

WHY AND WHEN DO CONSUMERS PERFORM GREEN BEHAVIORS? AN EXAMINATION OF REGULATORY FOCUS AND ETHICAL IDEOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

Green behavior has received a growing amount of attention in marketing research (Kronrod et al., 2012; Sheth et al., 2011). However, why and when consumers engage in environmental behaviors is still unclear. Building upon the theory of marketing ethics by Hunt and Vitell (1986, 1993), regulatory focus theory and survey data from a study on consumers' waste recycling and sorting (WRS) behavior collected in the United States, we show how different regulatory foci influence consumers' environmentally friendly behaviors differently through ethical ideologies. We find that a prevention focus positively affects ethical idealism but a promotion focus positively influences ethical relativism. Furthermore, we identify attention to social comparison information (ATSCI) as the boundary condition of the relationship between ethical ideology and ethical judgment. We show that the effect of relativism on ethical judgment is weakened by consumers' ATSCI. However, it does not moderate the effect of idealism on ethical judgment. Finally, we show that consumers' ethical judgments positively affect their ethical intention and consequently their actual green behaviors. By integrating the general socio-psychological research (e.g., regulatory focus and ATSCI) and consumer ethics literature (e.g., the H-V model and moral intensity), this research enriches understanding of why and when consumers engage in green behaviors. Lastly, environmental policy-makers would benefit from this research by understanding the underlying mechanism of consumers' green decision-making. This study empirically demonstrates that highly idealistic consumers tend to have higher moral standards and are more likely to perform environmentally friendly behaviors than are consumers who adopt a high relativistic ideology. Therefore, practitioners are suggested to take consumer ethics into account when fine-tuning their environmental policies. In particular, consumer ethics education, especially directed to young consumers, should be critical in accustoming consumers to idealistic ethical thinking.

THE STORIES OF “YOUNG” TEACHERS WHO CHOSE MATHEMATICS TEACHING AS A SECOND PROFESSIONAL CAREER

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ABSTRACT

Over the past few years, special retraining programs for Mathematics teachers have been opened, in an attempt for the graduates to be quickly accepted into schools as teachers. The program includes two components: the subject-matter component and the pedagogical instruction component. These retraining programs last one or two years, depending on the students' former studies (Bassan-Cincinatus & Patkin, 2015).

Effective learning creates connection between new information learned and learner's existing knowledge and life experience (Ramsden, 1992). When such a connection is made, the new knowledge, connecting former content knowledge, can be used to carry out new tasks. Only skilled, professional teachers can supply their pupils with quality education (Shriki & Lavi, 2012). These teachers enjoy teaching, are excited about the content, and the pupils and their learning are important to them (Dunkin, 2002). Thus, the question arises of whether or not the connection of new and old knowledge can characterize the retraining students, despite the fact that in most cases they do not come from the same content domain. That is, do they add the knowledge and experience from their first career to the teaching “toolbox” of their second career.

Research objective: to examine the possibility of using their first career knowledge and experience in dealing with their second career.

Research question: Does the first career of retraining teachers' professional experience assist in their second career?

The research population included 16 “young” teachers in their 30s, with an undergraduate degree and professional experience in the domain of their first career. They all study towards a second career in a retraining program for mathematics high school teachers in a teacher education college. The teachers were interviewed using a semi-structured interview.

The findings show that all the teachers reported that they feel positive about their subject matter knowledge (S.M.K) and believe they will be able to deal with the mathematical content in their classes. Regarding the pedagogical component, they do not yet feel ready to “jump into the pool”. They do not yet feel ready to stand in front of a class and teach, despite the fact that in their first career they had lectured

to colleagues and conducted themselves in front of large audiences. An additional issue is the lack of control of familiarization with the field. Lack of sufficient knowledge of who “calls the shots”, for example, regarding a teacher’s induction into a school: the regional advisor, the local council, the inspector, etc. Regarding the second research question, it was found that there was no connection between former professional experience and mathematics.

The conclusions arising from this study point at the importance of strengthening the pedagogical component and empowering the students from the didactic point of view, so that they may arrive in class ready to teach.

TEACHING LISTENING SKILLS: A PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

How can we teach listening skills to make a lasting impression on the students in such a way that they can acquire them efficiently? One method is empathetic listening, meaning the emotional connection of the interlocutor. Another method has to do with bottom-up processing, meaning that the listening activities need to offer the conditions for the learners' understanding and recognizing of divisions between word and clauses, recognizing key words, and so on. The importance of teaching listening nowadays has to do with the importance language proficiency tests such as the Cambridge, TOEFL, IELTS, and so on, tests that allow non-native English speakers to immigrate and work in an English-speaking country. Psychologists hold that it is important to know how to be a good listener so that the communication process is efficient. Closely linked to the concept of empathy is the concept of active listening, a rephrasing of the communication you hear to show you have understood what he said. We could include the standard questions with multiple choice answers from English language proficiency tests for listening comprehension in this category, as the multiple choice questions reflect concepts from psychology such as empathy and active listening. The multiple choice answers try to suggest a rephrasing of the communication we hear on tape to show that the students have got the right meaning. What is more, theories from pragmatics can also improve the understanding of what happens in testing listening comprehension. The focus is usually on the implied meaning of various assertions.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN IWB MEDIATED VOCABULARY IMPROVEMENT AND EQ IN ELEMENTARY EFL LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

With growing number of technology users it is increasingly difficult to ignore technology in demanding field of education. Even in improving countries, Interactive Whiteboards (IWB) or Smart Boards are being used by educators nowadays. In this study the improvement of vocabulary knowledge of foreign language students in an IWB equipped environment was compared with their Emotional Intelligence (EQ) which is a set of abilities individuals possess to use complicated information processing relevant to emotions and to use this information to direct thinking and behavior (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2008). In order to conduct this study, 90 elementary students received 13 sessions of vocabulary instruction and filled out Bar-On's Emotional Intelligence questionnaire. The data gathered from pretest and posttest before and after IWB facilitated vocabulary instruction were correlated with the data obtained from the questionnaire. A positive correlation was found between students' vocabulary improvement and their EQ, so, results indicated that students with higher scores in vocabulary test had higher levels of EQ.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence; Interactive Whiteboard; Vocabulary Improvement

THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN AC MULTIPLE-DIRECTORS, OWNERSHIP AND EARNINGS MANAGEMENT: EVIDENCE FROM SAUDI ARABIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the association between multiple-directorship and stock ownership of outside members of audit committees and companies' earnings management. Based on a sample of 98 Saudi nonfinancial listed companies, we find that multiple-directorship of outside audit committee members is not statistically associated with a reduction in the level of earnings management; however, we find that stock ownership of outside audit committee members is significantly related to a reduction in the level of earnings management. This result provides evidence on the alignment hypothesis from a less developed country (i.e. Saudi Arabia). It also adds to our understanding of the current situation of multiple-directorship and stock ownership of outside AC members and their role in improving the monitoring system and reducing earnings management in nonfinancial Saudi listed companies. Finally, this finding provides evidence that can assist companies to make changes and strategize to obtain greater benefit from multiple directors and to initiate long term plans to motivate directors to achieve the objectives of shareholders.

Keywords: multiple-directorship, stock ownership, audit committee, earnings management, Saudi nonfinancial listed companies.

SWOT ANALYSIS OF HEALTH TOURISM AND A ROAD MAP FOR TURKEY

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ABSTRACT

Health tourism, as defined the activities of consumers traveling abroad for health services and medical procedures, is growing rapidly all over the world. Turkey has a serious potential and goal to be a leading country in health tourism in the goals of 2023. The main aim of this study is to examine the situation in Turkey for emerging health tourism and explore possibilities for development of health tourism and its elements by comparing with other countries. Within this context, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis is carried out for Turkey's health tourism by taking into consideration competition conditions inside and outside the selected countries for analysis, their national competitors and healthcare sectors. The status of health tourism around the globe, advantages, disadvantages and characteristics obtained from various sources have been evaluated conceptually in this study. Thus, a road map for Turkey on health tourism is created.

Key words: health tourism, SWOT analysis, Turkey, healthcare.

I. INTRODUCTION

Health tourism that defined as travels interurban or intercountry with the aiming of treatment and leisure started to become an important revenue generation tool for the world countries (Ozer and Songur, 2012). The annual trade volume over the globe in this sector is approximately USD 100 billion and 20 million people are travelling for health tourism (Erdem, 2015). Health tourism has become a popular topic in recent years in Turkey as well. Turkey draws attention of many foreign citizens in terms of its geographical position, climate, natural riches, historical beauties and relatively cheap and high quality health care services (Icoz, 2009; Erdem, 2015).

The aim of this study is to inform about health tourism and reveal Turkey's health tourism over the globe health tourism, carry out a SWOT analysis for Turkey's health tourism by taking into consideration competition conditions inside and outside the selected countries for analysis, their national competitors and healthcare sectors.

II. HEALTH TOURISM

Health tourism is defined as travelling from a location to another place (domestic or foreign) in order to get service for any health reasons (Erdem, 2015). Moreover, Erdem (2015) presents a different definition of Health Tourism as "Travelling of people to protect health and be treated for a certain period of time to the tourism facilities based on natural resources to meet the requirements of cure,

accommodation, food and entertainment". In the literature health tourism is called with the same meaning of medical tourism. Health tourism is analyzed under three main groups as in Table

Table 1: Classification of health tourism

Health-Beauty Tourism	Treatment	Rehabilitation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPA-Wellness • Natural tourism • Eco-tourism • Mass tourism • Herbal therapy • After-treatment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elective surgery • Plastic surgery • Joint replacement • Cardiothoracic services • Diagnostic services • Cancer treatment • Infertility treatment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dialysis • Additional treatment • Elderly care programs • Addiction treatment

III. HEALTH TOURISM AND HEALTH TOURISM ORGANISATIONS IN THE WORLD

Health is an important factor enables people do international tourism movements. It is stated that the trading volume of health tourism is said to be 100 billion dollars/year. This trading volume is performed by 22 million health tourists (Erdem, 2015). Considering development potential of health tourism over the globe, it is stated that its importance will increase in the next years and that there will be an environment of global competition. According to the data of the World Tourism Organization (WTO), international tourist arrivals worldwide are expected to increase by 3.3% a year between 2010 and 2030 to reach 1.8 billion by 2030, according to UNWTO's long term forecast *Tourism Towards 2030*. International tourist arrivals (overnight visitors) increased by 4.3% in 2014, reaching a total 1133 million after topping the 1 billion mark in 2012. France, the United States, Spain and China continue to top the rankings by both international arrivals and receipts (World Tourism Organization/UNWTO Tourism Highlights, 2015). Mexico re-entered the Top 10 by arrivals at position 10. By receipts, China and the United Kingdom both moved up two places, to 3 and 7 respectively. Turkey was ranked 6th in arrivals and 12th in receipts in 2014 (Table 2).

Table 2: Recent statistics of international tourist arrivals and receipts (WTO Tourism Highlights, 2015 Edition)

International Tourist Arrivals						International Tourism Receipts								
Rank	Series¹	Million		Change (%)		Rank	US\$				Local currencies			
		2013	2014*	13/12	14*/13		Billion	Change (%)	Change (%)	Change (%)				
1	France	TF	83.6	83.7	2.0	0.1	1	United States	172.9	177.2	7.0	2.5	7.0	2.5
2	United States	TF	70.0	74.8	5.0	6.8	2	Spain	62.6	65.2	7.6	4.2	4.1	4.2
3	Spain	TF	60.7	65.0	5.6	7.1	3	China	51.7	56.9	3.3	10.2	1.4	9.2
4	China	TF	55.7	55.6	-3.5	-0.1	4	France	56.7	55.4	5.6	-2.3	2.1	-2.3
5	Italy	TF	47.7	48.6	2.9	1.8	5	Macao (China)	51.8	50.8	18.1	-1.9	18.1	-1.9
6	Turkey	TF	37.8	39.8	5.9	5.3	6	Italy	43.9	45.5	6.6	3.7	3.1	3.7
7	Germany	TCE	31.5	33.0	3.7	4.6	7	United Kingdom	41.0	45.3	12.1	10.3	13.2	4.8
8	United Kingdom	TF	31.1	32.6	6.1	5.0	8	Germany	41.3	43.3	8.2	5.0	4.7	4.9
9	Russian Federation	TF	28.4	29.8	10.2	5.3	9	Thailand	41.8	38.4	23.4	-8.0	22.1	-2.7
10	Mexico	TF	24.2	29.1	3.2	20.5	10	Hong Kong (China)	38.9	38.4	17.7	-1.4	17.7	-1.5

