! Soyez au rendez-vous!

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ACTIVITIES FROM 1:30-4pm
FREE ADMISSION ALL DAY 11am-5pm

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Family Sunday is made possible by the support of The McCam Foundation and the Graham C. Lount Foundation.
Media sponsor: PBS Kids

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Figure 1: Attraction advertising in Winnipeg Free Press (2009)

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Figure 2: Attraction advertising in Winnipeg Free Press (2010)

According to early research by Jenkins (1979), “20 to 35 percent of parents reported their children’s influence to be strong in the choice of timing, destination, accommodation and activities” (Wang, Hsieh, Yeh, & Tsai, 2004, p. 184), and according to Holman and Epperson (1984), places of interest to children are commonly visited by families with children. Later, Foxman (1989) reported that 60 percent of families agree that adolescents are having an influence on vacation and travel decisions. The pioneering work by Jenkins and subsequent studies by Holman and Epperson and Foxman in the area of children’s influence on travel, tourism and leisure are but a few of the many information sources that have contributed to the growth of the niche target market: marketing to children on vacation. Some of the more recent statistics that are relevant to the topic include:

- “Nearly half of all US family vacation trips included children in 1998, an increase of five percent over 1997 and 55 percent since 1992” (TIA, 1999).
- “The growth in the number of children accompanying parents on business trips has increased by 255 percent since 1990” (TIA, 1999).
- “45.6 percent of American married-couple families lived with own children under 18 years old” (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001).
- 18 percent of Canada’s population is between the ages of five and 18 years (Statistics Canada, 2006).

These trends and statistics make it is easy to understand why tourism marketers have decided to turn their focus to this traditionally ignored demographic. Increasing

expectations from those in the business of tourism (i.e., governments, hoteliers, attraction managers, and others) mean that tourism marketers need to become more progressive and sophisticated in their methods to become a destination of choice. The resulting effect has been the conception of niche tourism marketing: focusing on a subset of a market sector that is generally under-exploited by the mainstream (Dalgic & Leeuw, 1994). Many organizations have realized that it can be more lucrative not to be all things to all people. Rather, tourist destinations decide on one or a few specific target markets, then they research what will work best in attracting their chosen niche and carry out their mix of marketing activities in pursuit of achieving their visitation, economic, and other goals.

Defining a niche market is commonly done by breaking down segments of the population on the basis of demographic, behavioural, geographic, and psychographic similarities and targeting them by their similar attitudes, behaviours/moods, and unmet needs. Segmenting and targeting by a demographic can be as simple as marketing directly to high income earners and offering a premium product/experience at a premium price. Psychographic characteristics being sought might be selected on the basis of a travel motivation, such as persons seeking novelty, defined by Crompton (1979) as “curiosity, adventure, new and different” (p. 419). Others will choose their target by purpose, such as those travelling for business, pleasure, or for a pilgrimage. However, niche markets are smaller than segments (Chalasanani & Shani, 1992) and there is virtually no end to how specific and within which characteristic or combination thereof the niche can be; the concept is primarily about specialization (Kotler, 1991). For example, a hotel and conference centre can decide to market solely to religious meeting and convention

travellers from Eastern North America and tailor their products and services (i.e., specialize) to include things like an available kosher menu, religious-based city tours, and kneeling pads in every room to facilitate praying. Meanwhile, an attraction might choose to breakdown the family travel segment and specifically target a niche of 55 to 70 year old individuals and couples travelling with children. Hoping to entice multi-generational travellers to visit the attraction, management might communicate their child-friendly facilities and activities (e.g., interactive displays, supervised play areas, etc.) as well as their senior discount pricing. It is pertinent to note here that just because an organization has chosen to market to specific sub-segments, this does not mean that they will turn away business from others; the target is a preferred group, not necessarily an exclusive one. However, if the niche of marketing travel and tourism to children is keeping up with the growth in family travel, then the niche is in danger of elevating itself to a mainstream market segment with niche markets within it. For example, a recent article entitled “Baby-moon Pregnant with Possibility” in Tourism April 2007 (Canadian Tourism Commission) reported on the growing niche market of expectant couple travel and how the travel trade is targeting this potentially lucrative getaway category; evidence that there appears to be a great deal of ingenuity in the tourism industry to take advantage of, or perhaps even try to create, trends occurring within travel.

Statement of the Question

Increasingly, many organizations in the travel trade are choosing to market to children directly and indirectly (for the purposes of this paper, children are defined as those aged 6 to 17 years of age). Common sense would suggest that children have less need or desire to travel and/or engage in tourism activities, and have less discretionary income; so why the growing trend in targeting this market segment?

Vacation decision-making generally consists of three parts: 1) whether or not to go on vacation; 2) where to go on vacation (destination); and 3) what to do once at the chosen destination (activities). Travelling with children can certainly have an impact on the outcome of any and all three vacation decisions, but much of the research (Fodness, 1992; Jenkins, 1978; Kang & Hsu, 2005; Wang et al, 2004) has focused solely on the first two parts of vacation decision-making (i.e., whether or not to go, and where to go) and those few studies that have explored the question of activity selection have either done so in the context of general leisure for local residents (Turley, 2001; Walsh-Heron & Stevens, 1990) or have measured influence across multiple tourist activities found at a single attraction location (Nickerson & Jurowski, 2001; Thornton, Shaw & Williams, 1997). Thornton et al make the key point that:

...children seem to have little influence in the decision to travel, since it is a major, infrequent and expensive choice...In contrast, little research is available on decision-making whilst actually on vacation. In this situation tourist groups face a larger number of individually less important choices,

yet the outcomes of these choices are significant in shaping behaviour while on holiday (1997, p. 289).

The purpose of this paper is to answer the question: how do children influence vacation attraction choice? The key research objectives involve: 1) gaining insight on how groups with a child/children prefer to travel; 2) examining the views of adult facilitators who travel with a child/children on the child/children's participation with regards to the decision to visit cultural attractions; 3) understanding the reasons why groups with a child/children decide to visit cultural attractions; and 4) discovering what attraction characteristics adult facilitators believe are most important in providing their child/children with an enjoyable experience. An examination of the literature in the fields of tourism, leisure, and decision-making served to suggest gaps in the research, build a case for the study in a Canadian context, and support the topic's implications for industry professionals. Results from the study will contribute to the knowledge base on children's roles in vacation behaviour and provide managerial implications for marketing strategy (including target, timing, message, and medium) and visitor experience.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Children and Vacations

Children's Attitudes toward Vacations. Investigating the role of children in travel and tourism decisions requires an understanding of children's thought processes and attitudes towards vacation travel and tourism. Although no research studies were found that have a focus on how children viewed hotels, airlines, attractions, and other travel components specifically, Cullingford (1995) pioneered the study of views of children on overseas travel. His study provided valuable insight into children's mental framework and how the need to categorize what is normal and what is different by way of stereotyping helped form children's expectations of holidays and travel. Most notably, Cullingford's research reveals that children see the perfect destination as one with the pleasures of home but with the added extras of good food, entertainment, and good weather. The study also found that the use of the visual sense (i.e., television, print, etc.) plays a central role and is "clearly a strong influence in providing children with a stereotype of other countries" (Cullingford, 1995, p. 126) in the context of tourism. Today, this would more than ever include motion pictures and the Internet. To attract the family vacation market, it is assumed that tourism marketers must exploit children's easily influenced need to categorize and connect, preferably visually, their product/service with familiarities from home (e.g., family togetherness) and the extras they are looking for (e.g., entertainment and good weather). However, it has also been suggested by Cullingford that little evidence exists "that [children] respond with particular attention or interest to the advertising of

travel agents, tours operators, tourist boards and holiday destinations” (1995, p. 122) and that “children feature strongly in some advertisements, directly to impress the parents in their choice.” (1995, p. 122). Perhaps the growing number of advertisements appealing to families is simply meant to cast the widest net; in other words, hope that children develop a positive attitude towards the product/service and that parents choose products/services that make all members of the family feel good about the travel decision.

Appealing to Families. There are many reasons for wanting to attract families with children to a tourism destination or attraction. A summary list of reasons from Ryan (1992) includes:

1. Children are a catalyst in generating family visits.
2. Children directly swell the number of visitors (repeat or first-time).
3. Children potentially extend dwell-time (i.e. length of stay).
4. Children respond positively to catering and retail opportunities, and encourage membership of support schemes.
5. Children are believed to enrich the nature of the adult experience, thus enhancing the educational experiences of both adult and child.

Of this list from Ryan, the point of most importance to the topic explored in this paper is number one: children as catalysts (influencers) of demand for tourism experiences. As demonstrated in the literature, children can exert direct influence on travel and tourism purchase decisions by their level of involvement and/or their attitude and pre-conceived notions of a product/place. However, the mere existence and presence of children and their needs, as well as the needs and desires of the facilitators (parents/guardians facilitating the

child's experience), arguably have even more influence on the choice of tourism products and services. Although limited research has been conducted on this specific focus, inferences can be drawn from Turley's (2001) study on children and the demand for recreational experiences as they relate to zoos in the United Kingdom. The key conclusions of her study were that: 1) "the presence of children is found to have a notable influence on the demand for zoos"; and 2) "the presence of children in a visiting group has a positive influence on the decision to visit a recreational setting when the setting is perceived to be child/family oriented" (Turley, 2001, p. 1). The first point suggests that zoos, a leisure and tourist attraction, offer something that facilitators want for their children. Turley goes on to list the top zoo visitor motivations, from several adult only studies (Andereck & Caldwell, 1994; ETB, 1983; Holzer, Scott & Bixer, 1998; Kellert, 1979), which included: family togetherness, education for children, to treat the children, and developing relationships. As such, the demand for this kind of activity can most certainly be influenced, perhaps even provoked, by the presence of children. The second point, which is most interesting to tourism marketers, not only suggests that being perceived as child/family oriented will attract more family visits, but that this perceived image will also discourage other demographics from visiting at all. Visitor attractions need to be aware of this potential consequence should they choose to make families their primary target market. For those attractions that have made the informed decision to continue on their quest to be child/family oriented, the most appropriate question, asked by Turley (2001) herself, then becomes: "What features and facilities give rise to perceptions of child/family orientation in the context of managed visitor attractions?" (p. 16).

What do Vacationing Children Think About Tourist Attractions? Clearly, the presence of other children is a factor that gives rise to perceptions that a destination or attraction is child friendly, but the steady and continued presence of children is the result of activities that appeal to children, and by extension their facilitators. Tourism managers have found that in order to boost children's interest and enjoyment, they need to make use of live exhibits, be hands-on, and "find interactive methods to encourage participation, investigation, and knowledge gain" (Turley, 2001, p. 14). Unfortunately, there is very limited research on children's preferences and opinions on travel and more specifically on satisfaction with family vacation choices. A search of the literature in the field has turned up only one study which asked children their thoughts since the revolutionary work of Cullingford in 1995. The influence of children on vacation travel patterns, researched by Nickerson and Jurowski (2001), contains a rare survey study method, which included getting responses from vacationing children (and adults) in Virginia City and Nevada City USA on activities and satisfaction. The results provide valuable insight into what kinds of tourist activities children enjoy. According to Nickerson and Jurowski (2001), the "obvious" or key theme is participant interaction. Children evidently find activities with active, and more importantly, interactive components to be the most enjoyable or "fun". Also of interest is the inverse relationship of the activities most enjoyed by children with the number of children who participated in the activities (Nickerson & Jurowski, 2001). The authors of the study suggest that the attractions under study (Virginia City and Nevada City) need to do a better job marketing and communicating to adults and their children the activities that provide the most satisfaction.

Facilitators. Nearly all of the relevant literature reviewed seems to at least make mention of how the overseeing adults, care-givers or guardians, dubbed “facilitators” by the author, are a factor with regards to children’s influence on travel and tourism behaviour. Facilitators, regardless of what the children think and do, are in fact the family activity decision-maker; hence the reason why the vast majority of studies prefer the opinions of facilitators over the children. In most cases, especially those involving younger children, a facilitator is essential for the child’s experience to take place as the adult is needed for things like transportation and admission (i.e., payment of fee and required supervision). Knowing this, tourism marketers have a couple of apparent options: 1) target the children directly in the hopes that they will influence their facilitators, or 2) target the most common facilitator demographics. The first option relies on the influence strategies of children such as bargaining and persuasion which may include pouting or sweet talk (Shoham & Dalakas, 2003). Turley (2001) refers to this as technique ‘pester-power’ (Intel, 2002) and agrees that “well-positioned marketing activity may stimulate children to increasingly play the role of mediator in bringing the idea before their parents.” (p. 14). In an age of marketing, getting one’s message out to impressionable young minds is becoming increasingly achievable. Bridges and Briesch (2006) found that “...children do appear to influence purchase of child-focused products for which they have had greater opportunity (time) to observe media advertising” (p. 180). The second option might be a good one for tourism marketers that believe parents/guardians have a strong need to control what they do as a family and will not be easily persuaded by the whims of their children. After all, several studies (Berry & Pollay, 1968, Turner, Kelly, & McKenna,

2006) have found that parents believe that they very rarely give in to their children's pestering. While not the focus of this study, it is important to note that many psychologists and like-minded regulators believe advertising directly to children results in increasing materialistic values; the ethical debate is on-going (Clay, 2000).

Cullingford (1995) suggests that parents want help making travel and tourism choices to win approval and avoid disappointment from their children. The strategy here would be to communicate to facilitators that their organization has what they want for their children; which according to the study by Turley (2001) might include opportunities for family togetherness, education for children, to treat the children, and to develop relationships. A third and very fitting option might be a two-pronged approach - target both children and their facilitators. Learning from the literature reviewed, a tourism marketer would be wise to appeal visually to children, and to remind parents of the benefits related to bringing their children (e.g., free entry for children, educational component, interactivity, etc.). The desired result is to ensure that no matter who brings up the suggestion for the tourist activity, that the other will have a positive attitude towards the product/service making the transition from initiation to final decision smoother and more likely.

Decision Making

Family Decision Making. Theories on family decision making have progressed over the last half-century. According to Nanda, Hu, and Bai (2007), it was just over 50 years ago when researchers (Kenkel, 1959; Sharp & Mott, 1956) began to consider the role of the wife, as opposed to solely that of the husband, as a participant in the decision-

making process. Since the early work by Sharp and Mott, an ever-increasing consideration has been given to the study of bi-lateral (husband and wife) purchasing behavior (Cunningham & Green, 1974; Davis, 1970; Fodness, 1992; Jenkins, 1979; Smith, 1979; Zalatan, 1998). Notably, these studies all but ignored the influence children may have had, directly or indirectly, on the decision making process. Jenkins (1979) and Filiatrault and Ritchie (1980) were the first to recognize the influence of children on vacation (and several other) decisions and their research has opened the door to many more studies (Bachmann, John, & Rao, 1993; Flurry & Burns, 2005; Labrecque & Ricard, 1999) that have looked at which factors determine this influence, when it occurs, and its level of effectiveness.

Children and Decision Making. A 1999 Canadian study by Labrecque and Ricard surveyed children aged nine to 12 and one of their parents on their perceptions of the child's level of influence vis-à-vis the family's dining out decisions. The results showed that children viewed themselves more often (33.9% of the time) as the decision-maker with regards to the choice of restaurant, and less often (16.9%) as the decision-maker with regards to choosing to simply go out to a restaurant, while the parent viewed the child as the decision-maker equally in the cases of choosing to go out to a restaurant (30.2%) and choosing which restaurant (28.6%). Labrecque and Ricard (1999) concluded that children do in fact exert a significant level of decision-making influence in a "context that targets the whole family." (p. 175). The suggestion seems to be that because (many) restaurants are a family product/service, the decision-making authority of the children is elevated.

