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FUNCTIONAL AND SYMBOLIC CONGRUITY APPROACHES TO CONSUMER
SATISFACTION/DISSATISFACTION IN TOURISM

by

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ABSTRACT

    Using the evaluative congruity theory framework, this
study examined the role of destination images in tourism
with regard to consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction (CS/D)
from the stand point of: (1) the functional congruity
between the tourist's expectations and his/her perceptions
of performance outcome on specific functional attributes of
a destination; and (2) the symbolic congruity between the
tourist's self concept and the destination's personality
image. The overall findings indicate that CS/D in tourism
is related to both functional and symbolic congruity.
Further, the findings indicate that the functional congruity
explained CS/D better than the symbolic congruity.

KEY WORDS: consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction,
evaluative congruity, functional congruity, symbolic
congruity, tourist.

INTRODUCTION

    The consumer oriented approach to marketing assumes
consumer satisfaction to be the key to meeting an organiza-
tion's goals. In other words, effective marketing aims at

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identifying the needs and wants of target consumers and
striving to satisfy them. From the strategic marketing man-

agement perspective, a tourism organization can improve its chance of designing strategies that optimize environmental opportunities by making an accurate assessment of its customer environment (Chon and Olsen 1990).

A number of tourism researchers reported studies on CS/D in tourism. These studies attempted to identify the factors associated with tourist satisfaction (for example, Pizam, Yoram and Reichel 1978) or focused on the role of the traveler's expectations about specific functional attributes of a destination in fulfilling his/her satisfaction with those attributes (Van Raaij and Fracken 1984; Whipple and Thach 1988). However, the current consumer behavior literature holds a position that the consumer's purchase decision making process involves the evaluation of not only the utilitarian or functional attributes of a product but also the value-expressive or personality-related attributes of the product (Claiborne and Sirgy 1990; Sirgy 1982a; Sirgy 1982b; Sirgy 1985; Sirgy et al. 1990). In this regard, it is argued that previous CS/D studies in tourism mainly involved the use of functional attributes (e.g. the availability of suitable accommodations, or the availability of good beaches) with little attention to value expressive attributes of the destination (e.g. the personality of a destination). That is, previous CS/D studies in tourism did not consider the effect of the cognitive matching process between the value-expressive (symbolic) attributes of a destination and the traveler self-concept on the traveler's ultimate satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the destination.

The objective of this study was to demonstrate the relationship between the tourist destination image and an individual traveler's satisfaction with the destination. Using the evaluative congruity theory framework, this study focused on the testing of the functional evaluative congruity and the symbolic evaluative congruity in predicting CS/D in tourism.

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THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The satisfaction of consumer wants and needs is the ultimate purpose of all economic and marketing processes. This tenet is enshrined in the economist's principles of consumer sovereignty as well as in the marketing concept. For example, Rosenberg (1979) relates CS/D to the economic

doctrine that the satisfaction of consumer wants and needs is the ultimate purpose of economic activity. The doctrine of consumer sovereignty and consumer satisfaction is well reflected in the marketing concept as well.

The American Marketing Association defines marketing as the "process of planning and executing conception, pricing, promotion and distribution of ideas, goods, and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organization objectives" (Lewis and Chambers 1989).

Different models of consumer behavior describe satisfaction as the final output of the decision process or incorporate it in the feedback mechanism linking completed experiences to future behavior. For example, Nicosia (1966) attributes the state of CS/D to the dominant interest in the "final act" of consumers, that is the purchase of product. Further, the concept of CS/D is given greater emphasis in the works of McNeal (1973), Engel and Blackwell (1982), and Howard and Sheth (1967, 1969, 1973). In their consumer behavior models, satisfaction is shown as the final output in the framework of purchase decisions. These buyer behavior models postulate that if the actual outcome of a product is judged to be better than or equal to the expected, the buyer will feel satisfied. If, on the other hand, actual outcome is judged not to be better than expected, the buyer will be dissatisfied. This disconfirmation paradigm of CS/D can be also found in the works of Suprenant (1977); Lingoes and Pfaff (1972); Hunt (1977); and Oliver (1977, 1980).