*=provisional figure or data; TF: International tourist arrivals at frontiers (excluding same-day visitors)

The growth of health tourism can be effected by a number of criteria. From the demand side, the unavailability or inaccessibility of health services in the domestic market is the major driving criteria (Loh, 2015). Until recent decades, health tourism has been preferred by affluent patients from developing countries traveling abroad for health procedures that are unavailable or of lower quality in their countries of residence (Loh, 2015). Examples of health tourism activities from different countries are as in the following.

United States of America follows a two aspect based policy on health tourism. While the first one is to attract health tourists to the country, the second one is to infrastructure of health tourism in various countries. Lebanon aims to become regional health center of Middle East on health tourism. Lebanon has advanced in cardiology. In Hawaii, health tourism is consisted of medical treatment, check-up, spa, nutrition programs and healthy lifestyle exercises. Japan develops a new area in health tourism called "Tourism for Mental Health". India is placed in a good condition in this sector. It reaches a percentage of 30% increment of each year. Colombia is famous for its eye clinics. Patients from Venezuela, Panama and Equator prefer Colombia because of high quality service level. Bulgaria is a rich country in terms of its medicinal waters. Health tourism in Argentina is relating of the needs of patients from USA and Europe. The recent expansions of the health tourism sector in some countries, such as Thailand, India, Singapore, and Malaysia, added significant emphases on hip replacement, organ transplant, coronary artery bypass surgery, and other invasive procedures. In Egypt, number of facilities that serve Spa and Wellness has increased day by day (Loh, 2015; Erdem, 2015).

Regarding of health tourism organizations in the world, International Health Tourism Congress and Joint Commission International (JCI) are two forefront instances. Some important decisions taken in the third of International Health Tourism Congress which is carried out by participating of 28 different countries are as follows:

- Health tourism is a rapid developing sector in Turkey and the globe.
- It is so crucial of international standards, quality and information sharing in order to amplify the sector.
- In health tourism, it should be taken attention to customer oriented management and branding.

IV. HEALTH TOURISM IN TURKEY

Turkey is ranked 6th in international tourist arrivals. Since, there is a strong influx of tourists, Turkey has the potential to become at the forefront in health tourism. The number of international patients who prefer Turkey is increasing every year. In 2011, the number of international patients who utilized healthcare in Turkey was around 160.000, which rapidly rose to around 265.000 in 2012 (Akgun, 2015). Private hospitals contributed to this figure a lot. However, the majority of treatments are performed by JCI accredited hospitals. This is probably one of the main reasons for medical tourists to utilize healthcare in Turkey (Akgun, 2015).

In Turkey, planning and promoting activities relating to health and tourism are managed by The Turkish Prime Ministry State Planning Organization. The Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism is an organization that makes rules, guides and controls for businesses that directly serve the tourism sector. Additionally, The Turkish Ministry of Health is responsible for the establishment of health facilities, training and employment of health personnel, controlling of the various public health services.

The Turkey Ministry of Health highlights some developments in the action plan between 2010 and 2014 as follows (Turkey Ministry of Health Primary Health Services, Health Tourism 2010 Annual Report):

- A new role model to the world will be developed rapidly in the country for the elderly tourism.
- Hotels over five hundred beds have to establish and operate a health unit.

The Turkey Ministry of Health aims to strengthen the health tourism in Turkey by some targeted strategies as follows (Erdem, 2015): (1) to make a promotion within the scope of health tourism and to create attraction, (2) to improve quality of services delivery covered by health tourism, (3) to expand the scope of health tourism services and (4) to improve governance of health tourism.

Health tourism has some advantages for Turkey. First, advantage of price. Secondly, hospitals has advanced equipment capacity and physician quality. Third, Turkey is closer to Europe and Middle East geographically. Fourth is about the religious dimension. Turkey serves the patients of Muslim countries and non-Muslim countries easily. Finally, Turkey has an adequate number of staff who speaks foreign languages.

The Turkey Ministry of Development reveals a development plan between 2014 and 2018 that objects establishment of 100,000 beds in thermal tourism, providing service to 1,500,000 (600,000 therapeutic) foreign thermal tourists in thermal tourism, 3 billion dollars of revenue in thermal tourism, being in the world's top 5 destination for medical tourism, treatment of 750,000 medical patients, 5.6 billion dollars of revenue in medical tourism, establishment of 10 thousand beds in the elderly tourism, 150.000 foreign tourists visiting our country in the elderly tourism and obtaining 750 million dollars in elderly tourism (Erdem, 2015).

V. SWOT ANALYSIS ON HEALTH TOURISM IN TURKEY

SWOT analysis is one of the most known tools of strategic planning. It is comprised of the four letters of SWOT respectively, which represent: *Strength*, *Weakness*, *Opportunity*, and *Threat*. SWOT is used to identify internal strengths and weaknesses which can include image, structure, access to natural resources, capacity and efficiency; and financial resources and external opportunities and threats including customers, competitors, trends in the market, partners and suppliers, social changes and new technology, and various environmental economic, political and regulatory issues are also included (Maneenetr et al. 2015). The objective of this study is to reveal the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for health tourism in Turkey by taking into consideration competition conditions inside and outside the selected countries for analysis, their national competitors and healthcare sectors. The details of SWOT analysis is given in Table 3.