Lackman and Lanasa (1993) found that the more direct impact the decision had on the children, the more influence the children appeared to have. While Flurry and Burns

(2005) concluded that the more preference a child had for a particular product, the more influential the child believed they were in the decision-making process. Studies on decision-making influence by children across various product categories continue to reveal vacations as one in which children have an impact (Commuri & Gentry, 2000; Holman & Epperson, 1984; Martinez & Polo; 1999; Swinyard & Sim, 1987). In a study on family consumer decision-making, Shoham and Dalakas (2003) found evidence to support that children “are more likely to influence family decisions when they have high involvement with a product category.” (p. 239). Their research with Israeli family decision making further supported two key hypotheses: 1) (teenage) children do have influence over family purchases, particularly when there is a high degree of relevance to them, and 2) purchase influence is greatest during the initiation stage. The first point confirms that children have the power of producing effects on the behaviour or opinions of their parents. Marketers are starting to pay particular attention to the area of product category within decision making as, according to Shoham and Dalakas (2003), “increasing children’s involvement with a product category should increase children’s level of influence on family decisions.” (p. 246). The trick then is to appear to be a child friendly place or product and to “appeal to the parents via the children and vice versa” (Rosenberg, 2001, p. s2). The problem is that product familiarity, due to cognitive abilities and personal resources will vary greatly depending on the age of the child. According to Seaton and Tagg (1994) and Harrell (2002), a child’s influence on purchase decisions grows as they get older for evolving product categories such as clothing and family vacations. However, there are relevant studies that have found a negative age-to-purchase-influence relationship (Ward &

Wackman, 1972; Thornton et al, 1997). It may be wise to agree on standard age parameters for a child in order to better understand how age and influence, in this case on attraction choice, are related. The second theory in the Shoham and Dalakas study purports that of the three major stages in the decision making process (initiation, search/evaluation, and final decision), the influence by children is greatest in stage one: initiation. This information might explain why tourism marketers are finding ways to pique the interest of children by appealing to their needs/desires, then ensuring that parents feel comfortable with the product/service during the search/evaluation stage to best secure a final purchase decision. A salient tourism example is the Nickelodeon Family Suites Hotel in Orlando, Florida, USA, whose amenities include an arcade, a water park, live nightly children's entertainment, and a kids only spa, while the F.A.Q. (Frequently Asked Questions) section of their website (www.nickhotel.com) focuses on security, babysitting and laundry services, the on-site business and fitness centres, and the kids eat free program.

The Destination Choice-Sets Model. The Destination Choice-Sets Model was originally proposed and tested by Um and Crompton (1990) and Botha, Crompton, and Kim (1999) to explain how an individual tourist chose his/her travel destination. The model is essentially a progression that demonstrates how a traveller starts out with many potential destination choices and, due to push/pull factors (Dann, 1977) and personal situation constraints, ends up with just one final destination. The tourist begins with a large number of possible destination choices in the early consideration set. Then by a conscious or subconscious consideration of both push (i.e., socio-psychological motives such as escape and social interaction) and pull factors (i.e., attributes of a destination, such as

climate), the number of destination alternatives is reduced in the late consideration set. Ultimately, after weighing situational inhibitors such as time and money, a final destination is chosen. These escaping (push) and seeking (pull) factors were categorized as dialectical influences on motivation for pleasure vacations by Mannell and Iso-Ashola (1987). Such studies on travel motivation (e.g. Crompton, 1979, Dann, 1977, Mannell & Iso-Ahola, 1987) discuss initial motivation for travel and destination choice rather than motivation for attraction choice while travelling or particular vacation activities. A recent study by Jang et al (2007) considered an expansion to the individual choice-sets model to couples. While the survey dealt specifically with the couples' honeymoon destination selection process, Jang et al did propose a new (expanded) conceptual model theoretically applicable to heterosexual couples involved in the destination choice-sets process (Jang et al, 2007, p. 1302). The expansion divides the early consideration set into two parts: one for each member of the couple. The push/pull motivation factors are compared and discussed and the destination choices are narrowed into an individual/joint modified early consideration set. If a consensus is reached, the couple can set the final destination choice and skip the late consideration set. If no consensus is possible, the couple moves to the late consideration set and engages in accommodative decision-making (compromise) in order to select a final destination both can live with. The deficiency in the expanded model lies in the researchers' lack of consideration for the significant difference between a "couple" and a "family"; two words that are used interchangeably by Jang et al throughout their article. Jang et al (2007) seem to imply that a couple travelling with children (i.e., as a "family") continue to fall into the destination choice-sets model for a couple, except that

when explaining why honeymooners were chosen as their study population, they reasoned that: “this study required a simple and homogenous target population in order to control the effect of exogenous variables such as children’s influence” (p. 1303). Based on the findings from past research, including insight on decision making within the family unit and the apparent influence that previous family travel and tourism experiences play on children’s future preferences, an expanded family destination choice-sets model is shown in Figure 3.

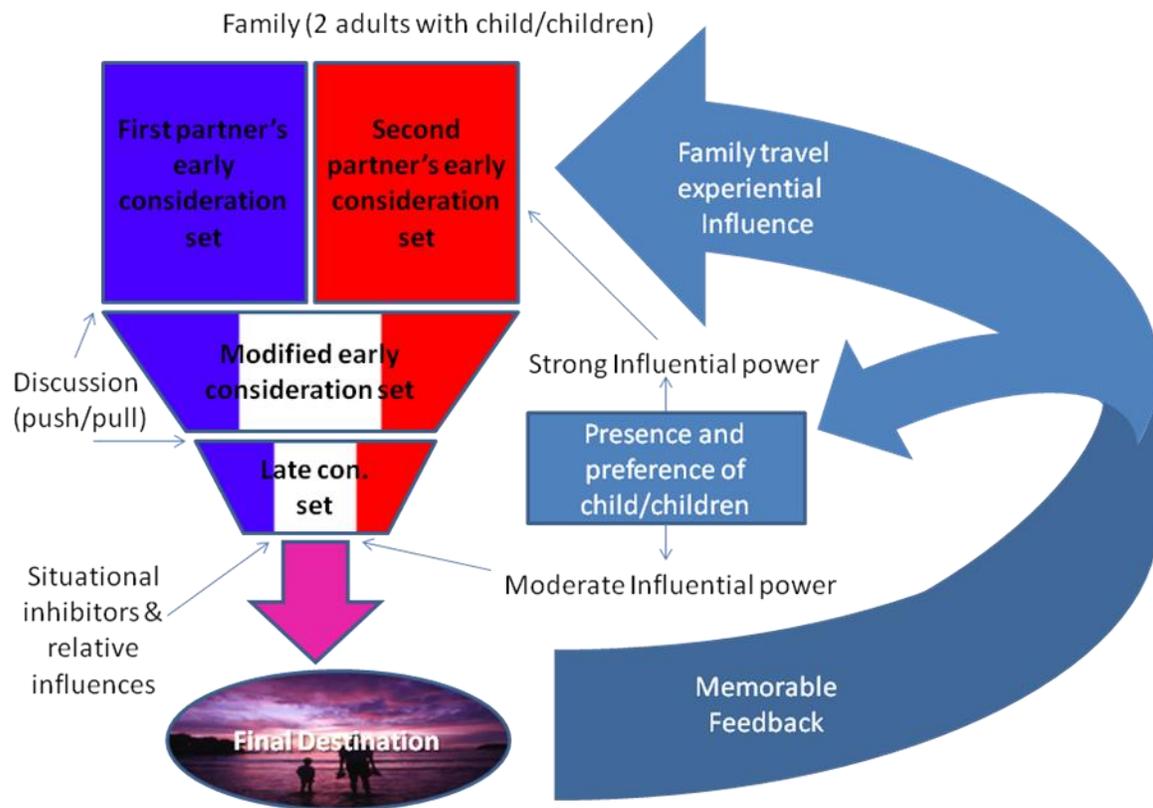


Figure 3: The family destination choice-sets model (Robin, 2008)

Family Decision-Making Model of Vacation Purchases. The most recent investigation on family decision making in the context of tourism was found to be from Nanda et al (2007, p. 110) and their proposal of the Family Decision-Making Model of Vacation Purchases. The theoretical framework developed is unique because it includes the role of children as part of the family decision unit. The model demonstrates how the members of the family take on different roles based on a variety of influential factors. The key roles include: the Gatekeeper, the individual who first initiates the idea and most often determines the purchase option criteria; the Information Gatherer, the person who collects and shares particulars of different options (it is interesting to note that the Gatekeeper and the Information Gatherer are often one and the same); the Influencer, the member (or members) who is consulted for his/her opinion and which will frequently affect the final outcome; the Decision-Maker; the Purchaser or Buyer, the one with the access and the means to make the decision actually happen; and finally the Users, those involved in the consumption of the product/service/experience and who, by simply having needs and restrictions are highly involved in defining the terms of purchase early on (Nanda et al, 2007). It has been noted that the role-playing concept in decision making is far from a onetime casting call and that over time each individual decision will result in family members playing different roles for different kinds of decisions (Lackman & Lanasa, 1993). Only detailed empirical data from a combination of different people, times, places, and types of decisions will be helpful in determining the appropriate member of the family to target and the kind of message that will be most effective.

Cultural Attractions

Cultural attractions in particular often rely heavily on tourists for their continued survival and with evidence that at least some of them (i.e., those participating in this study) are making a conscious shift to market to children, a study designed to gain insight on the value of this strategy could be very beneficial. It would be incomplete to conduct this kind of study without first defining cultural tourism, cultural attractions, and how groups travelling with a child/children fit into the picture.

There appears to be a consensus among tourism scholars that, although it is undoubtedly a distinct form of recreational tourism, there is no clear cut definition for cultural tourism (McKercher & du Cros, 2002). Some see cultural tourism as defined by its experiential or aspirational component, where one comes to connect with a distinctive heritage, character, and/or social fabric (Blackwell, 1997; Schweitzer, 1999). The World Tourism Organization favours a motivational definition, calling cultural tourism “...movements of persons essentially for cultural motivations such as study tours, performing arts and cultural tours, travel to festivals and other events, visit to sites and monuments, travel to study nature, folklore or art, and pilgrimages” (UNWTO, 1985). The problem with the aforementioned definitions is that there are many shades of cultural tourists from those that purposefully seek out deep cultural experiences to the incidental cultural tourist whose visit a cultural attraction is not planned as such (McKercher & du Cros, 2002). Perhaps the most appropriate in this study is an operational definition which identifies cultural tourism activities (e.g., visits to museums, archaeological sites, castles, historical buildings, art galleries, festivals, events, modified facilities, and pre-built

attractions) and infers the title of cultural tourist to travellers engaging in such activities (Goodrich, 1997; Miller, 1997), regardless of intent. In this sense, cultural tourism is simply the overarching term for tourists visiting or participating in/at a supply of attractions with some kind of link to the local culture (i.e., cultural attractions) without regard to the experience, nor the motivation to visit.

According to the 2006 Travel Activities and Motivations Survey, over half of participants who took a pleasure trip in 2004 and 2005 visited at least one cultural attraction (i.e., a historical site, museum, and/or art gallery) and nearly one in five reported their main reason for travel as engaging in culture and entertainment activities. While the 2006 Travel Activities and Motivations Survey does not collect information on the composition of the vacationing group (i.e., individual versus couple, versus group with a child/children, etc.) the survey does report that over 50 percent of respondents indicated that a highly important benefit sought from the trip was to enrich their relationship with their spouse/partner/children (TAMS, 2006). A fair amount of research has been geared towards exploring cultural tourism and its relationship as a destination motivator (Law, 2002; Silberberg, 1995; Zeppell & Hall, 1991) and the TAMS and other travel intention surveys continue to support these efforts. Unfortunately, little research is aimed at breaking down the decision making process as it relates to cultural attraction choice. Whereas governments and destination marketing organizations are concerned with persuading vacationers on where to travel, individual cultural attractions want to know what makes one institution/activity more attractive over another, particularly as it relates to their target markets.

Summary and Study Hypotheses

The empirical research described in the literature review reveals how children's perceptions are formed and how people's perception about a destination, including the potential presence of children, affects their decision whether to visit or not. Of particular interest to tourism marketers is the level of influence by children on travel and tourism choices at different stages in the decision-making process and what activities and attraction characteristics work best to draw and satisfy children and their tourism facilitators. The growing trend in family vacations coupled with the evidence of tourism decision-making influence by children in the United States and overseas, warrants attention to how travel activity choice, towards the selection of cultural attractions in particular, is affected by children. Careful attention must be given to the difference between motivations for travel versus attraction choice while on vacation. For example, a family may choose to travel together in order to spend time together as a family, but may then choose to spend a few hours at a specific attraction to learn something, be entertained, or even to spend some time apart from one another. Furthermore, the literature review reinforces past warnings to look at statistics critically, for example, it may be true that the frequency of family vacations is increasing (Nickerson & Jurowski, 2001), but that does not necessarily mean that families are spending more time vacationing.

Notably, there appears to be a paucity of studies conducted that address children's roles in vacation activity decision making, revealing an opportunity to contribute to the knowledge base and literature in this area. As it is also evident that tourism industry organizations are increasingly marketing to children and families, there is demand for

germane research to assist tourism marketers to maximize their effectiveness. According to Jenkins (1979), "...children were perceived (by their parents) to have the most influence, relative to other (vacation) sub decisions, in deciding upon the kinds of vacation activities for the family to participate" (p. 417). A more recent study by Thornton et al (1997) in which tourist parties kept space-time budget diaries found that "In terms of decision-making, all parties with children reported the importance of negotiation in deciding holiday activities" (p. 294). A study involving tourist visits to various cultural attractions would no doubt provide valuable insight into what (and who) influenced the group visit, not just insofar as experiences are concerned, but there may be implications with regards to what outcomes were hoped to be achieved and perhaps even if their current line of products and services are best suited for on-going sales to this niche consumer group.

It is clear that more studies in the field need to focus on how, when and where children participate in decision making; since this kind of study is scarce, there is value in building data on facilitators' preferences and opinions of attractions and their products and services in order to learn more about how marketers can attract and satisfy vacationing families. This study investigated adult facilitators' perceptions of child/children in their group's influence on the decision to visit a specified attraction. Other factors such as trip characteristics, reasons for visiting, perceptions of the attraction and group demographics have also been considered. Based on the literature review, the research question, "how do children influence vacation attraction choice?" was considered in terms of direct factors, such as timing (when were they most influential), degree (how strong was that influence), and did that differ based on the age of the child; as well as indirect factors such as the

facilitator's reasons for visiting the attraction, perceived child-friendly image of the site, and functional attributes of the site (e.g., price, parking, etc.).

Place/attraction related hypotheses (experience, child-friendly, functional attributes):

Hypothesis 1: Learning is the most important reason for adults travelling with a child/children to visit a cultural attraction.

Hypothesis 2: Interactive activities are the most important child-friendly attribute of a tourist attraction for adults travelling with a child/children.

Child related hypotheses (timing, degree, age):

Hypothesis 3: Of the three major stages in the decision making process (initiation, search/evaluation, and final decision), adults travelling with a child/children believe that the child/children's role is greatest in the idea initiation stage when deciding to visit a cultural attraction.

Hypothesis 4: Adults travelling with a child/children believe that older children have more relative overall influence on the decision to visit a cultural attraction than younger children.