A more encompassing approach to the understanding of CS/D can be found in Sirgy's evaluative congruity models of consumer behavior (Sirgy 1983; Sirgy and Tyagi 1986). Sirgy explains the theoretical position associated with CS/D in terms of discrepancies between perceived and normative outcome levels. According to his theory, satisfaction is a function of evaluative congruity, which is a cognitive matching process in which a perception is compared to an

evoked referent cognition for the purpose of evaluating a stimulus object/action. The result of the cognitive process is postulated to produce either a motivational or an emotional state. CS/D is viewed as an emotional state because it prompts the consumer to evaluate alternative courses of action to reduce an existing dissatisfaction state and/or to obtain future satisfaction state (Sirgy 1983; 1984; Sirgy and Tyagi 1986).

Further, CS/D is viewed as a function of one or more congruities between perceptual (perceived value) and evoked referent (evoked value) states. A problem recognition (dissatisfaction) is the function of a directional discrepancy between the valence level of the perceived performance of a good/service and the valence level of a referent (standard of comparison or performance expectation). The "negative incongruity" condition (a state of negative performance perception and positive referent state) is hypothesized to produce the second highest dissatisfaction or problem recognition, followed by "negative congruity" (a state of negative performance perception and negative performance expectation), "positive congruity" (a state of positive performance perception and positive expectation) and "positive incongruity" (a state of positive performance perception and negative performance expectation), respectively. The theory was supported in empirical studies involving consumer evaluation of the automobile, type-writer, a bachelor's degree, and a house (Sirgy 1984; 1987).

Sirgy (1982b) further argues that product images should be classified as being "functional" and "symbolic." The functional images of a product include the physical benefits associated with the product, whereas the symbolic images refer to the stereotypic personality images consumers have of a specific product often expressed in terms of the typical user image. Relatedly, Sirgy (1982b) argues that CS/D is not only an evaluative function of the consumer's expectation and performance evaluation, but it is also an evaluative function of the consumer's self-image and product image congruity. That is, the consumer's self-concept should be understood in order to truly understand the individual's satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Self-concept, defined as "the totality of the individual's thoughts and

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feelings having reference to himself as an object," has been construed from a multi-dimensional perspective (Rosenberg 1979). For instance, the term "actual self" refers to how a person perceives one's self, and "ideal self" refers to how a person presents one's self to others (Rosenberg 1979). An understanding of the self-concept is important for developing more effective marketing programs because much consumer consumption of products is directly influenced by the image an individual has of himself/herself. That is, the consumer prefers the product which is congenial and reinforces the way the consumer thinks about himself/herself

or the product with an image most like his/her self-image.

Sirgy (1982a; 1982b; 1985) proposes the impact of a consumer's self-concept to his/her purchasing behavior in a self-image/product-image congruity model. The self-image/product image congruity model in essence describes the effect of the cognitive matching process between value-expressive attributes of a given product and the consumer self-concept on consumer decisions such as product preference, purchase intentions, purchase behavior, product satisfaction/dissatisfaction, and product loyalty (Sirgy 1982b). The theory explains the effect of self-image congruence on consumer attitude through the mediating effects of two self-concept motives: self-esteem and self-consistency. According to the self-image/product-image congruity model, a consumer's specific value-laden self-image belief interacts with a corresponding value-laden product-image perception in terms of the typical user image in a product purchase. The result of such an interaction occurs in the form of the following four congruity conditions.

First, a "positive self-image congruity," occurs when there exists a state of positive self congruity (a low discrepancy between one's actual self-image and the product image) and a state of positive ideal self congruity (a low discrepancy between one's ideal self-image and the product image.) That is, a product image matches up with one's actual self-image as well as with his/her ideal self-image. Such a situation would result in high consumer satisfaction because, by purchasing or identifying himself/herself with this product, the consumer would reach an emotional state

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that enhances his/her self-esteem motive and reinforces his/her self-consistency motive.

Second, a "positive self-image incongruity" condition occurs when there exists a state of negative self congruity (a high discrepancy between one's actual self-image and the product image), but a state of positive ideal self congruity (low discrepancy between one's ideal self-image and the product image). In this situation the individual might be motivated to purchase the product but his/her satisfaction level would be moderate. This occurs because, while the purchase would enhance one's self-esteem motive, the self-esteem motive would conflict with his/her self-consistency motive.

Third, a "negative self-image incongruity" condition
is the opposite of the "positive self-image incongruity"
condition. That is, there is a state of positive self
congruity (low discrepancy between one's actual self-image
and the product image,) but a state of negative ideal self
congruity (high discrepancy between one's ideal self-image
and the product image.) The situation again would result in
a moderate satisfaction level because the individual's
self-consistency motive would conflict with his/her
self-esteem motive.