Table 3: SWOT analysis of health tourism in Turkey

Strengths	Weaknesses
(1) In terms of geographical location, climate and historical places Turkey has an advantageous position.	(1) Health staff and managers in Turkey have inadequate knowledge about European health legislation and patient rights.
(2) In Turkey rather than public hospitals, private and university hospitals have capability in terms of	(2) Due to unsatisfactory promotion, there are still people and countries that do not

<p>bed capacity, physical and technological infrastructure and physician quality.</p> <p>(3) It is a very important advantage that the price of health care is lower than the other European Union countries.</p> <p>(4) The viewpoint of EU countries, for Turkey is changing through a positive direction.</p>	<p>know Turkey has several capability on health tourism.</p> <p>(3) Since it is not given enough attention to marketing strategies and marketing research, there are wrong practices in pricing.</p> <p>(4) Physical and technological infrastructure of public hospitals is inadequate. Few hospitals have been accredited.</p>
Opportunities	Threats
<p>(1) The increase in the average life expectancy in the European countries and the increase in chronic diseases, increasing waiting time for treatment and the shortness of the working hours of medical staff in European countries, high labor costs, and lack of personnel are considered as an opportunity for the Turkish health institutions.</p> <p>(2) While wealthy Muslims in the Middle East prefer America to treat, patient moves are directed to Greece and western countries because of the terrorism measures taken by the United States after the 9/11 attacks. Turkey is expected to receive the largest share of this market.</p> <p>(3) After the collapse of USSR (Soviet Union), citizens of the countries that gained independence, citizens living in the Turkish Republics and citizens of Russia are in search for therapeutic purposes.</p> <p>(4) Turkish citizens living in Europe, instead of getting health care from the staff that has different cultures and languages; they wanted to receive the services they trust the medical staff serving in their own language, in their own countries and according to their own culture.</p>	<p>(1) It is not shown the necessary sensitivity in patients' rights and wrong medical practice.</p> <p>(2) Promotional activities of the competitor countries are more interesting.</p> <p>(3) It has seen increases in health care costs.</p> <p>(4) Political crises and wrong pricing policies have been experienced.</p> <p>(5) The danger of war in the Middle East and terrorist acts and terrorist news media outlets in Turkey lead to negative publicity and lobbying.</p> <p>(6) Natural disasters and bird flu, and so on disease crisis have been important threats.</p>

VI. CONCLUSION

By incorporating Turkey's natural wealth, historical and cultural assets with other competitive factors developed using SWOT analysis enables itself get the maximum level of the opportunities and better assess of its potential in the face of competing countries and international conjuncture. The main two factors for the selection of Turkey as for the health of patients coming from abroad are price and climate. Tourism activities in the country are adversely affected by various factors such as natural disaster, terrorism and climate. Pluses of Turkey's health tourism are quite high. These can be mentioned as geographical position, the rapid developments in the health sector, technological equipment, increase in the number of health care organizations, quality health services, provided good results, friendliness, and hospitality and are tolerant approaches to different cultures.

In this study, a roadmap for Turkey on health tourism is created benefiting from a SWOT analysis. The status of health tourism around the world, advantages, disadvantages and are assessed conceptually. For future studies, development studies such as SWOT, A-WOT (Analytic Hierarchy Process-AHP and SWOT) and BSC (Balanced Scorecard) for each classes of health tourism which are actively operated in Turkey can be executed.

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THE POWER OF THE VIRAL MARKETING AND OBSERVING ITS IMPACT VIA PUBLISHED VIRAL VIDEO

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ABSTRACT

As a result of human nature, people always are influenced by others, they look for recommendations when choosing a product or service. The social ties they have, strong or weak, influence their decisions, actions and opinions. With the fierce competition that e-commerce companies face today, a low-cost high-impact marketing strategy, such as viral marketing, can become valuable.

The critical issues about viral marketing and its impact on consumer's purchasing behaviour have been examined in every respect in this paper. For that subject, special attention has been given to Gen Y consumers to measure if the seed selection can be comprised of this generation or not for viral marketing campaigns, and what kind of viral marketing properties can change on their perception for a product or service. A video is used for implementation part of this study, which was published on the internet by L'Oreal Turkey, in which has focused to difficulty of using eyeliner for a woman with sense of humor.

Key words: Viral Marketing, Generation Y, Purchasing Behaviour, Word of Mouth, Social Media

I. INTRODUCTION

The marketing process, which started in the minds of consumers and continued after consuming, has shifted from traditional marketing to the modern marketing thanks to technological innovations. The early marketing thoughts were focused on how to bring products to the market and make the consumers buy what was available at the market. While the economy developed, organizations had to become more market and customer positioned. The technology changes that have occurred in the recent years have been reflected in the product and services in the market. Companies have to adapt these changes to keep their competitiveness because of many substitutes in the market. The communication in the Internet market has become more important and therefore social media such as Facebook, YouTube and blogs have become one of the most important ways for companies to market themselves.

Viral marketing is a strategy that boosts individuals to pass along a message to other people. If a large number of receivers forward a message to a large number of people, the message grows quickly.

A viral message can be exploded to thousands and millions of people, therefore the name viral marketing and off version of the viral marketing come to be known as "word of mouth". Also commonly referred to as "buzz", companies that mercantile in viral marketing techniques must be aware of how to maintain a healthy balance in inducing consumers to spread their messages, while not making them feel as though they are only a part of the marketers' promotional game. Similar to any other form of advertising, viral marketing does not always work effectively. The key points included the right choice of the channel, brand and the target consumer for a successful viral marketing.

Shortly, it is a vital concept for today's marketing professionals to understand and be able to effectively utilize the target consumers.

Considering that our study based on the power of the viral marketing techniques and observing its impact on Y generation's purchasing behaviour via published viral video by L'Oreal Turkey in 2014. For this examination, a two phased online survey have been applied on our focus group and then the results have been analysed via WEKA software. During the analyses answers of the survey questions have been collected as a data and then this data has been used for explaining the meaning of the survey answers. Finally, our hypotheses have been tested, in regard to WEKA outputs.

II. ANALYSIS OF SURVEY FINDINGS

The survey is shared online. In the end 119 respondents answered all the questions and results came up as follows for all 23 questions.