Chapter 3: Methods

Research Design

The research design involved a cross-sectional, self-administered, web-based survey. The rationale for this choice of survey design versus a researcher administered questionnaire was primarily that of reach. Providing front line employees at tourism attractions with the ability to hand out participation invitation cards to all visitors that fit the sample parameters ensured that a larger number of individuals were exposed to the call to participate in the study. In addition to the increased reach, the unsupervised self-administered web-based questionnaire could be undertaken at the participants' convenience in a completely anonymous manner from the comfort of their home, office or hotel room, theoretically increasing the likelihood of truthful responses and eliminating social desirability effects and interaction effects (Weisberg, 2005). Furthermore, the interviewer error and bias was in effect eliminated by the standardized format and consistent experience. Another advantage was the relatively low cost versus mail response survey instruments (Cobanoglu, Warde, & Moreo, 2001; Dillman, 2000). It was assumed that since new research continues to suggest that web survey applications, when the population has easy access to the internet, have increasing response rates now comparable to surface mail (Couper, 2000), the web based questionnaire was appropriate for this study.

It was believed that the call to action coupled with a participation draw incentive would result in a good rate of response (Dillman, 2000; Weisberg, 2005). Also to encourage response, the questionnaire format was designed to be "brief, attractive, [with]

unambiguous questions, interesting and easy to complete” (Cohen & Manion, 1980, p. 76).

The use of a professional web-based survey hosting organization was preferred to give legitimacy to the process as well as ensure a simple, attractive and easy to complete questionnaire, providing a more dynamic experience; all intended to contribute to the maximization of the response rate (Dillman, 2000; Harper et al, 2003).

Setting

The invitations to complete the questionnaire were handed out at three separate cultural attractions in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. The sites included the Manitoba Museum, the Royal Canadian Mint, and The Winnipeg Art Gallery. The Manitoba Museum has a long history of focusing their offerings and their marketing towards children and families. These initiatives include advertisements that feature happy families, the coordination of child-friendly special events such as birthday parties, sleepovers, and visits with Santa Claus, as well as curriculum-relevant educational programs for parents and teachers. Since 2005, the Royal Canadian Mint, an attraction born from a wide-spread interest in the international coin manufacturing facility, has chosen to include child-friendly marketing by launching initiatives to entice children and their facilitators to frequent their attractions. Meanwhile The Winnipeg Art Gallery focuses primarily on adults who can understand and appreciate art, but as can be seen in their participation in family-friendly tour packages and in their recent forays into promotions like “family day at the WAG” (see Figure 1 and 2), it is evident that they do not want to ignore the art lovers of tomorrow.

Sampling

Past research has not found a consensus on the definition of a child or adolescent describing age ranges from three years old to nineteen years old and multiple different combinations in between (Berry & Pollay, 1968; Belch, Belch, & Ceresino, 1985; Foxman & Tansuhaj, 1989). For the purpose of this study the sample included adults with at least one child between the ages of six to 17 years old. The primary reason for defining children as those aged six to 17 years old is based on the admission pricing structures of the three participating attractions. Since all three attractions have an admission category of ‘child’ or ‘youth’, it is easier to estimate the population size and it provided for simpler instructions to front line staff (i.e., to provide adults who purchase admission for themselves and at least one child or youth admission).

Data collection took place on all days within the time frame of August 1 to August 31, 2009. All parties meeting the aforementioned criteria were provided with the invitation to participate at the point of admission purchase during their visit to one of the three cultural attractions in the Winnipeg metropolitan area, including the Manitoba Museum, the Royal Canadian Mint, and The Winnipeg Art Gallery. The population can best be described as adult tourists travelling with at least one child paying a visit to one of the three attractions. The United Nations World Tourism Organization’s definition of a tourist, people who travel to and stay in places outside their usual environment for more than twenty-four (24) hours (UNWTO, 1995), was used to filter out non-tourist visits through qualifying questions on the web questionnaire. These parameters resulted in a target population of 1155. The target sample size was 300 respondents.

Data Collection

The chosen unit of analysis was facilitators with at least one child who purchased admission during the month of August 2009 to one of the three participating cultural tourist attractions in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The cases were intended to apply to all tourists who travel with at least one child and were motivated to visit cultural attractions in a Western Canadian city. To address the research question, how do children influence vacation attraction choice, the web-based questionnaire (Appendix E) contained five sections measuring the following variables: 1) *trip characteristics* including distance travelled, length of trip, purpose of travel, mode of transportation, frequency of travel, name and type of attraction, frequency of visit to the attraction, information source about the attraction, size of group, age/sex of child/children in the group; 2) *reasons for visiting the attraction* including common vacation motives and attraction attributes; 3) *decision-making to visit attraction* including timing and degree of decision-making and identity of activity participation such as who played the role of gatekeeper, information gatherer, influencer, decision-maker, and purchaser; 4) *perception of the attraction* with regards to meeting of expectations and satisfaction; and 5) *demographic information* such as general vacationing and attraction habits and preferences, sex, age, marital status, size of group, education level, income, and ethnicity.

The order of the sections and questions were taken into consideration when constructing the instrument. Furthermore, questions were kept simple and in plain language (so not to confuse the participants), double-negatives and ambiguous terms were avoided. The instrument's questions were mostly rating scales or closed-ended (multiple

choice using a full phrase or scale) with a category of “other” where applicable in case the answer categories provided were not exhaustive (Meyburg & Metcalf, 1997). Careful attention was given to the technical aspects of the web survey to ensure appropriate functionality, screen formatting, and loading speed. Pre-testing took place several weeks before the actual data collection. A select group of fifteen industry peers and seven infrequent travellers were invited to test the questionnaire and provide feedback on the clarity of the questions and possible answers, the total time to complete, flow, and overall feel. Results of the pre-testing were used to make minor wording changes to ensure better comprehension and to encompass the widest possible range of questionnaire respondent-types (i.e., mother with child/children, grand-father with child/children, guardian with child/children, older sibling with child/children, etc.). Suggestions and observation outcomes from the 22 pre-test participants included the need for a more concise survey introduction, an increase in the approximate time to complete from ten to fifteen minutes, and some web formatting changes such as keeping all text “above the fold” and the placement of the “back” and “next” buttons both at the top and the bottom of each page.

The invitation to participate in the study included all relevant contact information for the researcher, as well as the full disclosure of ethics permissions and requirements. Once on the website, participants were asked to complete a question at the very beginning, before entering the actual questionnaire, to assure their informed consent (see Appendix E). As an incentive to take part in the study, all participants who completed the questionnaire were given the opportunity to enter into a draw for a gift card from WestJet[®] Airlines with a value of 500 dollars. A WestJet[®] Airlines gift certificate was selected

because it was relevant to the topic and because it promoted future travel and tourism within Canada. The draw was advertised in advance on the invitation and again on the questionnaire's welcome web page so as to entice invitees to participate and complete the survey. Participants' very limited information was collected via e-mail for the sole purpose of conducting the prize draw; this information was not connected to the study data in any way and the questionnaire responses were kept completely separate and anonymous.

Data Analysis

Hypotheses one through four indicate the basis for the specific questions and measures in the questionnaire.

Hypothesis 1: Learning is the most important reason for adults travelling with a child/children to visit a cultural attraction.

Hypothesis 2: Interactive activities are the most important child-friendly attribute of a tourist attraction for adults travelling with a child/children.

Hypothesis 3: Of the three major stages in the decision making process (initiation, search/evaluation, and final decision), adults travelling with a child/children believe that the child/children's role is greatest in the idea initiation stage when deciding to visit a cultural attraction.

Hypothesis 4: Adults travelling with a child/children believe that older children have more relative overall influence on the decision to visit a cultural attraction than younger children.

In order to answer the research question (how do children influence vacation attraction choice?), the responses to all the questionnaire items were coded numerically,

and stored initially in a Microsoft Excel[®] spreadsheet, with the cases (respondents) occupying the rows and the variables (responses) occupying the columns. The database was initially screened to inspect the accuracy of the data, missing values, and outliers. 99 respondents were found to provide 100 percent valid responses, with no missing values or outliers. The cleaned database was imported into SPSS[®] version 17.0 for statistical analysis using the methods described by Field (2009).

The frequency distributions of the responses measured using rating scales (i.e., Hypotheses 1 and 2: importance of reasons for visiting the attraction with child/children and importance of attraction attributes for visiting the attraction with child/children) were highly skewed high or low, deviating from symmetrical bell-shaped curves, hence parametric statistics assuming normal distributions (e.g., means and standard deviations) were not appropriate. The medians were used as measures of central tendency and, while lower in power and more prone to a Type 1 error, Mood's Median non-parametric test was chosen to compare the median scores. Mood's was selected because it is robust against the outliers and errors in the data relative to the usual normal theory F test (Mendelhal & Sincich, 1989; Zimmerman, 1992) and because it enabled a comparison of the number of responses above the median with the number of responses below the median; such a comparison is not possible with other similar types of non-parametric test, such as the Mann-Whitney U test and the Kruskal-Wallis test, since these tests only provide a test statistic and a p value. The null hypothesis was no difference between the median scores with respect to each question. The decision rule was to reject the null hypothesis if the p value of Mood's χ^2 statistic was $< .05$. The numbers of scores above and below the median

values were computed in order to compare the frequency distributions of the scores for each question.

For Hypothesis 3, the scores attributed by each respondent for the person who initiated the idea to visit the attraction, the time researching/evaluating what the attraction had to offer, and the person who made the final decision to visit the attraction (the respondent, the spouse of the respondent, a child/children, or another person e.g., grandparent, sibling, aunt, uncle, cousin, nephew, niece, or friend), were measured at the scale/interval level. Most of these distributions were found to be skewed. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was initially considered as a method to compare the mean scores, since it is robust when using large samples (> 30) of skewed scale/interval level data; however the use of ANOVA assumes that the variances in each group are homogeneous and that the residuals (the differences between the mean values and the observed values) are normally distributed (Field, 2009). To determine whether ANOVA was justified, Levene's test for homogeneity of variance and the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for residual normality were applied. The decision rules were to reject the null hypothesis that the variances were homogeneous if the p value of Levene's test statistic was $< .05$, and to reject the null hypothesis that the residuals were normally distributed if the p value of Kolmogorov-Smirnov's test statistic was $< .05$. If both null hypotheses were rejected, then this implied that the data strongly violated the assumptions of ANOVA. Attempts to convert the skewed distributions into symmetrical normal distributions (e.g., by use of square root or logarithmic transformations) were not successful. Only non-parametric statistics applicable to non-normal distributions could be computed and Mood's Median

non-parametric test was again used as an alternative method to compare the median scores. A Z test for the comparison of proportions was also conducted to determine if the proportions of summed scores attributed to children initiating the idea, time spent researching, and making the final decision were significantly different from each other. The decision rule was to reject the null hypothesis of no difference between the proportions of summed scores if the p value of the Z statistic was $< .05$.

With respect to Hypothesis 4, Spearman's rank correlation coefficients and scatter plots were used to determine if there were any linear relationships between the ages of the children and the percentage scores attributed by the respondent for the person who initiated the idea to visit the attraction, the time researching what the attraction had to offer, and the person who made the final decision to visit the attraction. Spearman's rank correlation coefficient was chosen because is a non-parametric statistic that assumes non-normally distributed data as opposed to Pearson's correlation coefficient, which is a parametric statistic that assumes normally distributed data. Since non-parametric statistics were used throughout this study, the use of a non-parametric correlation coefficient was appropriate for consistency. However, because the sample size was adequate for this calculation (i.e. greater than 50) then the p values and magnitudes of Pearson's and Spearman's coefficients are in fact the same. The decision rule was to reject the null hypothesis of no correlation if the p value of the correlation coefficient was $< .05$.

Scope and Limitations

A study of this nature carried with it some obvious limitations. Firstly, it was likely that the majority of the survey population were parents and parental responsibilities might

interfere or distract with the call to take the time to participate in the survey. Secondly, since the invitation to participate kept the respondents anonymous, there was no way to follow-up to remind people to complete the questionnaire or with those who chose not to participate, allowing for possible non-response bias. Finally, because the research only took place at three cultural attractions in Winnipeg, it is not appropriate to generalize the findings to other attractions; particularly those of a different overall character or *raison d'être* (e.g., museum vs. zoo).

Chapter 4: Results

Questionnaire Response

Data collection began at all three participating cultural attractions on August 1, 2009. Invitations were distributed for 31 consecutive days ending on August 31, 2009. Respondents were asked to reply by September 30, 2009. The three attractions received a total of 31,641 paid admission visitors during the period of data collection. Through pre-screening at the point of admission, 1155 individuals were found to fit the sample parameters, and as such 1155 invitations to participate were handed out. Completed questionnaires were received from 119 participants, 20 of whom (15.5%) were only permitted to answer less than 25 percent of the questions because they did not fit sample parameters (i.e., they did not qualify as tourists). For the purposes of statistical analysis, these 20 respondents were removed entirely from the database and the information supplied by the remaining 99 qualified respondents was retained for analysis, which gave an overall response rate of nine percent (Table 3). The sample size of 99 was only 33 percent of the target sample size of 300. The anonymity of the questionnaire meant that it was not possible to send reminders or conduct a follow up test for non-response bias.

Table 1**Visitor statistics at participating cultural attractions (N = 31,641)**

August 1-31, 2009	RCM ^a	Percent	MM ^b	Percent	WAG ^c	Percent
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Total adult visitors	2528	43.0	4739	20.2	1609	69.0
Total child visitors	1801	30.7	7968	34.0	134	5.7
Other visitor categories (including school/summer camp groups)	1547	26.3	10,727	45.8	588	25.3
<i>Total paid admission visitors</i>	<i>5876</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>23,434</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>2331</i>	<i>100.0</i>

^aRoyal Canadian Mint^bManitoba Museum^cWinnipeg Art Gallery**Table 2****Breakdown of visiting adults with a child/children (N = 4876)**

August 1-31, 2009	RCM ^a	Percent	MM ^b	Percent	WAG ^c	Percent
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Adults with children from Winnipeg	452	54.8	3228	81.0	41	61.2
Adults with children not from Winnipeg (tourists)	373	45.2	756	19.0	26	38.8
<i>Total adults with children</i>	<i>825</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>3984</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>67</i>	<i>100.0</i>

^aRoyal Canadian Mint^bManitoba Museum^cWinnipeg Art Gallery

The majority (81%) of the qualified respondents received the invitation to participate in this study at the Royal Canadian Mint (Table 3).

Table 3**Invitation response rates**

August 1-31, 2009	Adults with children not from Winnipeg	Percent	Qualified Responses	Percent
	n	%	n	%
RCM ^a	373	32.3	80	80.8
MM ^b	756	65.5	16	16.2
WAG ^c	26	2.2	3	3.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>1155</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>100.0</i>

^aRoyal Canadian Mint^bManitoba Museum^cWinnipeg Art Gallery**Description of Respondents**

Respondent Demographics. Slightly more than half the respondents were male (51.5%). Respondents' ages ranged from 18 to 60 with a mean age of 39.6. About half of the respondents were over 40 years of age (Table 4). Full responses are provided in Appendix F.

Table 4**Ages of the respondents**

Age range	Frequency	Percent
	n	%
41 to 60 years old	44	44.4
31 to 40 years old	32	32.3
18 to 30 years old	10	10.1
Prefer not to say	13	13.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>100.0</i>

The marital status of the majority (83%) of the respondents was married/common law (Table 5). Most of them (85%) were parents of the child/children who were in the group when visiting the attraction (Table 6). About two thirds of the respondents had achieved college/university degrees, some graduate work, or a graduate/professional degree (Table 7).