Finally, "negative self-image congruity" occurs when
there exists negative self congruity (high discrepancy
between one's actual self-image and the product image,) as
well as negative ideal congruity (high discrepancy between
his/her ideal self-image and the product image.) The
satisfaction level would be the lowest because the purchase
of the product serves no function to the maintenance of
either the self-esteem or self-consistency motives.

Based on the review of literature on CS/D as related to
the evaluative congruity models and self-concept, a logical
interpolation can be drawn with respect to CS/D in tourism
as related to the role of the tourist's perception of
destination images. That is, CS/D in tourism is a function
of both (1) the evaluative congruity of a tourist's
expectation of a destination and his/her perceived outcome
of the destination experience; and (2) the evaluative

congruity of a tourist's self-image and his/her perception
of the destination's value-expressive image.

<div align="center">METHODS</div>

Based on the theoretical framework as reviewed above,
specific research hypotheses were advanced:

H1: The tourist's satisfaction is a positive function of
    both: (1) the functional evaluative congruity between
    the tourist's expectation of a destination and perceived
    performance outcome; and (2) the symbolic evaluative
    congruity between the tourist's self-image perception
    and his/her destination image perception.

H2: The tourist's satisfaction is a function of the
    functional evaluative congruity between a tourist's

expectation of a destination's attributes and his/her
perceived outcome. Specifically it is hypothesized that
the level of satisfaction would occur in the following
order of the functional evaluative congruity (See Table
1):

1) Under a positive incongruity condition in which the
    tourist's expectation of a destination is negative
    but his/her perceived outcome is positive, he/she
    would be most satisfied.

2) Under a positive congruity condition in which the
    tourist's expectation of a destination is positive
    and his/her perceived performance outcome is
    positive, he/she would be moderately satisfied.

3) Under a negative congruity condition in which the
    tourist's expectation of a destination is negative
    and his/her perceived outcome is also negative,
    his/her satisfaction level would be lower than that
    of a positive congruity condition.

4) Under a negative incongruity condition in which the
    tourist's expectation of a destination is positive
    and his/her perceived outcome is negative, he/she
    would be least satisfied.

Table 1: HYPOTHESIZED RELATIONSHIP OF FUNCTIONAL EVALUATIVE
          CONGRUITY BETWEEN DESTINATION PERFORMANCE
          EXPECTATION AND PERCEIVED OUTCOME

Performance Expectation (PE)	Performance Outcome (PO)	Evaluative Congruity	Expected Order of Satisfaction Level
Negative	Positive	Positive Incongruity	1
Positive	Positive	Positive Congruity	2
Negative	Negative	Negative Congruity	3
Positive	Negative	Negative	4

H3: The tourist's satisfaction is a function of the symbolic
    evaluative congruity between a destination's image and
    the tourist's self-image. Specifically, it is
    hypothesized that the level of the tourist's
    satisfaction with a travel destination area would be in
    the following order of the symbolic congruity
    conditions (See Table 2):

   1)   "Positive Self-Image Congruity Condition:" A
        situation in which there is a low congruity between
        a destination's image and the tourist's actual
        self-image, and also a low congruity between a
        destination's image and the tourist's ideal
        self-image.

   2)   "Positive Self-Image Incongruity Condition:" A
        situation in which there is a high discrepancy
        between the tourist's actual self-image and the
        destination image, but a low discrepancy between
        the tourist's ideal self-image and the destination
        image. Or, "Negative Self-Image Incongruity

        Condition": A situation in which there is a low
        discrepancy between one's actual self-image and the
        destination image, but a high discrepancy between
        his/her ideal self-image and the destination image.

   3)   "Negative Self-Image Congruity": A situation in
        which there is a high discrepancy between the
        tourist's actual self-image and the destination
        image, and also between his/her ideal self-image
        ideal self-image and the destination image.

The Sample

     The destination in the study was Norfolk, Virginia.
This particular destination was selected because it is a
relatively well known multi-faceted tourist destination
and the city's tourism authority offered cooperation in
implementing the study. Considering the theoretical
aspect of this study, combined with the pragmatic
constraint of financial resources, the most important
criterion in selecting the sample was to increase the
validity of the collected data, rather than to ensure
that the sample was representative of a population.