2.1 Ages and Gender

77.3% of respondents were female and 22.7% of them were male. Also respondents were separated to five main groups according to their birth year intervals as follows; 1982-1985, 1985-1990, 1990-1995, before 1982 and after 1995. These data are shown on Table 1.

Table 1

Respondents per cent according to their birth years

Birth year intervals	Percentage
Before 1982	0.8
1982-1985	5.9
1985-1990	9.2
1990-1995	82.4
After 1995	0.8

2.2 Social Media Usage

94.1% of respondents agree that they follow social media actively and 99.1% of them have an account in one of those social media channels. The social media that are used most by the respondents are given in Table 2.

Table 2

Most used social media

Social Media	Percentage
Instagram	47.1
Facebook	34.5
Twitter	12.6
YouTube	3.4
Blogs	1.7
Pinterest	0.8

2.3 Viral Awareness

81.5% of the respondents already know what the viral advertisement is, on the other hand 18.5% of them do not even have a clue about it.

2.4 Sharing Motivation

%93 of the respondents agree that they would share a video that they like in social media and %21.8 of them don't. Also the most important criterion for respondents to share a viral video online was questioned in the online survey and results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Most important criteria to share a viral video online

Criteria	Percentage
Interest on the brand	6.7
Interest on the kind of product	6.7
Interest of the video	70.6
Interest of the product	16

The kind of videos that impress the respondents most and their percentages are given in Table 4.

Table 4

Kind of videos that impress the most

Kind of videos	Percentage
Videos which have positive contents more	22.7
Videos which have negative contents more	0.8
Videos which have rational contents more	32.8
Videos which have humorous contents more	40.3
Videos which have emotional contents more	3.4

2.5 Knowledge of the video

The knowledge of the viral video of Maybelline "Underline your beauty" was also questioned in online survey. Beside that video, six other viral videos were also added to the questionnaire (see Table 5).

Table 5

Viral videos and their recognisability

Viral video	Percentage
Profilo "O tabak biticek"	71.4
Markafoni "Aşk insana neler yaptırıyor"	11.8
THY "İnanılmaz evlenme teklifi"	49.6
Gittigidiyor.com "Aldatılan kız Fulya"	27.7
Gittigidiyor.com Batesmotelpro "Ah Anam Lahanam"	22.7

Secretcv.com “Muhteşem Piyanist”	4.2
MNY “Maybelline ile güzelliğin altını çizmek bu kadar kolay”	30.3

2.6 Purchasing Decision

Until this headline, the main issue that have been questioning was the effectiveness or awareness of the viral videos. Hereafter, the questioning subject is changed into variations in consumer’s purchasing decision with the questions.

When asked if they ever purchased a product of any brand after watching a viral video of that brand, 27.7 per cent of the respondents answered “yes”.

The kind of videos that change the respondents’ minds about purchasing a product are given in Table 6.

Table 6

Kind of videos that change respondents’ minds about purchasing a product

Kind of videos	Percentage
Videos which have positive contents more	30.3
Videos which have negative contents more	3.4
Videos which have rational contents more	44.5
Videos which have humorous contents more	21
Videos which have emotional contents more	0.8

2.7 Questions about the video

Our online survey shows us %63.9 of respondents are already eyeliner user and %36.1 of them are none user. On the other hand, %45.7 of them said they have a difficulty in using eyeliner and %54.3 of them said they don’t.

%76.5 of the respondents are already user of L’Oréal as a brand and %70.6 of them are user of Maybelline.

Also, the kind of content in the video impressed people more is questioned. The results are given in Table 7.

Table 7

Kind of content that impressed more

Kind of content	Percentage
Being positive	17.6
Being negative	10.9
Being rational	50.4
Being humorous	33.6
Being emotional	1.7

At the time we asked if they would share this video, %19.3 of them said “yes” and %80.7 of them said “no”. Another question of survey in which we asked the respondents if there was a specific criteria motive them to share, being user of the eyeliner of any brand came out as the strongest one (see Table 8).

Table 8

Reasons that affect towards to share the video

Reasons	Percentage
I share this video because I am already a Maybelline NY user	23.1
I share this video because I am already an eyeliner user of any brand	69.2
I share this video because I am already user of Maybelline Gel Liner	7.7

Finally, we asked if they used MNY Gel Liner before. %80.7 of them said “no” and at the time we asked if they would buy it after watching the video in the survey, %50.4 of them said “no”.

To sum up, we came through that Gen Y consumers follow social media actively and almost all of them have their own account. Top following two social media channels are Instagram and Facebook by Gen Y consumers and YouTube and blogs are becoming watch out points for the firms to use this channels as a tool for reaching those consumers in terms of viral marketing. Results also show us Gen Y consumers highly aware about viral videos and they don’t care about which brand creates the video when the subject came to the sharing videos. Results point out, they are also potential perception spreaders for the firms, so that almost all of them said that they share the videos which they like independently of their sympathy to those brands.

III. ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH FINDINGS

In this chapter, we evaluated key Generation Y consumers’ characteristics in every respect. We also made studies to measure how much effect it has to use viral videos as a marketing tool on this generation of people to affect their purchasing behaviour.

For all these, we used data mining as a method with the software of WEKA to explain the meaning of the data in crosstabs. In all data mining analysis, we used $\Delta=0.05$ and tested our hypotheses according to this criteria.

3.1 Sample Selection and Design

For this study, target group was determined as Generation Y, and components like age, gender, social media usage chose to investigate the Generation Y respondents deeply.

3.2 Sample Characteristics

To understand Generation Y consumers’ line of vision, we asked a few questions in our online survey (like their birth year interval, gender, social media usage, awareness of viral advertisement etc.) and analyzed the results of those questions with data mining methodology by using the software of WEKA.

WEKA results showed us 100% of people who born in 1990-1995 year interval use social media actively and all of them have their own social media account. Also the 96% of people, who use social media actively, are aware of what viral advertisement is.