Table 5**Marital status of the respondents**

Marital status	Frequency	Percent
	n	%
Married/common law	82	82.8
Single	11	11.1
Divorced	6	6.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 6**Respondents - child/children relationship**

Relationship	Frequency	Percent
	n	%
Parent	84	84.8
Aunt/uncle/cousin/older sibling	8	8.1
Other ^a	5	5.1
Grand-parent	2	2.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>100.0</i>

^aOther included friend

Table 7**Highest level of education achieved by the respondents**

Level of education	Frequency	Percent
	n	%
Less than high school	2	2.0
High school	13	13.1
Technical school	9	9.1
College without degree	7	7.1
College/University degree(s)	45	45.5
Some graduate work	6	6.1
Graduate/professional degree	14	14.1
Prefer not to answer	3	3.0
<i>Total</i>	99	<i>100.0</i>

The annual household income of 13 percent of the respondents was less than \$50,000 per year. About half the respondents earned between \$50,000 and \$150,000, whilst 17 percent earned over \$150,000 (Table 8). The respondents included a wide range of ethnic groups; 39 percent described themselves as Canadian, or Canadian with mixed origins, and the others were of European, Asian, North American or Latin American extraction (Table 9).

Table 8**Current annual household income levels of the respondents**

Annual household income	Frequency	Percent
	n	%
Less than \$25,000	3	3.0
\$25,000 to \$49,999	10	10.1
\$50,000 to \$74,999	14	14.1
\$75,000 to \$99,999	17	17.2
\$100,000 to \$149,999	21	21.2
\$150,000 to \$199,999	11	11.1
Over \$200,000	6	6.1
Prefer not to answer	17	17.2
<i>Total</i>	99	<i>100.0</i>

Table 9**Ethnic or cultural groups of the respondents**

Ethnic or cultural group	Frequency	Percent
	n	%
Canadian	30	30.3
Canadian with mixed origins	9	9.1
Other	11	11.1
Prefer not to answer	49	49.5
<i>Total</i>	99	<i>100.0</i>

The residence of 81 percent of the respondents was Canada, with 68 percent from Ontario, Alberta, and Manitoba. Only 11 percent lived abroad of which seven percent were from USA (Table 10).

Table 10**Current place of residence of the respondents**

Place of residence	Frequency	Percent
	n	%
Ontario	36	36.4
Alberta	19	19.2
Manitoba, but from outside the greater Winnipeg area	12	12.1
Saskatchewan	11	11.1
United States	7	7.1
British Columbia	6	6.1
Quebec	6	6.1
Another country (not including the United States) ^a	2	2.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>100.0</i>

^aAnother country included Argentina and Germany

Trip Characteristics. The length of the trip of about half the respondents was one to two weeks or more. Only 15 percent made a short trip of less than two days (Table 11).

The main reason for visiting the Winnipeg area was pleasure, vacation, or holiday (50%) or to visit friends or relatives (46%) but rarely for business or education (Table 12).

Table 11**Length of the entire trip which included the visit to the attraction**

Length of trip	Frequency	Percent
	n	%
More than 24 hours, but less than 2 days	15	15.2
More than 2 days but less than 1 week	30	30.3
1 to 2 weeks	31	31.3
More than 2 weeks	23	23.2
<i>Total</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 12**Main purpose of the visit to the Winnipeg area**

Purpose of visit	Frequency	Percent
	n	%
For pleasure, vacation, or holiday	50	50.5
To visit friends or relatives	46	46.5
Other ^a	2	2.0
For business or work-related reasons	1	1.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>100.0</i>

^aOther included educational reasons

About two-thirds of the respondents travelled to Winnipeg by car; 18 percent travelled by air, but few by bus, or rail (Table 13). Over half had visited Winnipeg over five times previously, whilst 17 percent were visiting for the first time (Table 14).

Table 13**Method of travel to Winnipeg**

Method(s) of travel	Frequency	Percent
	n	%
By automobile	65	65.7
By air	18	18.2
By RV	7	7.1
By automobile & air	5	5.1
By bus	2	2.0
By rail	1	1.0
By automobile & RV	1	1.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 14**Number of times the respondents have visited Winnipeg**

Number of visits to Winnipeg	Frequency	Percent
	n	%
More than five times	51	51.5
Two to five times	31	31.3
This was my first visit to Winnipeg	17	17.2
<i>Total</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Attraction Information. The majority (79%) of the respondents were visiting the attraction for the first time (Table 15). They mostly heard about the attraction from friends/family (33%) or from the attraction's website (13%) or from a guidebook (12%) but nine percent visited for other reasons, such as they happened to be passing by, or to visit again (Table 16). Relatively few respondents (3.6%) heard about the attraction from hotels, children, or in the media.

Table 15**First visit to the attraction**

First visit to attraction?	Frequency	Percent
	n	%
Yes	78	78.8
No	21	21.2
<i>Total</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 16**How respondents heard about the attraction**

How respondents heard about the attraction	Frequency	Percent
	n	%
Friends/family	54	32.7
Attraction's website	21	12.7
Guidebook	20	12.1
Other ^a	15	9.1
CAA/AAA or other motor club	14	8.5
Brochure/rack card	9	5.5
Other website	7	4.2
Visitor information centre	7	4.2
Hotel front desk or concierge	6	3.6
Child/children	6	3.6
Local Newspaper	5	3.0
Television	1	0.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>165</i> ^b	<i>100.0</i>

^aOther included "Driving/passing by", "Visited in the past" and "Wanted to see it again"

^bSince the respondents were asked to "check all that apply" the total number of responses is > 99.

Visit Group Demographics. Over three-quarters of the groups visiting the attraction consisted of four or more persons (Table 17) including one or two children under the age of 18 (Table 18). A total of 190 children visited the attraction in association with the respondents. Boys were slightly more prevalent than girls (Table 19).

Table 17**Number of people in visit group**

Number of people	Frequency	Percent
	n	%
Two	7	7.1
Three	17	17.2
Four	41	41.4
Five or more	34	34.3
<i>Total</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 18**Number of children under 18 in visit group**

Number of children	Frequency	Percent
	n	%
1	27	27.3
2	49	49.5
3	15	15.2
4	5	5.1
5+	3	3.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 19**Sex of children in visit groups**

Sex	Frequency	Percent
	n	%
Male	104	55.0
Female	85	45.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>189</i>	<i>100.0</i>

A wide age-range of children from infants to 17 year olds visited the attraction with the respondents. The frequency distribution histogram of the children's ages was a broad dome shape, with the mode (10), mean (10.2), and median (10) located at about 10 years old near the centre. Eighty-seven percent of the children associated with the respondents were between the ages of six and 15 (Figure 4).

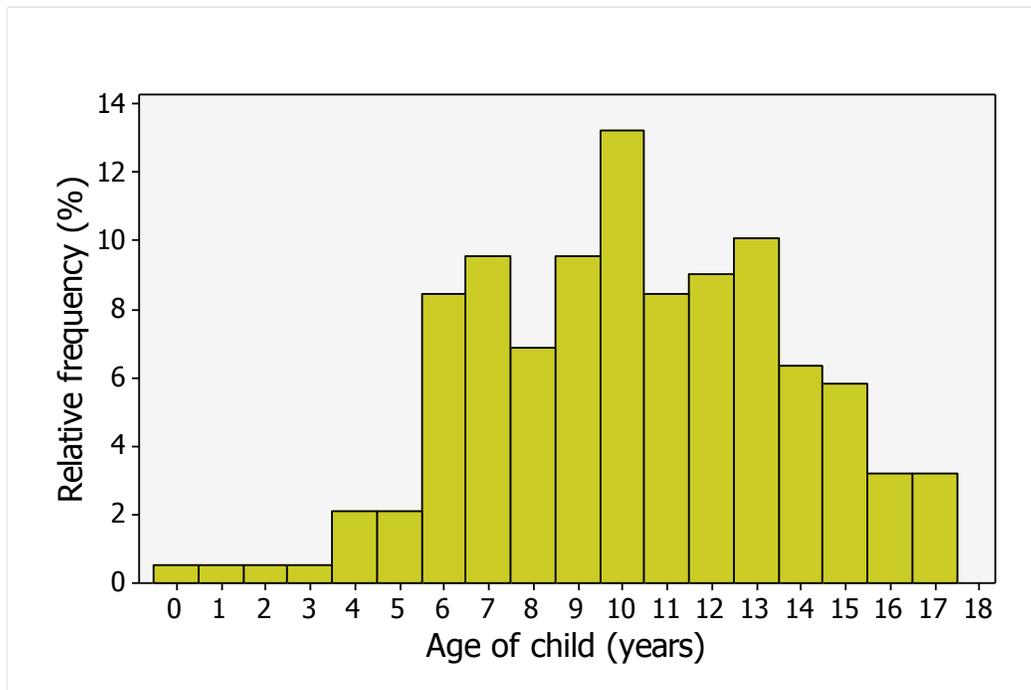


Figure 4: Frequency distribution histogram of the ages of the children visiting the attraction

Visit Group Experience. About three quarters (73%) of the respondents reported that they paid for the admission to the attraction themselves (Table 20). One, two, or three purchases were made at the attraction's gift shop, of these 36 percent of the purchases were made by the respondent, compared to 34 percent by the children and 30 percent by the spouse and other persons (Table 21).

Table 20**Who paid for the admission to the attraction**

Paid for admission	Frequency	Percent
	n	%
Myself	72	72.7
Spouse	66	16.2
Other ^a	11	11.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>100.0</i>

^aOther included grandparent, uncle, sibling, cousin, and friend

Table 21**Who made a purchase at the attraction's gift shop**

Made a purchase	Purchase 1	Purchase 2	Purchase 3	Total purchases	Percent
				n	%
Myself	43	-	-	43	35.8
Spouse	15	14	-	29	24.2
Child/Children	12	19	10	41	34.2
Other ^a	2	4	1	7	5.8
No purchases were made/ Prefer not to answer	27	-	-	-	-
<i>Total</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>120</i>	<i>100.0</i>

^aOther included grandparent, sibling, cousin, and friend

The distributions of the responses to the question “Please rate how much you agree with the following statements about the attraction” (Table 22) were highly skewed. No respondents disagreed with any of the statements. The responses of over 92 percent of the respondents were “mostly agree” or “completely agree” reflected by a median score of 7.0.

Table 22

Perceptions about the attraction experience

	Completely disagree		Mostly disagree		Slightly disagree		Neutral		Slightly agree		Mostly agree		Completely agree		Median
	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
S1 ^a	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	3.0	2	2.0	31	31.3	63	63.6	7
S2 ^b	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	2.0	6	6.1	34	34.3	57	57.6	7
S3 ^c	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	3.0	36	36.4	60	60.6	7

^aI believe the child/children were very pleased with the overall attraction experience.

^bI believe the attraction offers many attributes that are fitting for groups visiting with a child/children (i.e., child-friendly)

^cI was very pleased with the overall attraction experience

The distributions of the responses to the question “Please rate how much you agree with the following statements” (concerning vacations with children) were also highly skewed (Table 23). Only a few respondents disagreed with or were neutral about any of the statements. The responses of over 93 percent of the respondents were “mostly agree” or “completely agree” reflected by a median score of 7.0.

Table 23

Vacationing with children patterns

	Completely disagree		Mostly disagree		Slightly disagree		Neutral		Slightly agree		Mostly agree		Completely agree		Median
	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
S1 ^a	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	3.0	36	36.4	60	60.6	7
S2 ^b	0	0.0	5	5.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	7.1	24	24.2	63	63.6	7

^aI take most of my vacations with a child/children

^bI often visit tourist attractions while on vacation with a child/children

About half of the respondents decided to visit the attraction once in Winnipeg, although 36 percent decided before leaving home (Table 24).

Table 24

Timing of decision to visit the attraction

Timing of decision to visit	Frequency	Percent
	n	%
Once in Winnipeg	51	51.5
Before leaving home	36	36.4
After leaving home but prior to arriving in Winnipeg	11	11.1
Cannot recall	1	1.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Results of Hypothesis 1: Reasons for Visiting Cultural Attraction

Hypothesis 1 put forward that learning is the most important reason for adults travelling with a child/children to visit a cultural attraction. With respect to the responses to the importance of reasons for visiting the attraction with a child/children (Table 25), distributions tended to be skewed, either to the right or left. The responses which were mainly “mostly important” or “totally important” with a median score of 3.0 to 4.0 were “I wanted the group/family to learn something, to experience something new and exciting, to experience and appreciate some culture, to spend time with close friends/family, to develop my relationship with the child/children, and to treat the child/children to a fun experience”. The responses which were mainly “not important” or “slightly” important, with a median score of 1.0 or 2.0, were “I wanted to get away from stress, for the child/children to be distracted for a few hours, and to experience that attraction through the eyes of children”.

Table 25

Importance of reasons for visiting the attraction with child/children

Reason	Not important		Slightly important		Mostly important		Totally important		Not applicable		Median score	Number of scores ≤ median	Number of scores > median
	Score 1		Score 2		Score 3		Score 4						
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%			
I wanted the group/family to learn something	2	2.0	14	14.3	22	22.5	60	61.2	0	0.0	4	38	60
I wanted the group/family to experience something new and exciting	1	1.0	9	9.2	39	39.8	49	50.0	0	0.0	3.5	49	49
I wanted the group/family to experience and appreciate some culture	7	7.4	20	21.0	18	18.9	50	52.6	0	0.0	4	45	50
I wanted to get away from stress	49	54.4	22	24.4	9	10.0	10	11.1	0	0.0	1	80	10
I wanted the child/children to be distracted for a few hours	38	42.2	31	34.4	15	16.7	6	6.7	0	0.0	2	84	6
I wanted to spend time with close friends/family	6	6.5	8	8.6	28	30.1	51	54.8	0	0.0	4	42	51
I wanted to experience the attraction through the eyes of the child/children	18	18.6	33	34.0	24	24.7	22	22.7	0	0.0	2	75	22
I wanted to develop my relationship with the child/children in my group	8	8.3	27	28.1	27	28.1	34	35.4	0	0.0	3	62	34
I wanted to treat the child/children to a fun experience	1	1.0	5	5.1	30	30.3	62	62.6	1	1.0	4	36	62

The results of Mood’s median test showed a significant difference between the median scores with respect to the nine questions in Table 25 at the .05 level. The difference was indicated by $\chi^2(8) = 145.06$ $p = .000$. The items with the highest number of scores (62 and 60) above the median were respectively “I wanted to treat the child/children to a fun experience” and “I wanted the group/family to learn something”. This analysis provided

some evidence to support *Hypothesis 1*, that learning is one of the most important reasons for adults travelling with a child/children to visit a cultural attraction.

Results of Hypothesis 2: Important Attraction Attributes

With respect to the question “Please rate how important the following attraction attributes were for visiting this attraction with a child/children” the responses were again skewed, either to the left or right. Over 50 percent of the respondents generally considered seven of the nine attraction attributes to be “mostly important” or “totally important” with a median score of 3.0 (Table 26). The option to purchase food and refreshments was perceived by most respondents to be “not important” with a median score of 1.0. The fact that the attraction offered a gift shop for the respondent and child/children to purchase souvenirs was considered by most respondents to be “slightly important” with a median score of 2.0.