Therefore, it necessitated the decision to use a
purposive sample. The sample population was composed of
the individuals (1) who have actually visited the City
of Norfolk, Virginia, between May and September 1990;
and (2) who participated in pleasure travel activities
during their visit to Norfolk. A self-administered mail
questionnaire was sent to 382 individuals who met the
above criteria.

Survey Instrument

     The mail survey instrument consisted of three
different global measures of tourist
satisfaction/dissatisfaction in the form of a five-point
face scale, Andrews and Withey's (1976) seven-point
Delighted-Terrible (DT) scale, and a non-verbal graphic
scale with a continuum of 0 (not at all satisfied) to
100 (totally satisfied) with 50 (mixed feelings) in the
middle. These three global measures of
satisfaction/dissatisfaction were selected because they
were recommended in a previous study (Maddox 1985). The

Table 2: HYPOTHESIZED RELATIONSHIP OF SELF-IMAGE/DESTINATION-
           IMAGE CONGRUITY AND TOURIST SATISFACTION

Image Variables (D) (S) (I)	Destination/ Self-Image Congruity	Evaluative Congruity Condition	Expected Order of Satisfaction Level
Low discrepancy between D and S; Low discrepancy between D and I	+ SC + IC	+ Self-Image Congruity	1
High discrepancy between D and S; Low discrepancy between D and I	– SC + IC	+ Self-Image Incongruity	2
Low discrepancy between D and S; High discrepancy between D and I	+ SC – IC	– Self-Image Incongruity	2

| High discrepancy between D and S; High discrepancy between D and I | – SC – IC | – Self-Image Congruity | 3 |

D – Destination Image
S – Actual Self-image
I – Ideal Self-image
SC – Self Congruity
IC – Ideal Self Congruity

above three repeat measures of CS/D were physically separated in the questionnaire in order to minimize any response bias (Lehman 1989).

The functional evaluative congruity of the tourist's expectation and his/her performance perception was measured using a series of questions designed to measure the respondent's expectations and performance perceptions of 15 functional attributes of the destination area. The 15-item attributes were derived from a previous study which was conducted to identify the image of Norfolk as a travel destination (Chon, Weaver and Kim 1990). The 15-item functional attributes were:

1) Places for water activities such as swimming, sail boating and cruise ships.
2) Places for golfing and other sports in Norfolk.
3) Places of historical interest.
4) Places of cultural interest.
5) Festivals in Norfolk.
6) Places of scenic beauty.
7) Nice treatment from local people.
8) Restful and relaxing atmosphere.
9) Good shopping places.
10) Variety and quality of restaurants
11) Availability of entertainment or night life
12) Availability of suitable accommodations such as hotels or motels.
13) Tours of naval base and naval ships.
14) Easy accessibility to the area.
15) Variety and quality of attractions.

For each of the 15-item functional attributes of Norfolk's tourism features, the respondent was requested to indicate pre-visit expectations on a five-point scale of -2 to +2 (expected very little to expected very high). Likewise, for each of the multi-attribute items, the respondent was requested to indicate his/her post-visit perceptions on a five-point scale of - 2 to +2 (very poor to very good). The actual self congruity (SC) and ideal self congruity (IC) were respectively measured using three five-point Likert type scales below.

The SC Measures:

1) The typical visitors (or tourists) to Norfolk reflect the type of person who I am.

2) The typical visitors (or tourists) to Norfolk are similar to me.

3) The typical visitors (or tourists) to Norfolk are very much like me.

The IC Measures:

1) The typical visitors (or tourists) to Norfolk reflect the type of person who I like to be.

2) The typical visitors (or tourists) to Norfolk are consistent with how I like to see myself.

3) The typical visitors (or tourists) to Norfolk are very much the kind of person I like to be.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The overall response rate was 58.9%. After eliminating the unusable responses, 192 responses were coded for data analysis. The respondents were pre-dominantly females (62.4%) and they were predominantly married (64.3%). The median age of the respondents was the 40 to 49 years group, while the median income was the $30,001-$40,000 category. A majority of the respondents were residents of Virginia (50%), followed by North Carolina (20.5%) and Maryland (15.7%).