3.3 Hypothesis Testing and Results

With using the software of WEKA, accuracy of the hypothesis have been searched by determining $\Delta = 0.05$, minimum metric value = 0.90 and number of rules are = 10. Then best 10 results examined for each hypothesis and polysemous of them have chosen according to relation criteria that were determined by us.

3.4 Purchasing Behaviour

By comparison of “What kind of videos does affect you most?” and “What kind of videos change your mind about purchasing a product?” questions, the result obtained as 89% of the people have been affected by the humorous and rational contents more while watching a video and rational contents have the strongest effect on their purchasing decision.

1. What kind of content does affect you most while watching this video=Being rational - 45 ==> Would you buy Maybelline Gel Liner after watching this video=Yes - 31 conf:(0.69)

2. What kind of content does affect you least while watching this video=Being humorous 32 ==> Would you buy Maybelline Gel Liner after watching this video=No -20 conf:(0.63)

Also, by the comparison of “What kind of content does affect you most while watching this video?” and “Would buy the Maybelline Gel Liner after watching this video?” questions, the result obtained as 69% of people affected the rational contents of the viral video and decide to purchase the product, however 63% of them affected by the humorous contents of the video said “no” to purchase same product, the WEKA results have shown in above. Based on these results, we prove that the videos which include rational and humorous content affect consumers’ purchasing behaviour and other contents don’t have a significance impact as much as they have. As a consequence, we accept H3 and H5 reject H1, H2, H4.

3.5 Sharing Motivation

At the time, we compare the questions “What kind of content does affect you most while watching this video”, “What kind of content does affect you least while watching this video” and “Would you share this video?”, WEKA outputs have shown as written below:

1. What kind of content does affect you most while watching this video=Being positive 17 ==> Would you share this video=No 16 conf:(0.94)

2. What kind of content does affect you least while watching this video=Being rational 45 ==> Would you share this video=No 38 conf:(0.84)

As we see, outputs show us positive and rational contents have a negative effect on Generation Y consumer’s sharing motivation of the viral videos, on the other hand the videos, which have humorous content mostly push them to share according to survey ratio. As a result of these we reject the hypotheses H6, H7, H9, H10 and accept the H8.

3.6 Users vs. Non Users

1. Do you ever use any product of L’Oréal =No Do you ever use any product of MNV=No 20 ==> Would you share this video=No 19 conf:(0.95)

2. Do you ever use any product of MNV=Yes Would you share this video=Yes 18 ==> Do you ever use any product of L’Oréal =Yes 17 conf:(0.94)

3. Do you ever use any product of L’Oréal =No 28 ==> Would you share this video=No 26 conf:(0.93)

4. Would you share this video=Yes 23 ==> Do you ever use any product of L’Oréal =Yes 21 conf:(0.91)

When we compared the questions “Do you ever use any product of L’Oréal?”, “Do you ever use any product of Maybelline?” and “Would you share this video?”; 94% of the respondents who are already user of both L’Oréal and Maybelline said they would share this video and 91% of them user of just L’Oréal also said so. Therefore all the results support the hypothesis H11, which says the motivation of sharing the video is higher for brand users.

The time we compared the “Do you use eyeliner?” and “Would you share this video?” 97% of the non-users of that kind of product said “no”. However, being 80.7% of respondents none user of Maybelline Gel Liner and the same percentage of them said they would not share this video after watching, the hypothesis H12 could not interpret properly. Therefore hypothesis H12 and H13 determined as uninteruptable.

In addition to that, the results of survey already supported the fact that 50% of the respondents said they would buy this product after watching this video, even though 80.7% of them being none user of this product. In view of almost all respondents were non-user, we could accept the 50% for supporting, so that H14 and H15 accepted.

Last but not least, the WEKA results also showed us 93% of the respondents who said that they would this product are user of L’Oréal or MNY and 92% of them are already eyeliner user, but they did not use Maybelline Gel Liner before, so that we accept H16 and H18 and reject H17. On the other hand the hypothesis testing ended up as in Table 9.

Table 9

Hypothesis Results

H1	Viral videos that includes a positive content affects consumer's purchasing behaviour	Rejected
H2	Viral videos that includes a negative content affects consumer's purchasing behaviour	Rejected
H3	Viral videos that includes a humorous content affects consumer's purchasing behaviour	Accepted
H4	Viral videos that includes an emotional content affects consumer's purchasing behaviour	Rejected
H5	Viral videos that includes a rational content affects consumer's purchasing behaviour	Accepted
H6	Viral videos that includes a positive content are more likely to be shared	Rejected
H7	Viral videos that includes a negative content are more likely to be shared	Rejected
H8	Viral videos that includes a humorous content are more likely to be shared	Accepted
H9	Viral videos that includes an emotional content are more likely to be shared	Rejected
H10	Viral videos that includes a rational content are more likely to be shared	Rejected
H11	The motivation of sharing the video is higher for brand users	Accepted
H12	The motivation of sharing the video is higher for that kind of product users of any brand	Uninterruptable
H13	The motivation of sharing is higher for the users of the product that shown in video	Uninterruptable
H14	People, who watch this video, purchase the product	Accepted
H15	People, who watch this video, have been effected positively	Accepted
H16	People who purchase the product were already user of that kind of product	Accepted
H17	People, who purchase the product were already user of this product	Rejected
H18	People, who purchase the product were already user of this brand	Rejected

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The aim of the study was to measure the viral marketing’s power on our focused point Generation Y. For these measurement, during the study, 18 hypotheses set up and an online survey created with a sample viral video of L’Oréal Turkey to test these hypotheses. For interpretation of the data survey statistics of Google and data mining solutions have been used.

According to survey statistics, we clearly reach the point that the Gen Y consumers who born between 1990-1995 have a great potential for viral marketing campaigns as a seed, cause the 100% of them from our respondents agreed that all of them use social media actively and have their own accounts. Furthermore, they also affect by videos immediately and spare no effort for sharing a video that they like.

In the light of all these hypotheses results, we conclude our study understanding that the videos which include rational content and humorous contents affect Generation Y consumers' purchasing behaviour and the videos which include the rational content affects their purchasing decision positively and the videos that include humorous contents are more likely to be shared by this generation's people.