Table 26**Importance of attraction attributes for visiting with child/children**

Attribute	Not important		Slightly important		Mostly important		Totally important		Not applicable		Median score	Number of scores < median	Number of scores ≥ median
	Score 1		Score 2		Score 3		Score 4						
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%			
Others said that the child/children would enjoy the attraction	11	11.1	19	19.2	32	32.3	19	19.2	19	18.2	3	30	51
The attraction's promotional materials indicated to me that the child/children would enjoy the experience	11	11.1	21	21.2	30	30.3	17	17.2	21	20.2	3	32	47
I felt that the attraction was generally perceived to be child-friendly	6	6.1	11	11.1	51	51.5	29	29.3	3	2.0	3	17	80
The attraction had interactive activities for the child/children	6	6.1	21	21.2	24	24.2	47	47.5	2	1.0	3	27	71
The attraction offered a good value for families and/or children (i.e., reasonable prices)	6	6.1	14	14.1	45	45.5	32	32.3	3	2.0	3	20	77
The attraction provided a safe and secure environment for my group	7	7.1	10	10.1	51	51.5	30	30.3	2	1.0	3	17	81
The time required to visit the attraction appeared appropriate (i.e., not too long, not too short)	2	2.0	16	16.2	41	41.4	39	39.4	2	1.0	3	18	80
The parking offered at the attraction appeared convenient	14	14.1	24	24.2	28	28.3	26	26.3	8	7.1	3	38	54
I had the option to purchase food and refreshments at the attraction	56	56.6	13	13.1	7	7.1	1	1.0	23	22.2	1	69	8
The attraction offered a gift shop for me and the child/children to purchase souvenirs	33	33.3	33	33.3	21	21.2	8	8.1	5	4.1	2	66	29

The results of Mood's median test implied a significant difference between the median scores with respect to the 10 questions in Table 26 at the .05 level indicated. The difference was indicated by $\chi^2(9) = 197.88$ $p = .000$. The item with the most number of scores (81) above the median was "The attraction provided a safe and secure environment for my group", followed very closely by "I felt the attraction was generally perceived to be child-friendly" with 80 scores above the median, "The time required to visit the attraction appeared appropriate" also with 80 scores above the median, and "The attraction offered a good value for families and/or children" with 77 scores above the median. The item with the highest number of "totally important" scores (47) with 71 scores above the median was "The attraction had interactive activities for the child/children". Therefore, *Hypothesis 2* could be considered partially supported as results of the Mood's Median test showed that interactive activity for the child/children is one of the most important reasons for visiting a cultural attraction; however, it is not necessarily the most important since three other questions received a higher number of scores above the median.

Results of Hypothesis 3: Timing and Relative Degree of Influence

Hypothesis 3 involved the percentage influence exerted by the child/children in the decision making process. Most of the percentage distributions were skewed, with conspicuous modes located at the left hand sides, reflecting high frequencies of zero responses and implying that many visitors did not view children (and others) as contributing to the decision making processes. To determine if ANOVA was justifiable as a method to compare the mean scores, the results of Levene's test for homogeneity of variance and Kolmogorov-Smirnov's test for residual normality are presented (Table 27).

Table 27

Results of tests for homogeneity of variance and normality of residuals with respect to the use of ANOVA to compare the mean scores

Stage	Levene's test for homogeneity of variance		Kolmogorov-Smirnov's test for residual normality	
	Test statistic	p	Test statistic	P
Initiating the idea	9.01	.000*	.262	.000*
Percentage of time spent researching	10.87	.000*	.265	.000*
Making the final decision	8.30	.000*	.198	.000*

*Significant at $p < .05$

The tests clearly indicated that the scores strongly violated the assumptions of ANOVA at the .05 level; consequently a meaningful comparison of mean scores using ANOVA was not possible. The results of Mood's non-parametric tests to compare the numbers of responses above and below the median scores are therefore presented in Table 28.

Table 28**Results of Mood's Median Test to compare influence of decision makers in the decision making process**

Stage in the decision making process	Decision makers				Between decision makers across each stage	
	Respon- dent	Spouse	Children	Other	χ^2	p
Initiating the idea	40.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	31.67	.000*
≤ Median	39	64	61	77		
> Median	60	35	38	22		
Percentage of time spent researching	45.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	75.35	.000*
≤ Median	23	61	62	82		
> Median	76	38	37	17		
Making the final decision	50.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	109.74	.000*
≤ Median	13	44	65	83		
> Median	86	55	34	16		
Within decision makers between each stage						
χ^2	5.86	9.58	.380	1.38		
p	.053	.008*	.828	.501		

*Significant difference between medians at $p < .05$

When the median scores among the four groups of decision makers across the three stages in the decision making process were compared using Mood's χ^2 statistics, significantly higher median scores at the .05 level were attributed to the respondents. The scores for the respondents were 40.0 to 50.0 compared to 0.0 to 25.0 for the spouses and 0.0 for the children and other persons. The median scores for the children and other persons were consistently zero, inferring a general tendency for the children and other

persons to contribute little at each stage of the decision making processes relative to the respondents and spouses.

When the median scores within the four groups of decision makers were compared among the three stages of the decision making process, the median scores for the respondents, the children, and the other persons did not vary significantly at the .05 level. There was insufficient evidence to conclude that the role of children was greatest in the idea initiation stage when deciding to visit the attraction. The contribution of the spouses, however, varied across the three stages. The median score for the spouses was significantly higher for making the final decision than for the initiation and search/evaluation stages.

Since a comparison of means as well as a comparison of medians was difficult due to the highly skewed distributions containing many zero values, an alternative approach was used to compare the scores. A Z test can be used to determine if there were significant differences in the proportions of summed scores so percentage score results for each group member at each stage in the decision making process were summed to provide a total score. For example, all scores attributed to the respondent (i.e., "Myself") to the question "Who initiated the idea to visit the attraction?" (e.g. 0, 0, 40, 50, 50, 50, 100, 0, 100...) were summed giving a summed score of 4028 which represents 13.56% of all scores attributed. The total scores attributed to the respondents, spouses, children, and other persons for the three stages in the decision making process and the percentage contributions of each group to the grand total score are presented in Table 29. It is evident that the respondents contributed the most (44.78%) to the three stages in the decision

making process, other persons contributed the least (10.53%) whilst spouses and children accounted for similar proportions (21.72% and 22.97% respectively).

Table 29

Summed scores attributed to the respondents, spouses, children, and other persons for the three stages in the decision making process

Stage in the decision making process	Decision makers							
	Respondent		Spouse		Children		Other	
	Summed score	% of total	Summed score	% of total	Summed score	% of total	Summed score	% of total
Initiating the idea	4028	13.56	1972	6.64	2656	8.94	1244	4.18
Percentage of time spent researching	4590	15.45	1967	6.62	2317	7.80	1026	3.45
Making the final decision	4681	15.76	2512	8.46	1849	6.22	858	2.88
All three stages combined	13299	44.78	6451	21.72	6822	22.97	3128	10.53

A Z test for the comparison of proportions was conducted to determine if the percentages of children initiating the idea, time spent researching, and making the final decision were significantly different from each other. The results are presented in Table 30. Evidence is provided from the Z statistics to indicate that the three proportions, corresponding to the three stages in the decision making process, were significantly different from each other at the .05 level.

Table 30**Results of Z tests for comparison of the proportions of the summed scores attributed to the children for the three stages in the decision making process**

	Initiating the idea	Percentage of time spent researching
Percentage of time spent researching	Z = 5.02 p = .000*	
Making the final decision	12.52 p = .000*	7.52 p = .000*

*Significant at $p \leq .05$

It is concluded that the proportion of the summed score attributed to children initiating the idea (8.94%) was significantly higher than the proportion of the summed score to the time spent researching (7.80%) and significantly higher than the proportion of the summed score attributed to making the final decision (6.22%).

With respect to *Hypothesis 3*, evidence was provided using Mood's Median test to conclude that of the three major stages in the decision making process (initiation, search/evaluation, and final decision), adults travelling with a child/children do not necessarily believe that the child/children's role is greatest in the idea initiation stage when deciding to visit a cultural attraction. Significantly higher median scores were attributed to the respondents for the three major stages in the decision making process. The children's median scores for their contribution to initiation, search/evaluation, and final decision were all zero, and insufficient evidence was obtained using Mood's Median test to determine if the median scores were different from each other. The skewed distribution of the scores and the high number of zeroes made it very difficult to compare the contributions of the children to each stage in the decision making process. The results of a Z test for the

comparison of proportions of summed scores, however, provided preliminary statistical evidence to indicate that the percentage of the summed score attributed to children for initiating the idea was significantly higher than the percentage attributed to the time they spent researching/evaluating and significantly higher than the percentage attributed to making the final decision. Consequently it can be concluded that the child/children's role may be greatest in the idea initiation stage, but this conclusion is not unequivocal in view of the difficulties experienced in performing the statistical analyses.

Results of Hypothesis 4: Influence and Age

Correlation coefficients were computed to determine if the ages of the children were related to the percentage scores attributed by the respondent to each child initiating the idea to visit the attraction, time spent researching what the attraction had to offer, and making the final decision to visit the attraction (Table 31).

Table 31

Correlation coefficients between ages of children and percentage scores

Decision making items	Correlation coefficient	p
Initiating the idea to visit the attraction	.224	.002*
Time spent researching what the attraction had to offer	.285	.000*
Making the final decision to visit the attraction	.140	.055

*Significant at $p \leq .05$

The scores attributed to each child who initiated the idea to visit the attraction were positively correlated with the ages of the children at the .05 level. The scores attributed to the times each child spent researching what the attraction had to offer were also positively correlated with their ages at the .05 level. There was no significant correlation at the .05

level between the scores attributed to each child who made the final decision to visit the attraction and the ages of the children.

The significant correlations, however, did not imply linear relationships. The scatter plots (Figure 5 and 6) illustrated that very young children (below seven years old) contributed little or nothing to initiation or search/evaluation. The scores attributed to children between the ages of seven and 17 were very widely scattered. Most of the highest scores (60% -100%) for initiating the idea to visit the attraction, and for time spent researching, were attributed to children between the ages of seven and 13 and not to older children between 14 and 17 years old.

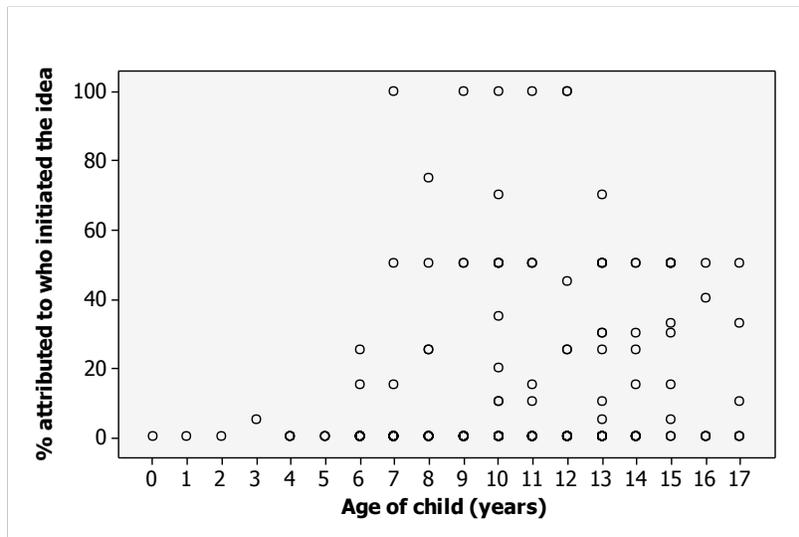


Figure 5: Relationship between the age of the child and the percentage attributed to who initiated the idea to visit the attraction

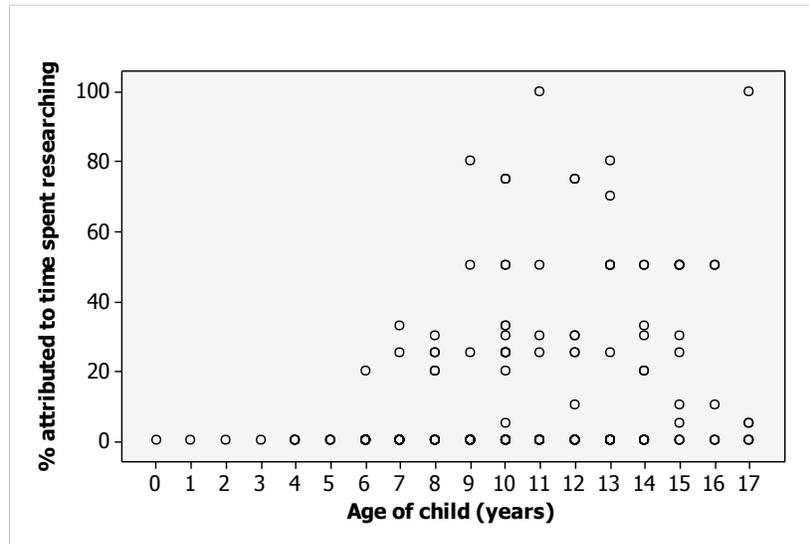


Figure 6: Relationship between the age of the child and the percentage attributed to the time spent researching what the attraction had to offer

Hypothesis 4, that adults travelling with a child/children believe that older children have more relative overall influence on the decision to visit a cultural attraction than younger children, was partially supported. Although adults travelling with a child/children believed that children over eight years old have more relative overall influence on the decision to visit a cultural attraction than younger children, the perceived relative influence begins to drop off for the oldest children (i.e., over 13 years old). Scatter plots illustrated that very young children (below seven years old) contributed little or nothing to initiation or search/evaluation, whilst a wide scatter of scores were attributed to children between the ages of seven and 17 with respect to initiation and search/evaluation, but with a notable slight decline from 13 to 17 years old.

Discussion

At a time when attention on motivation and decision-making in the area of family travel is on the rise (Boyer & Viallon, 1996; Bronner & de Hoog, 2008; Mayo & Jarvis, 1981), it is fundamental to examine the relationship dynamics between adult facilitators and the child/children they vacation with. This study examined the role of children as it relates to vacation attraction choice by investigating how children influence the decision-making of their adult facilitators in a tourism setting and by exploring the importance of a vacation activity's (i.e., a visit to a cultural attraction) experiential outcomes and functional attributes.

The data collected concerning important reasons for an adult travelling with a child/children to visit a cultural attraction supports similar leisure activity research on family visits to zoos (Andereck & Caldwell, 1994; ETB, 1983; Holzer, Scott & Bixer, 1998; Kellert, 1979; Turley, 2001). These studies all found that: 1) education for the child/children, 2) to treat the child/children, and 3) family togetherness, were among the most important motivations for the adult facilitators. However, the zoo visitor data placed a stronger importance on developing relationships than did our study at cultural attractions.

The data on the importance of attraction attributes for groups travelling with a child/children revealed that the option to purchase food/refreshments or souvenirs (i.e., the presence of a gift shop) were considered by most (adult) respondents to be "not important" and only "slightly important" respectively. These findings can be compared to those of Nickerson and Jurowski (2001) who, in their tourist attraction survey of both adults and children, found that the children had significantly higher satisfaction ratings on the

opportunity to shop and the opportunities for food and beverage services than the adults in their group. While nearly all adult facilitators agreed that an attraction which is generally perceived to be child-friendly, offers good value for families, can be experienced in a reasonable amount of time, and provides a safe and secure environment for their group is at least slightly important, the attraction attribute with the highest number of “totally important” scores was the perception or presence of interactive activities for the child/children. While there is evidence to support that children find interactive activities at tourist attractions to be most enjoyable (Cullingford, 1995; Nickerson & Jurowski, 2001), previous studies have not shown adult facilitators to be highly motivated by interactive activities for their family/group which included at least one child (Seaton & Tagg, 1995; Thornton, 1997).