The dependent variable in this study was the tourist's satisfaction/dissatisfaction with Norfolk as a place to visit. An individual respondent's average composite score for the three different CS/D measures (face scale, graphic scale and DT scale) was computed for further data analysis. The theoretical range of the scale would be 1 (lowest satisfaction or highest dissatisfaction) to 7 (highest satisfaction. The actual score ranged from 1.33 to 7, with a median of 5.75, a mean of 5.45.

Hypothesis 1

With respect to the testing of the first hypothesis, multiple regression analysis was utilized as the primary statistical test of significance:

$$CS/D = a + B1\ (FEC) + B2\ (SEC) + e$$

where, CS/D is the tourist's satisfaction/dissatisfaction
   a is a constant term
   B1 and B2 are regression coefficients for FEC and SEC
   FEC and SEC are functional evaluative congruity and
     symbolic evaluative congruity, respectively
   e is an error term

The regression analysis indicates that the model was significant overall ($p < .0001$) in predicting the tourist's satisfaction, with an R-square value of 0.3750. However, the regression results indicate that only the FEC alone significantly contributes to the tourist's satisfaction (beta = 0.72; $p < .0001$), while the symbolic evaluative congruity marginally contributed to the model (beta = 0.15; $p < .1037$). Hence, the hypothesis was generally supported. That is, both FEC and SEC significantly contribute to the model in predicting the tourist's satisfaction. However, when the two different evaluative congruity conditions were examined separately, only FEC was significantly correlated to CS/D.

Hypothesis 2

One-way ANOVA and Duncan's multiple range test were used for the testing of hypothesis 2. An individual respondent's average summation scores for performance

expectation (PE) and performance outcome (PO) were
computed, thus resulting in the grouping of the
respondents into four FEC categories. The scales for
PE and PO were converted from the original scale of "-2
to +2" to the scale of "1 to 5." As a result, the
average score of PE and PO for each subject could range
from 1 to 5, with 5 associated with more positive
feelings.

In grouping the FEC groups into four congruity
conditions based on the research hypothesis, the median
scores for PE and PO were used as cutoff points between
positive and negative PE and PO. The actual median
scores for PE and PO were 4.46 and 3.66, respectively.
When the respondents were grouped into four FEC cells
based on the above cutoff points, 48 respondents
belonged to Group 1 (positive incongruity), 39 were
categorized into Group 2 (positive congruity), 49 were
categorized into Group 3 (negative congruity), and 47
were categorized into Group 4 (negative incongruity).

The ANOVA results (Table 3) indicate a significant
relationship between each of the four FEC conditions and
CS/D at $p < .0001$. The rank order of the congruity
conditions in terms of the CS/D scores was consistent
with the order it was hypothesized to occur: 1)
positive incongruity; > 2) positive congruity; > 3)
negative congruity; and > 4) negative incongruity.
Duncan's multiple range test indicates non-significance
between and among the positive incongruity condition
(low expectations and high performance perceptions), the
positive congruity condition (high expectations and high
perceptions), and the negative congruity condition (low
expectations and low perceptions). However, a
significant difference ($p > .05$) was noted between the
negative incongruity condition (high expectations and
low perceptions) and the other three congruity
conditions. The ANOVA and Duncan's test indicate that:
(1) there exist a significant relationship between
functional evaluative congruity and CS/D in tourism; (2)
each of the four FEC conditions is positively correlated
with CS/D; and (3) the differences between and among the
four evaluative congruity conditions are generally
significant. Therefore, hypothesis 2 is generally
supported.
Hypothesis 3

The statistics for hypothesis testing were ANOVA and Duncan's multiple range test. In order to categorize the subjects into four hypothesized SEC groups, it was necessary to examine the relative range of the average composite scores for the self-image congruity (SC) and the ideal image congruity (IC). By

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Table 3: RELATIONSHIP OF FUNCTIONAL EVALUATIVE CONGRUITY
OF DESTINATION IMAGE TO CS/D

General Linear Model Procedure
Dependent Variable: CS/D

Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value
Model	3	62.2989	20.766	16.47
Error	179	225.6450	1.260	PR > F
Total	182	287.9439		0.0001*

Duncan's Multiple Range Test for Variable: FEC
Alpha = 0.05 DF=179

Means with the Same Letter Are Not significantly different.