Last but not least, we conclude our study helps understanding that brand users, also product users are the best starting points for the firms to seeding their viral messages for the product that they want to commercialize and even their non-users of the product for which the viral video stands might change their mind easily and recommend it to their social ties.

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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT OF SMEs AND THE AGE OF ENTREPRENEURS

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ABSTRACT

This article explores significant factors of quality of business environment of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The aim of the article is to define and quantify the relationship between such important factors of business environment as motives for starting a business and the perception of selected types of business risks on the age of entrepreneur. The survey of the quality of business environment was carried out in 2015 through a questionnaire on a sample of 1,141 respondents (business owners) in the Czech Republic. Statistically significant differences between the designated social groups were compared through Pearson statistics at the significance level of 5%. We found that there are statistically significant differences in the approach of the entrepreneurs. According to our research making money is the most important motive for starting a business in the SME segment. Younger entrepreneurs more frequently in comparison to their older counterparts present this opinion. We also found that the perception of the market and financial risks does not depend on the age of the entrepreneur. On the other hand, entrepreneurs under 35 years less intensively perceive credit risk exposure than older entrepreneurs, and present lower perception of the overall effect of business risk than older entrepreneurs. Our findings may help in the innovation approaches of commercial banks in the area of the management of credit risk.

Keywords: credit risk, financial risk, market risk, motives, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises.

INTRODUCTION

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are an important part of the economic system in each country. Most of the experts agree that SMEs significantly contribute to the growth of the employment, Gross Domestic Product and carry out other duties (Shuying and Mei, 2014; International Finance Corporation, 2013; European Commission, 2011; Karpak and Topcu, 2010; Henderson and Weiler, 2010; OECD, 2006).

The research of SMEs business environment is a current topic of scientific research worldwide. Researchers focus their interest on various areas of SMEs' activities. Such authors as Soininen, Martikainen, Puumalainen & Kyläheiko (2012), Eggers, Kraus Hughes laraway & Snyckerski (2013) Avlonitis & Salavat (2007), and Keh, Nguyen & Ng (2007) examine the significant attributes of entrepreneurial orientation SMEs and its impact on business performance.

Ardic (2012), Casey and O.Toole (2014), Kundin and Erecgovac (2011), and Ozturk and Mrkaic (2014) examine the impact of the financial crisis on SMEs financing.

Other authors focus their research on such attributes of the activities of SMEs, as personal characteristics of the entrepreneur, gender and age of the entrepreneur, the age of the company in context of company's financial performance etc.

The aim of the article is to define and quantify the relationship between such important factors of business environment as motives for starting a business and the perception of selected types of business risks on the age of entrepreneur. Authors' own methodology allows defining and quantifying of the differences in the attitudes of entrepreneurs depending on their age.

This article has a following structure. The first section presents the views of the experts on the age of entrepreneurs in context of business environment. The second section presents the research methodology and data. Results of the empirical research and a brief discussion are presented in the third part of the article. The final section summarizes obtained results.

LITERATURE & THEORY

Researchers in the field of business environment usually focus on the most suitable time for starting a business in relation to the age of the entrepreneur, and present different results.

According to Arenius and Minniti (2005) age is negatively related to entrepreneurship, and entrepreneurship is a game of young men. On the other side Bonte, Falck, and Heblich (2007) found that, the belonging to the groups aged between 20-30 and 40-59 has a positive effect on the startup of hi-tech businesses. They have also stated that, people who belong to the group aged from 30 to 39 years old are more risk averse, do not want to take any entrepreneurship initiative, and are entrepreneurially passive. According to these authors people in the age between 40 and 49 are the prime group for starting a new business. In this age people usually have some accumulated experience from their previous jobs and also have the startup capital, which is not the case for the age group of 20-29. In this context Levesque and Minniti (2011) state that older people are less motivated to take any business initiatives. They have shown that the age between 32 and 35 can be a good start up point to become an entrepreneur, however, the probability to become an entrepreneur decreases after the specified age.

Brunow, and Hirte (2006) found although age group from 30-44 adds significant value to the overall economic growth, individuals from the age group from 45-59 are the most productive.

Levesque and Minniti (2006) state that when a person gets older and more experienced she/he rather wants to have a more stable life with a regular source of income, which is not possible in case of doing business; because the earnings are unstable for any new company, and are much more uncertain than the earnings of the employee. However, regardless of age people when the risk aversion decreases, they begin to desire to try for their own business, in order to be more independent. On top of that, it is also found that, wealth is positively related to entrepreneurship, whereas, earning of the high wage is negatively related with entrepreneurship. So it is suggested that, those who are already working as a highly paid worker don't want to start new business due to the high opportunity cost for leaving the job. Lastly, the value of leisure is higher for older people because they have already worked a lot of years, due to that reason they do not want to devote more time to the opening of a new company. And this is not the case for a younger employee, who wants to have a try something new by working hard by reducing the value of leisure time.

The desire to become an entrepreneur increases with age due to higher wealth accumulation during the life cycle and wider range of gathered knowledge from previous experience or educational background (Velez, 2009).

Lafuente and Vaillant (2013) found that pre-startups coefficient is positive for individuals at the age of 30. However, the value of startups decreases when they include post startups (those are already in business, at least for the last 36 months) to the evaluation process.

METHODS AND DATA

This article is based on the survey of the quality of business environment carried out in 2015 in Czech Republic on a sample of 1141 small and medium sized enterprises, out of a total number of 1650 randomly selected companies. The questionnaire available at https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1U9coaC5JRL0N2QOOO6Xb8j3mnaZXdSM47Kugt4EDGFo/viewform?usp=send_form, which consisted of 52 questions, was presented to the companies, selected from Albertina database. 740 out of 1141 respondents belonged to the category of microenterprises according to the EU definition of SMEs stated by the EU recommendation #2003/361, where the main factor determining the category of the enterprise is staff headcount, when microenterprises should employ up to 9 employees. The respondents of the survey represented all 14 regions of the Czech Republic.