Analyses provided a small level of support for the conclusions of Shoham and Dalakas (2003) that children’s influence on family purchases is greatest during the idea initiation stage. The scores attributed by the respondents to all three decision-making stages was greatest for the respondent, less for the child/children, and lower still for the spouse (and others). However, respondents did attribute a higher level of influence to the child/children in stage 1 (idea initiation) relative to stages 2 (search/evaluation) and 3 (final decision).

A positive correlation was revealed between the ages of the children and the percentage scores attributed by the respondent to each child in the first two stages of the decision-making process: 1) initiating the idea to visit the attraction, and 2) time spent researching what the attraction had to offer. While the results mostly contradict the

negative age-to-purchase influence relationships suggested by Ward and Wackman (1972) and Thorton et al. (1997), it is interesting to note that the correlations did not imply linear relationships like those of Seaton and Tagg (1994) and Harrell (2002) as relative influence seems to peak between ages seven and 13 and then dissipates as the child/children get older.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

Implications and Recommendations

While the study, due to its small sample size, cannot unequivocally contribute to the knowledge base on children's roles in vacation behaviour, the results can serve as building blocks in understanding the influence of children on vacation attraction choice and other closely related areas of research.

Firstly, results clearly indicated that there are at least three relatively equally important reasons why adult facilitators choose to visit cultural attractions while on vacation: 1) education for the child/children, 2) to treat the child/children, and 3) family togetherness. Because all three reasons place a strong significance on the benefits gained by the child/children relative to the adult(s), it can be suggested that adult facilitators primarily seek to provide the most rewarding experience for the child/children and thus children do (indirectly) influence vacation attraction choice. Moreover, the fact that everyday conveniences such as the availability of food/refreshments and automobile parking did not score nearly at the same level of importance as attributes associated with the enjoyment of the child/children may imply that facilitators are willing to accept certain inconveniences as long as the child/children are content. These results provide support for suggestions by Cullingford (1995) and for tourism marketers who have chosen to feature happy and engaged children prominently in their advertisements, as it appears that a happy child equals a happy facilitator. However, managers of tourism products should take note of two key findings: 1) that child-centered promotional materials and word of mouth

testimonials were found to be only slightly or not important to nearly one third of the respondents, and 2) that while certain inconveniences appear to be more than acceptable, sacrifice for the benefit of the child/children does not seem to extend to pricing as 77.8 percent of all respondents rated good value for families and/or children as mostly or totally important. Special family pricing or deals to attract business during off peak hours should continue to be part of, or added to, the marketing mix. It appears that the perception that the attraction is both fun and educational will be required to pull facilitators beyond stage one (idea initiation) and that good value will often be required to move facilitators beyond stage two (search/evaluation); consequently family pricing may be irrelevant if the right message is not communicated to the target audience. The solution for cultural attractions is to move in the same direction as emerging technologies (i.e., Web 2.0, mobile web applications, Wikipedia, etc.) and adopt interactive learning or “edu-tainment” that appeals to the children but, perhaps more importantly, are understood as an educational experience that the entire family can share in and bond as a result.

The findings on importance of attraction attributes for groups travelling with a child/children revealed that the option to purchase food/refreshments or souvenirs (i.e., the presence of a gift shop) were considered by most respondents to be “not important” and only “slightly important” respectively. But most groups (73 percent) made at least one purchase at the gift shop. The theory that children use influence strategies such as bargaining and persuasion or “pester-power” (Intel, 2002; Shoham & Dalakas; Turley, 2001) may well extend to souvenir purchase once at the attraction. While not the focus of this study, attraction managers might find this limited but insightful information as support

for planning approaches that keep gift shop shelves (at least the lower ones at a child's eye level) filled with good value, educational souvenirs for children. Furthermore, attraction managers should be aware that there exists research which has demonstrated that "extras" such as the presence of a restaurant or gift shop tend to increase in importance when they are not provided adequately (Stuart & Stynes, 1995). The results of this study may simply speak to sufficient provision of services in that regard.

Finally, the data gathered in this study showed some evidence that the perception of children's direct influence, while relatively small at all three stages, was slightly greater at stage one in the decision making process (idea initiation) than stage two (search/evaluation), and greater still over stage three (final decision). Despite the determination that respondents (adult facilitators) saw themselves as overwhelmingly in charge in all three stages, there was evidence that children's influence was not insignificant in the first two stages in the decision making process with relative influence peaking between the ages of seven and 13 years old. Figure 7 incorporates findings from this study in a proposed model which demonstrates how vacationing families move through stages of the decision making process and select cultural attractions that are deemed worth visiting.

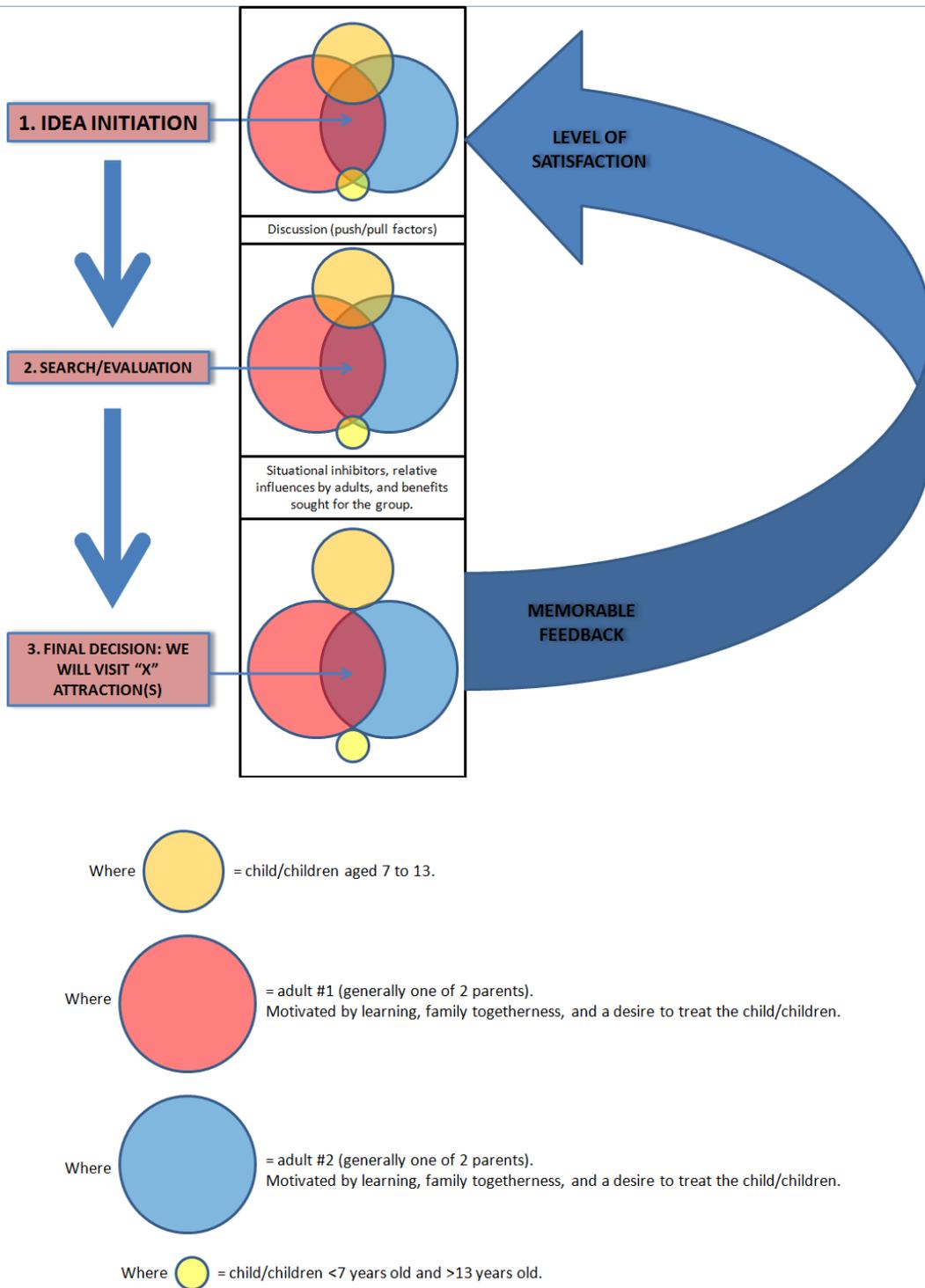


Figure 7: The family's influence on vacation attraction choice model (Robin, 2010)

Loosely based on Jang et al's (2007) destination choice-sets model for a couple, the family's influence on vacation attraction choice model is the first known model that aims to illustrate how and why vacationing families select which (cultural) attraction(s) to visit. At the top of the model, idea initiation (stage 1) discussion surrounds motives such as education, fun/treat, and family togetherness - the push to visit a cultural attraction, as well as the pull of attraction attributes such as learning activities and cultural exposure. In search/evaluation (stage 2), the decision-making unit focuses on situational inhibitors (e.g., time, money, transportation, etc.) and a match up of the benefits sought with the perceived attraction attributes (i.e., is this attraction safe and does this attraction appear to offer a good opportunity for learning and entertainment for the entire family or group?). For the most part, final decision (stage 3) is solely up to the one or two adult facilitators. While adult #1 and adult #2 are shown to be equally involved in all three stages of the vacation attraction choice decision-making process, this is only meant to represent a potential level of participation as the reality is that one or the other may retain 100 percent of the authority or they may share it at any shared combination level therein. Finally, memorable feedback and satisfaction are shown to influence future vacation attraction idea initiation and encourage (or discourage) repeat visits to cultural attractions, both individually and in general.

Study Limitations and Future Research

The total number of questionnaire responses was quite low and consequently the generalizability of the results beyond those who replied is limited. It was assumed that a high value incentive offer (a chance at winning a 500 dollar gift card from WestJet®

Airlines) would have resulted in a higher response rate, however past research has shown that this is not necessarily the case (Dillman, 2000). It is believed that the incentive offer was in fact adequate, but that perhaps the message which accompanied the invitation to participate could have been stronger. It would be advisable for future studies using the same study design to seek feedback on the participation invitation strategy as well as ensure face-to-face training for all persons responsible for handing out the invitations to participate. Even if the response rate was not a concern, locations chosen for the research may pose a problem for generalization to cultural attractions in a dissimilar milieu. Further research should be undertaken to test the applicability of the results at different times of the year as well as to rural cultural attractions and cultural attractions in other regions and/or climates. Additionally, if cultural attractions want to gain a better understanding of the nature and scope of family and multi-generational travel and implement best practices, they will need to begin by clearly defining and collecting data on attendance by family, youth, child, infant and a separation of spouse/partner from a family which includes a child/children.

Of interest to understanding motives of visitors with a child/children to leisure and tourist attractions, Turley's (2001) conclusions placed a significantly stronger importance on developing relationships than did the results from this study. Because the study by Turley (2001) included a large constituent of local residents in the sample, it would be astute to include both local residents and tourists to compare and contrast perceptions of cultural attractions. Furthermore, the fact that the adult facilitators in our study agreed that interactive activities are a mostly or totally important attribute when selecting a cultural

attraction for their group while on vacation sets the stage for a follow-up question: why? Based on the ratings of how important certain reasons for visiting the attraction were for these same facilitators, it is difficult to determine the connection to interactive activities. Is this truly what they want for the child/children (i.e., to treat the child/children; to facilitate “fun”) or is it because interactive activities are perceived as a promising means to an end: for the child/children to learn something and/or to appreciate some culture? While there is considerably more research required before the academic and professional worlds of tourism grasp the full nature of children’s influence on vacation attraction decision making, models such as the family’s influence on vacation attraction choice serve to provide guidelines to pursue further research.

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Appendix A

Invitation Letters to Attractions to Participate

Christian Robin
Master of Arts Candidate
University of Manitoba
106 Frank Kennedy Centre
Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management
Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3T 2N2



July 21, 2009

Dear Heather Mousseau, The Winnipeg Art Gallery:

As you know, I am pursuing a Master of Arts at the University of Manitoba Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management majoring in travel and tourism. This summer I will be conducting a study on the influence of children on vacation attraction choice for my master's thesis. The purpose of this study involves four key objectives: 1) Gaining insight on how groups with a child/children prefer to travel, 2) Understanding the reasons why groups with a child/children choose to visit certain kinds of attractions, 3) Examining the views of adult facilitators who travel with a child/children on the child/children's participation with regards to the selection of tourist attractions, and 4) discovering what attraction characteristics adult facilitators believe are most important in providing their child/children with an enjoyable experience. As an academic study, this research will be conducted under the regulations of the Human Subjects Research Ethics Board at the University of Manitoba.

I am requesting your assistance to recruit participants. Specifically, I am seeking permission for your staff to ensure all adult visitors originating from outside the greater Winnipeg area purchasing an admission to The Winnipeg Art Gallery during the month of August 2009 (August 1 to August 31) for themselves and at least one child between the ages of six and 17 years old receives a business card-sized invitation to participate in the study. The card is simply an invitation to participate by visiting the website which hosts the on-line questionnaire – they will be informed of the study purpose, procedures, and how their responses will be kept anonymous once logged on to the site.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. Upon completion of the study, you will receive a report of the results and a copy of my final thesis document; both should provide your organization with valuable information on your visitors. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 204-229-5012 or umrobinc@cc.umanitoba.ca. You may also contact the University of Manitoba Human Ethics Secretariat at 204-474-7122 or the supervising professor, Dr. Kelly MacKay, at 204-474-7058 or mackay@cc.umanitoba.ca.

Thank you for considering my request. I look forward to hearing back from you on this matter.

Regards,

Christian Robin
Master of Arts Candidate

Christian Robin
Master of Arts Candidate
University of Manitoba
106 Frank Kennedy Centre
Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management
Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3T 2N2



July 21, 2009

Dear Javier Schwersensky, Manitoba Museum:

As you know, I am pursuing a Master of Arts at the University of Manitoba Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management majoring in travel and tourism. This summer I will be conducting a study on the influence of children on vacation attraction choice for my master's thesis. The purpose of this study involves four key objectives: 1) Gaining insight on how groups with a child/children prefer to travel, 2) Understanding the reasons why groups with a child/children choose to visit certain kinds of attractions, 3) Examining the views of adult facilitators who travel with a child/children on the child/children's participation with regards to the selection of tourist attractions, and 4) discovering what attraction characteristics adult facilitators believe are most important in providing their child/children with an enjoyable experience. As an academic study, this research will be conducted under the regulations of the Human Subjects Research Ethics Board at the University of Manitoba.

I am requesting your assistance to recruit participants. Specifically, I am seeking permission for your staff to ensure all adult visitors originating from outside the greater Winnipeg area purchasing an admission to the Manitoba Museum during the month of August 2009 (August 1 to August 31) for themselves and at least one child between the ages of six and 17 years old receives a business card-sized invitation to participate in the study. The card is simply an invitation to participate by visiting the website which hosts the on-line questionnaire – they will be informed of the study purpose, procedures, and how their responses will be kept anonymous once logged on to the site.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. Upon completion of the study, you will receive a report of the results and a copy of my final thesis document; both should provide your organization with valuable information on your visitors. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 204-229-5012 or umrobinc@cc.umanitoba.ca. You may also contact the University of Manitoba Human Ethics Secretariat at 204-474-7122 or the supervising professor, Dr. Kelly MacKay, at 204-474-7058 or mackay@cc.umanitoba.ca.

Thank you for considering my request. I look forward to hearing back from you on this matter.