Duncan Grouping	CS/D Mean	N	FEC Group
A	6.01	48	+ Incongruity
A	5.84	39	+ Congruity
A B	5.58	49	– Congruity
B	4.52	47	– Incongruity

* Significant

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using the median score as the cutoff points between positive and negative SC and IC, the subjects were grouped into four cells (2 x 2 matrix) which represent the four symbolic evaluative congruity conditions. As a result, 55 subjects belonged to the positive self-image congruity group, 4 subjects belonged to the positive self-image incongruity group, 34 subjects belonged to the negative self-image incongruity group and 65

subjects belonged to the negative self-image congruity group.

The results of one-way ANOVA and Duncan's test (Table 4) show that there exists a statistically significant relationship between the four symbolic evaluative congruity (SEC) conditions and CS/D at p < .018. The rank order of the congruity conditions in terms of the CS/D scores was consistent with the order it was hypothesized to occur: 1) positive self-image congruity > 2) positive self-image incongruity or negative self-image incongruity > and 3) negative self-image congruity. However, the results of image incongruity. However, the results of Duncan's multiple range comparison test indicates no significant differences of the CS/D scores among the four symbolic evaluative congruity conditions at p <.05. Pearson's product moment correlation also shows a significant relationship between CS/D and SEC with a coefficient value of .373 (p <.0001). Therefore, the hypothesis is generally supported.

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study clearly indicate that a tourist's satisfaction/dissatisfaction is correlated to both functional evaluative congruity (FEC) and symbolic evaluative congruity (SEC). That is, a tourist's satisfaction is correlated to his/her expectations of a destination and performance perceptions as well to his/her self-concept and the destination image perceptions.

Specifically, the findings indicate that, when the tourist's expectation of a destination was negative but perceptions were positive, the tourist was most satisfied. When the expectation was positive and perceptions were positive, the level of satisfaction was moderate. When the tourist's expectation was negative and perceptions were negative, the tourist's satisfaction was lower than the first two congruity conditions. Finally, when the tourist's expectation was positive but perceptions were negative, the tourist was least satisfied. Further, the tourists who perceived a low discrepancy between a destination's user image and their actual self-image or their ideal self-image were most satisfied with the destination. On the other hand,

Table 4: RELATIONSHIP OF SYMBOLIC EVALUATIVE CONGRUITY (SEC)
OF DESTINATION IMAGE TO CS/D

General Linear Model Procedure
Dependent Variable: CS/D

Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value
Model	3	16.70709	5.5690	3.40
Error	154	249.71800	1.6215	PR > F
Total	157	266.42510		0.018*

Duncan's Multiple Range Test for Variable: SEC
Alpha = 0.05 DF=157

Means with the same letter are not significantly different.

Duncan Grouping	CS/D Mean	N	SC/IC	Self-Image Congruity
A	5.88	55	+SC/+IC	+ Self-Image Congruity
A	5.54	4	-SC/+IC	+ Self-Image Incongruity
A	5.40	34	+SC/-IC	- Self-Image Incongruity
A	5.14	65	-SC/-IC	- Self-Image Congruity

* Significant

the tourists who perceived a high discrepancy between a
destination's user image and his/her actual self-image
or ideal-self image were least satisfied. The tourists
who experienced high actual self-image congruity but low
ideal self-image congruity (or those who experienced a
low actual self-image congruity but high ideal
self-image congruity) between the destination user image
and his/her self-concept were moderately satisfied.
However, when examining the relative strength of the two
different evaluative congruities, it was found that FEC
was found to explain the tourist satisfaction better
than SEC.

From the theory point of view, this finding adds a significant meaning to both consumer behavior literature and tourism marketing literature. Its most important theoretical contribution is that the consumer's satisfaction/dissatisfaction in tourism involves the evaluation of not only the functional attributes of a destination but also the personality-related "symbolic" attributes of a destination (Claiborne and Sirgy 1990, Sirgy 1985, Sirgy et al. 1990). As Dann (1979) argued, to truly understand tourist's satisfaction or dissatisfaction, one should investigate the personality aspects of the tourist in conjunction with the destination's personality. The findings in this study clearly indicate the relationship between the tourist's self-concept and his/her satisfaction/dissatisfaction with tourism.

Most significant strategic marketing implications would be that, a destination marketing organization, in planning marketing programs, should focus on both functional and symbolic attributes of the destination in tourism product development and promotion. This would be particularly important in designing promotional messages aimed at creating a desirable image of the destination in relation to specific market segments. In this regard, it would be highly important for the destination area to identify the symbolic image of the area as perceived by the target market segment and adjust the product development efforts and promotional activities accordingly.

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