Regards,

Christian Robin
Master of Arts Candidate

Christian Robin
Master of Arts Candidate
University of Manitoba
106 Frank Kennedy Centre
Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management
Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3T 2N2



July 21, 2009

Dear Wendy Repischak, Royal Canadian Mint (Senior Manager of Boutique & Tour Operations):

As you know, I am pursuing a Master of Arts at the University of Manitoba Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management majoring in travel and tourism. This summer I will be conducting a study on the influence of children on vacation attraction choice for my master's thesis. The purpose of this study involves four key objectives: 1) Gaining insight on how groups with a child/children prefer to travel, 2) Understanding the reasons why groups with a child/children choose to visit certain kinds of attractions, 3) Examining the views of adult facilitators who travel with a child/children on the child/children's participation with regards to the selection of tourist attractions, and 4) discovering what attraction characteristics adult facilitators believe are most important in providing their child/children with an enjoyable experience. As an academic study, this research will be conducted under the regulations of the Human Subjects Research Ethics Board at the University of Manitoba.

I am requesting your assistance to recruit participants. Specifically, I am seeking permission for your staff to ensure all adult visitors originating from outside the greater Winnipeg area purchasing an admission to the Royal Canadian Mint during the month of August 2009 (August 1 to August 31) for themselves and at least one child between the ages of six and 17 years old receives a business card-sized invitation to participate in the study. The card is simply an invitation to participate by visiting the website which hosts the on-line questionnaire – they will be informed of the study purpose, procedures, and how their responses will be kept anonymous once logged on to the site.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. Upon completion of the study, you will receive a report of the results and a copy of my final thesis document; both should provide your organization with valuable information on your visitors. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 204-229-5012 or umrobinc@cc.umanitoba.ca. You may also contact the University of Manitoba Human Ethics Secretariat at 204-474-7122 or the supervising professor, Dr. Kelly MacKay, at 204-474-7058 or mackay@cc.umanitoba.ca.

Thank you for considering my request. I look forward to hearing back from you on this matter.

Regards,

Christian Robin
Master of Arts Candidate

Appendix B:

Invitation card to sample population to Participate

WIN A \$500 GIFT CARD FOR WESTJET AIRLINES
BY PARTICIPATING IN A UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA
STUDENT STUDY ON FAMILY VACATION CHOICES!



UNIVERSITY
OF MANITOBA

Visit: www.tiny.cc/uofm330
by September 30, 2009



Appendix C:

Invitation Response from Upper Management at the Royal Canadian Mint



ROYAL CANADIAN MINT
MONNAIE ROYALE CANADIENNE

Wendy Repischak
Senior Manager, Boutique & Tour Operations (Ottawa and Winnipeg)
Royal Canadian Mint
320 Sussex Drive
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0G8

July 21, 2009

Dear Christian Robin:

The Royal Canadian Mint is very pleased to assist you in your pursuit of a Master's degree and the completion of an academic study on The Influence of Children on Vacation Attraction Choice.

Should it be necessary for anybody to contact me regarding the Mint's support of this worthwhile study, please have them contact me directly at 613-991-6068 or at repischak@mint.ca.

Regards,

Wendy Repischak

Appendix D:

Ethics Protocol

As approved by Education/Nursing Research Ethics Board

The thesis research is subject to the ethical scrutiny and approval of the Education and Nursing Research Ethics Board, or ENREB. An ENREB Approval Certificate was obtained on July 28, 2009. The following paragraphs explain the manner in which issues involving participation and confidentiality were addressed.

As an incentive to take part in the study, all participants who completed the questionnaire were given the opportunity to enter into a draw for a gift card from WestJet[®] airlines with a value of 500 dollars. The 500 dollar WestJet[®] gift card was purchased by the investigator as his own personal expense. The names and contact information of the participants who have entered the draw are being stored separately from the collected data in a locked file cabinet located in a secure office at the Royal Canadian Mint. As indicated in the questionnaire, the e-mail draw is not linked or connected to the survey responses in any way. The draw was held on December 1st, 2009. Once the winner was contacted and the prize was awarded, all information collected for the draw was destroyed within 24 hours using the Royal Canadian Mint's industrial shredder located on the third floor in the Accounting and Finance department. Any and all e-mail records were erased (deleted).

Data collected is stored on the researcher's computer in a secure file requiring a password. Electronic data will be erased (deleted) after seven years. All data is anonymous and is not connected to any respondent in any way and is only identified by a case number.

Participants were given the option to skip any question they did not wish to answer. The prize draw was an incentive to participate and only those who participated were able to enter in the draw – regardless of whether they completed all the questions or not. There

was no consequence for the participant to who chose to skip any question and there was no consequence for the participant who arrived at the end of the questionnaire and chose not to allow his/her responses to be used in the study. However, a participant who chose to walk away from the questionnaire prior to completing was deemed to have made the choice not to participate in the study in the same way as those who did not log on to the questionnaire site in the first place.

Appendix E:
Online Questionnaire

Progress 8%

Back

Next



UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

You have been invited to participate in this survey because you recently purchased admission to a Winnipeg attraction for yourself and at least one child. This study is being undertaken as part of a University of Manitoba Master's thesis.

The goal of my research, entitled *The Influence of Children on Vacation Attraction Choice*, is to understand what kind of influence the child/children in your group had on the decision to visit the Winnipeg attraction. If we can gain a better understanding on how children influence vacation attraction choice, as well as gain insight as to how groups with children react to the attraction you visited and others like it, the expectations and experiences of future visitors can be better managed. Your participation is important to the study and to the management of the attraction.

Respondents must be at least 18 years old. This brief questionnaire consists of 5 sections:

Section #1 asks general questions about the nature of your trip and how you became aware of this attraction.

Section #2 inquires about your reasons for visiting the attraction.

Section #3 asks questions about when and how decisions were made with regards to visiting the attraction.

Section #4 inquires about your thoughts about the attraction and how satisfied you were with your experiences.

Section #5 asks about your personal characteristics so that survey respondents can be described as a group - no individual responses will be isolated. Remember, you may withdraw your participation at any time or skip any you do not wish to answer.

The questionnaire should take you no longer than 15 minutes to answer and you can stop at any time. If you decide to stop and quit at any time prior to completing the final question, all of your answers will be deleted and your responses will not be used in the study. If you choose to complete the questionnaire, your individual responses will remain anonymous and kept strictly confidential; only the collective results from all the completed questionnaires will be used in the study and shared with the participating attractions. Data collected will be stored on the researcher's computer in a secure file requiring a password. Electronic data will be erased (deleted) after seven years.

When you are finished the questionnaire, you will be invited to enter the participation draw for a \$500 gift card from WestJet Airlines. To enter the draw, you will simply need to e-mail your full name and telephone number to the e-mail address provided at the end of the questionnaire. The e-mail draw is not linked or connected to the survey responses in any way. The draw will be held on December 1st, 2009. Only the winner will be contacted.

This research has been approved by the University of Manitoba Education and Nursing Research Ethics Board and the Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management. If you have any concerns about this project you may contact the principal investigator and sole funding agent, Christian Robin at 204-983-5647 (umrobinc@cc.umanitoba.ca), the Human Ethics Secretariat at 204-474-7122, or the supervising professor Dr. Kelly MacKay at 204-474-7058.

A summary of the results of this research may be viewed on Dr. MacKay's website after January 30th, 2010. Please go to:
<http://www.umanitoba.ca/faculties/physed/research/mackay/>

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my thesis research study.

Sincerely,



Christian Robin
Master of Arts Candidate Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management
University of Manitoba
204-983-5647
umrobinc@cc.umanitoba.ca

IMPORTANT NOTE:

In order to ensure accurate results, it is asked that each participant complete the questionnaire only ONE TIME and for only one attraction.

Press "NEXT" to continue

Back

Next

Page 2

Progress 12%

Back

Next

Participation Agreement

By clicking "YES" below you are indicating that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to complete the questionnaire.

In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities.

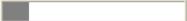
A reminder that your individual responses are anonymous and will be kept strictly confidential

- YES, I give my informed consent that my answers be included in the study as indicated above.
- No, I would prefer that my answers not be used in the study.

Back

Next

Page 3

Progress  15%

[Back](#) [Next](#)

Which of the following best identifies your current place of residence?

- The greater Winnipeg area (i.e. Winnipeg is part of my usual environment)
- Manitoba, but from outside the greater Winnipeg area
- Saskatchewan
- Alberta
- British Columbia
- Ontario
- Quebec
- Atlantic provinces
- The United States
- Another country (not including the United States), please specify:

[Back](#) [Next](#)

Page 4

Progress  18%

[Back](#) [Next](#)

The length of your entire trip which included the visit to the attraction was:

- Less than 24 hours
- More than 24 hours, but less than 2 days
- More than 2 days but less than 1 week
- 1 to 2 weeks
- More than 2 weeks

[Back](#) [Next](#)

Page 5

Progress  20%



Which of the following best describes the main purpose of your visit to the Winnipeg area?

- For pleasure, vacation, or holiday
- For business or work-related reasons
- To visit friends or relatives
- Other (Please specify):

Page 6

Progress  22%



How did you and your group travel to Winnipeg? (check all that apply)

- By automobile
- By RV
- By bus
- By air
- By rail
- Other (Please specify):

Page 7

Progress  22%

How did you and your group travel to Winnipeg? (check all that apply)

- By automobile
- By RV
- By bus
- By air
- By rail
- Other (Please specify):

Page 8

Progress  25%

How many times have you been to Winnipeg?

- This was my first visit to Winnipeg
- Two to five times
- More than five times

Page 9

Progress  28%

At which attraction did you receive the invitation to participate in this study? If you received more than one invitation, please choose the attraction that you visited most recently.

- Manitoba Museum
- Royal Canadian Mint
- Winnipeg Art Gallery

Page 10

Progress  30%

Was this your first visit to the Manitoba Museum?

- Yes
 No

Page 11

Progress  32%

How did you hear about this attraction? (check all that apply)

- Attraction's website
 Other website, check off and specify website in box below
 Guidebook
 Television
 Local Newspaper
 Brochure/Rack card
 Visitor Information Centre (Destination Winnipeg, Travel Manitoba, or other)
 CAA/AAA or other motor club
 Travel Agency
 Hotel front desk or concierge
 Friends/family
 From my child/children
 Other (Please specify):

Page 12

Progress  35%

How many people, including yourself, visited the attraction?

- 1
 2
 3
 4
 5+

Page 13

Progress 38%

How many children under the age of 18 were in your group?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5+
- None

Page 14

Progress 40%

How many years old is each child that was in your group visiting the attraction?

Child 1	<input type="text"/>
Child 2	<input type="text"/>
Child 3	<input type="text"/>

Page 15

Progress 42%

Of what sex is each child that was in your group visiting the attraction?

	Male	Female
07 year old child	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10 year old child	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11 year old child	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Page 16

Progress 45%

[Back](#) [Next](#)

Please rate how important the following reasons were for visiting this attraction with a child/children. I visited the attraction with a child/children because

	totally important	mostly important	slightly important	not important	not applicable
I wanted the group/family to learn something	<input type="radio"/>				
I wanted the group/family to experience something new and exciting	<input type="radio"/>				
I wanted the group/family to experience and appreciate some culture	<input type="radio"/>				
I wanted to get away from stress	<input type="radio"/>				
I wanted the child/children to be distracted for a few hours	<input type="radio"/>				
I wanted to spend time with close friends/family	<input type="radio"/>				
I wanted to experience the attraction through the eyes of the child/children	<input type="radio"/>				
I wanted to develop my relationship with the child/children in my group	<input type="radio"/>				
I wanted to treat the child/children to a fun experience	<input type="radio"/>				

[Back](#) [Next](#)

Page 17

Progress 48%

[Back](#) [Next](#)

Please rate how important the following attraction attributes were for visiting this attraction with a child/children.

	totally important	mostly important	slightly important	not important	not applicable
Others said that the child/children would enjoy the attraction	<input type="radio"/>				
The attraction's promotional materials indicated to me that the child/children would enjoy the experience	<input type="radio"/>				
I felt that the attraction was generally perceived to be child-friendly	<input type="radio"/>				
The attraction had interactive activities for the child/children	<input type="radio"/>				
The attraction offered a good value for families and/or children (i.e., reasonable prices)	<input type="radio"/>				
The attraction provided a safe and secure environment for my group	<input type="radio"/>				
The time required to visit the attraction appeared appropriate (i.e., not too long, not too short)	<input type="radio"/>				
The parking offered at the attraction appeared convenient	<input type="radio"/>				
I had the option to purchase food and refreshments at the attraction	<input type="radio"/>				
The attraction offered a gift shop for me and the child/children to purchase souvenirs	<input type="radio"/>				

[Back](#) [Next](#)

Page 18

Progress 50%

When was the decision to visit the attraction made?

- Before leaving home
- After leaving home but prior to arriving in Winnipeg
- Once in Winnipeg
- Cannot recall

Page 19

Progress 52%

Who initiated the idea to visit the attraction? ----- Please attribute a percentage amount (0 to 100) to the possible answer choices -----
Use the tab key to navigate the fields, please total to 100% and then press next when finished.

Myself	<input type="text" value="0"/>
My spouse	<input type="text" value="0"/>
07 year old Male child	<input type="text" value="0"/>
10 year old Male child	<input type="text" value="0"/>
11 year old Female child	<input type="text" value="0"/>
Others in group	<input type="text" value="0"/>
Total (100%)	<input type="text" value="0"/>

Page 20

Progress 57%

What percentage of time did each of the following people spend on researching what the attraction had to offer? ----- Please attribute a percentage amount (0 to 100) to the possible answer choices ----- Use the tab key to navigate the fields, please total to 100% and then press next when finished.

Myself	<input type="text" value="0"/>
My spouse	<input type="text" value="0"/>
07 year old Male child	<input type="text" value="0"/>
10 year old Male child	<input type="text" value="0"/>
11 year old Female child	<input type="text" value="0"/>
Others in group	<input type="text" value="0"/>
Total (100%)	<input type="text" value="0"/>

Page 21

Progress  62%

Who made the final decision to visit the attraction? ----- Please attribute a percentage amount (0 to 100) to the possible answer choices -----
----- Use the tab key to navigate the fields, please total to 100% and then press next when finished.

Myself	0
My spouse	0
07 year old Male child	0
10 year old Male child	0
11 year old Female child	0
Others in group	0
Total (100%)	0

Page 22

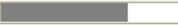
Progress  68%

Who paid for the admission to the attraction?

Please check all that apply.

- Myself
- My spouse
- The child/children
- Other, please specify

Page 23

Progress  70%

[Back](#) [Next](#)

Who made a purchase at the attraction's gift shop?

Please check all that apply.

- Myself
- My spouse
- The child/children
- No purchases were made
- Other, please specify
- Prefer not to answer

[Back](#) [Next](#)

Page 24

Progress  72%

[Back](#) [Next](#)

Please rate how much you agree with the following statements about the attraction.

	completely agree	mostly agree	slightly agree	neutral	slightly disagree	mostly disagree	completely disagree
I believe the child/children was very pleased with the overall attraction experience.	<input type="radio"/>						
I believe the attraction offers many attributes that are fitting for groups visiting with a child/children (i.e., child-friendly)	<input type="radio"/>						
I was very pleased with the overall attraction experience	<input type="radio"/>						

[Back](#) [Next](#)

Page 25

Progress  75%

[Back](#) [Next](#)

Please rate how much you agree with the following statements

	completely agree	mostly agree	slightly agree	neutral	slightly disagree	mostly disagree	completely disagree
I take most of my vacations with a child/children	<input type="radio"/>						
I often visit tourist attractions while on vacation with a child/children	<input type="radio"/>						

[Back](#) [Next](#)

Page 26

Progress  78%

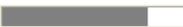
[Back](#) [Next](#)

You are

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to answer

[Back](#) [Next](#)

Page 27

Progress  80%

[Back](#) [Next](#)

You were born in the year?

If you prefer not to answer enter "9999".

[Back](#) [Next](#)

Page 28

Progress  82%

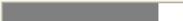
[Back](#) [Next](#)

You are

- Married/common law
- Single
- Divorced
- Prefer not to answer

[Back](#) [Next](#)

Page 29

Progress  85%

[Back](#) [Next](#)

What is your relationship to the child/children who were in your group when visiting the attraction?

- Parent
- Grand-parent
- Aunt/uncle/cousin/older sibling
- Friend of the family
- Paid guardian (e.g. babysitter/nanny/teacher, etc.)
- Other (Please specify):

[Back](#) [Next](#)

Page 30

Progress  88%

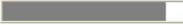
[Back](#) [Next](#)

Please indicate the highest level of education you achieved:

- Less than high school
- High school
- Technical school
- College without degree
- College/University degree(s)
- Some graduate work
- Graduate or professional degree
- Prefer not to answer

[Back](#) [Next](#)

Page 31

Progress  90%

Please indicate your current annual household income level:

- Less than \$25,000
- \$25,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$74,999
- \$75,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$149,999
- \$149,999 to \$199,999
- Over \$200,000
- Prefer not to answer

Page 32

Progress  92%

What ethnic or cultural group do you belong to (e.g. Canadian, Japanese, German, East Indian, Inuit, American, etc.)?

Specify as many groups as applicable:

Please Specify

Prefer not to answer

Page 33

Progress  95%

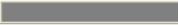
By clicking "YES" below you are indicating that, now having completed the questionnaire, you still agree to allow your answers to be used for the purposes of the study.

In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities.

A reminder that your individual responses are anonymous and will be kept strictly confidential.

- Yes
- No

Page 34

Progress  98%



You have completed the survey.

Please enter the participation draw for a \$500 gift card from WestJet Airlines by sending an e-mail to umrobinc@cc.umanitoba.ca.

Please remember to include:

- 1.) Your full name
- 2.) Your telephone number
- 3.) And your randomly assigned draw entry number: 15290

The information gathered for the draw will be kept strictly confidential.

The draw is not linked or connected to the survey responses in any way. The deadline to enter the draw is September 30th, 2009 and the draw will be held on December 1st, 2009. Only the winner will be contacted.

All information gathered for the draw will be destroyed once the winner has been contacted.

Thank you for your participation!

Please click the "Next" button to exit.

Appendix F:
Full Results for Age and Ethnicity of Respondents

Ages of the respondents (uncondensed)

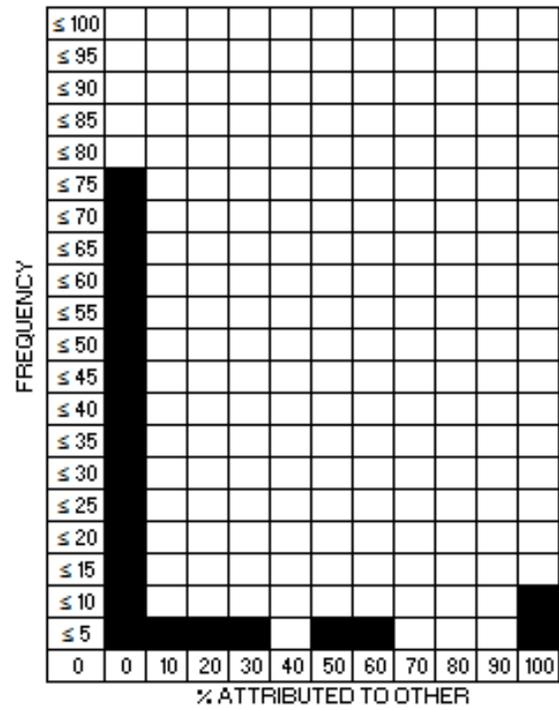
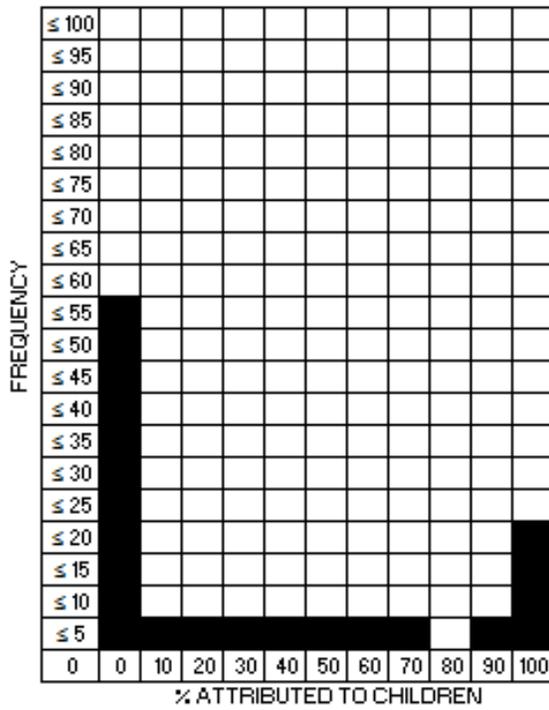
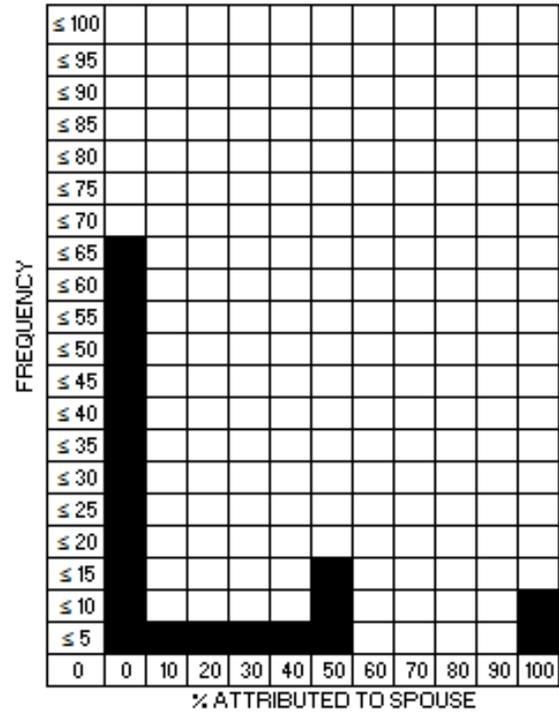
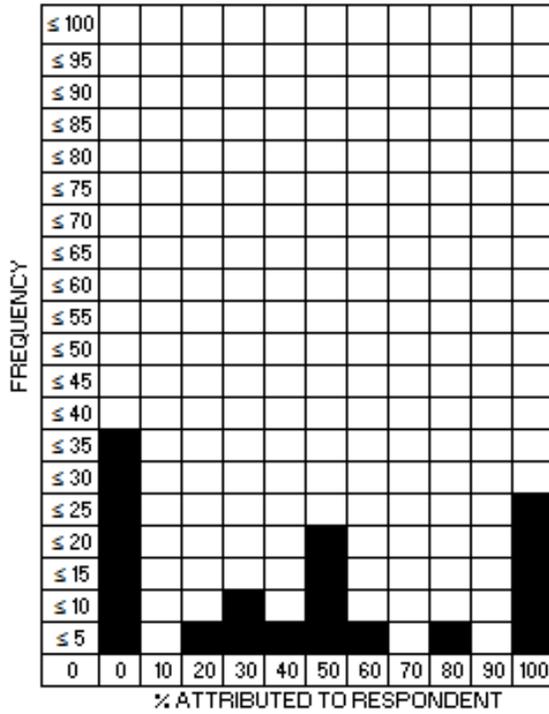
Year of birth	Frequency	Percent	Age in 2009	Age-group	Percent
	n	%			%
1949	1	1.0	60	44	51.2
1959	3	3.0	50		
1960	1	1.0	49		
1961	2	2.0	48		
1962	3	3.0	47		
1963	5	5.1	46		
1964	10	10.1	45		
1965	4	4.0	44		
1966	8	8.1	43		
1967	2	2.0	42		
1968	5	5.1	41		
1969	2	2.0	40	32	37.2
1970	4	4.0	39		
1971	8	8.1	38		
1972	5	5.1	37		
1973	2	2.0	36		
1974	4	4.0	35		
1975	3	3.0	34		
1977	1	1.0	32		
1978	3	3.0	31	10	11.6
1979	2	2.0	30		
1980	1	1.0	29		
1981	1	1.0	28		
1982	3	3.0	27		
1988	1	1.0	21		
1990	1	1.0	19	86	100.0
1991	1	1.0	18		
Prefer not to say	13	13.1	Total	86	100.0
Total	99	100.0			

Ethnic or cultural groups of the respondents (uncondensed)

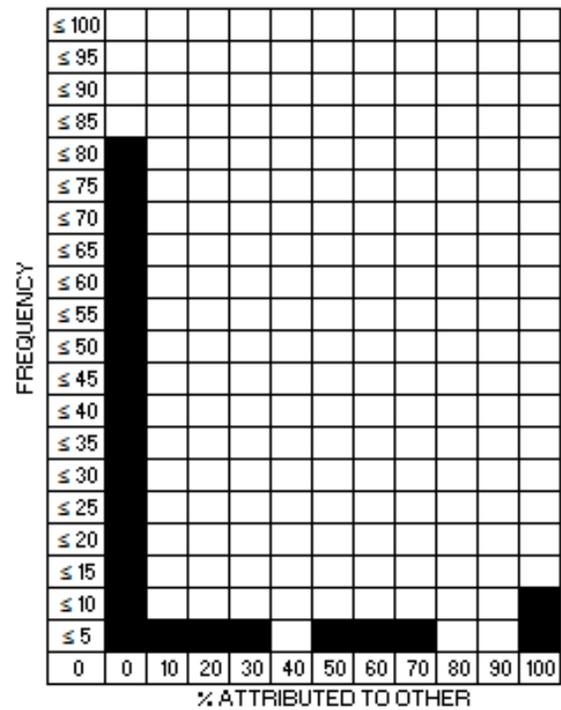
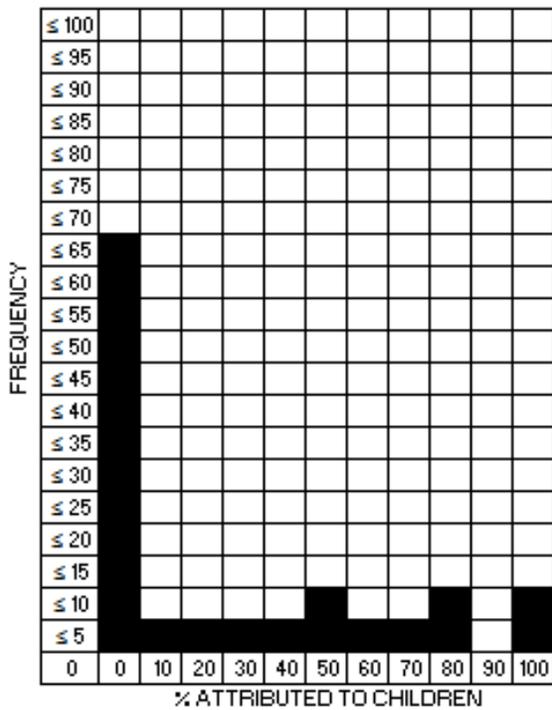
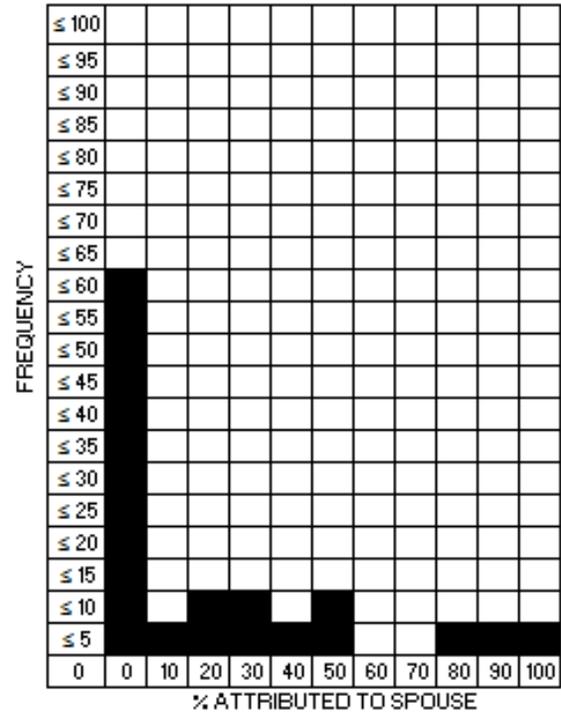
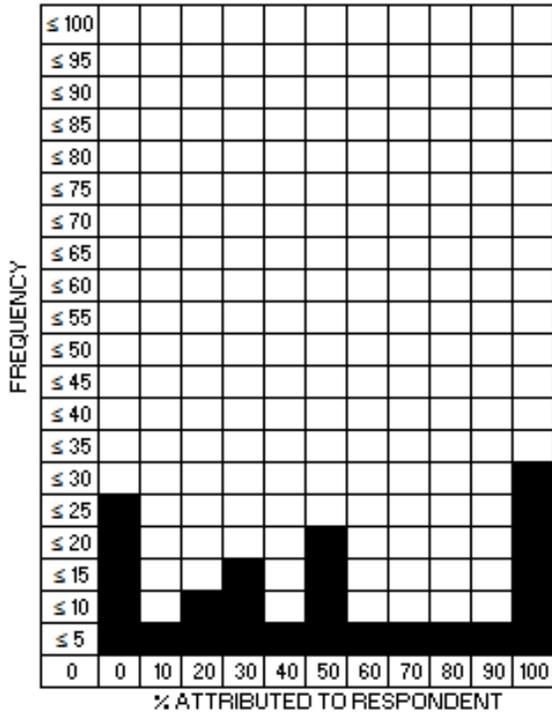
Ethnic or cultural group	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
	n	%	%
Canadian	30	30.3	30.3
Canadian French	1	1.0	31.3
Canadian French Irish	1	1.0	32.3
Canadian Portuguese	1	1.0	33.3
Canadian American	1	1.0	34.3
Canadian Chinese	1	1.0	35.4
Canadian English	1	1.0	36.4
Canadian German Polish Scottish	1	1.0	37.4
Canadian Italian	1	1.0	38.4
Canadian Scottish Italian	1	1.0	39.4
Chinese English	1	1.0	40.4
English Hungarian	1	1.0	41.4
English Scots Russian	1	1.0	42.4
French Irish	1	1.0	43.4
French Metis Cree Basque Walloon	1	1.0	44.4
German	2	2.0	46.5
Goan Scottish Irish German	1	1.0	47.5
Indian	1	1.0	48.5
Latino-American	1	1.0	49.5
North American	1	1.0	50.5
Prefer not to answer	49	49.5	100
<i>Total</i>	99	100.0	100

Appendix G:
Frequency Distributions (Hypothesis 3)

Distribution of the scores for “Who initiated the idea to visit the attraction?”



Distribution of the scores for “What percentage of the time did the following people spend on researching what the attraction had to offer?”



Distribution of the scores for “Who made the final decision to visit the attraction?”