The structure of the respondents from the group of microenterprises was as follows: 73% men, 27% women; 71% of respondents reported to have secondary education, 29% had the university degree; 53% of companies' owners stated that the company exists for more than 10 years, 47% of them declared that their companies operate for a less than 10 years. The age of the researched companies was as follows: 62% were established more than 10 years ago, 21% operated between 1 and 5 years, and 17% of them operated between 5 and 10 years. Most of the total number of the respondents reported to have secondary education (48%), 34% of them had a university degree and 18% declared secondary education without graduation.

Our research used the tools of descriptive statistics, including percentages and averages, pivot tables, the methods of comparison and deduction, Pearson's chi-square statistics at 5% significance level for the verification of the existence of the statistically significant dependences and differences between the selected factors. The calculation were made in MS Excel and in the statistical software available at www.socscistatistics.com. Statistically significant differences in the individual responses were investigated by the means of Z- score. The calculations were made through the free software available at: <http://www.socscistatistics.com/tests/ztest/Default2.aspx>

We set two alternative working hypotheses for this article by the method of expert estimation. The hypotheses were assigned with the abbreviations of H1 to H2. Second hypothesis has 4 modifications assigned with the letters a, b, c and d. The alternative hypotheses were supplemented by the null hypotheses assuming there were no statistically verifiable differences between the researched factors. *Null hypotheses: There are no statistically significant dependences between the age of the entrepreneur and the chosen field of research.*

Null hypothesis means that $\mu_1 = \mu_2$, so $\mu_1 - \mu_2 = 0$, while the alternative hypothesis states that $\mu_1 - \mu_2 \neq 0$

We have the following alternative working hypotheses:

- H1: Making money is the most important motive for starting a business. There are statistically significant differences between the entrepreneurs in terms of age.
- H2: The perception of business risks depends on the age of the entrepreneur, while younger entrepreneurs less intensively perceive business risks in comparison to older entrepreneurs.

Hypothesis H2 has the following sub hypotheses:

- H2a: Entrepreneurs younger than 35 years old less intensively perceive the action of the market risk than older entrepreneurs.

- H2b: Entrepreneurs younger than 35 years old less intensively perceive the action of the financial risk than older entrepreneurs.
- H2c: Entrepreneurs younger than 35 years old less intensively perceive the action of the credit risk than older entrepreneurs.
- H2b: Entrepreneurs younger than 35 years old less intensively perceive the action of the business risks than older entrepreneurs.

RESULTS

The results of research regarding the motives for starting a business in relation to the age of the entrepreneur are presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Motives for starting a business

What was you motive to start a business?	35 – N = 279	35 – 45 N = 320	45+ N = 542	Z-score p-value
1. Money	103 (36.92%)	102 (31.88%)	133 (24.54%)	0.1936*/ 0.0002** / 0.0193***
2. Mission	70	66	118	0.1936/0.2846/0.6892
3. I wanted to have a job	0	0	0	---
4. I had no choice	11	22	58	0.1164/ 0.0009 /0.0615
5. Other	95	130	233	0.0969/ 0.0131 /0.4965
Chi square/p-value	3.9899* 0.2626	23.3984** 0.0001	7.5368*** 0.5662	

Notes: 35 - entrepreneurs with the age under 35; 35-45 - entrepreneurs with the age between 35 and 45; 45 + entrepreneurs with the age over 45; N - number of respondents; value marked with * means that we compared entrepreneurs under the age of 35 years and entrepreneurs aged 35-45 years; value marked with ** means the comparison of the entrepreneurs under the age of 35 with entrepreneurs older than 45, value marked with *** means the comparison of entrepreneurs aged 35 to 45 years and entrepreneurs over the age of 45 years.

Our research identified the following most common motives for starting a business: independence (to be his own man, independent decision-making); taking over the family business, inheritance, hobby, to do what one enjoys and self-realization.

Presented results allow us to confirm the statement, presented in the hypothesis H1, that *making money is the most important motive for starting a business*. This opinion was expressed by 30% of all entrepreneurs. We also found that there are statistically significant differences in entrepreneurial motives among entrepreneurs in terms of their age. The values of the test criteria (p-value = 0.0002 / 0.0193) at the significance level of 5% confirmed that there are significant differences in positive responses of entrepreneurs under 35 and over 45 businessmen and entrepreneurs between 35-45 years and over 45 entrepreneurs. Younger entrepreneurs mentioned money as the most important motive for doing business more often. Presented results allow us to reject the null hypothesis, and to adopt hypothesis H1. *H1 was fully confirmed*.

The results of research regarding the perception of market risk in relation to the age of the entrepreneur are presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Perception of market risk in relation to the age of entrepreneur

<i>SMEs perceive an intense action of market risk</i>	35 – N = 279	35 – 45 N = 320	45+ N = 542	Z-score p-value
1. Totally agree	11	15	50	
2. Agree	121	142	245	
Total:1+2	132	157	295	0.6672* 0.0536** 0.1285***
3. Neutral position	80	86	132	
4. Disagree	64	70	103	
5. Totally disagree	3	7	12	
Chi square/p-value	1.5788* 0.8126	11.0969** 0.0255	6.8574*** 0.1436	

Most of the respondents agree with the statement that *SMEs perceive an intense action of market risk*. Although the value of the test criteria (p-value = 0.0255) confirmed that there are statistically significant differences in the overall responses when comparing entrepreneurs younger than 35 and entrepreneurs older than 45, but p-value of the comparisons of three presented age groups (0.6672 / 0.0536 / 0.1285) confirmed at the significance level of 5% that *market risk perception does not depend on the age of the entrepreneur*. The values of the test criteria for the comparison of the entrepreneurs under the age of 35 with entrepreneurs older than 45 got close to set significance level, which indicates some influence of the age, but not at the expected level. The conclusion is that there are no statistically significant differences in the affirmative replies of the entrepreneurs according to their age. Due to this fact *null hypothesis was adopted, and sub hypothesis H2a was rejected*.

Table 3
Perception of financial risk in relation to the age of entrepreneur

<i>Financial risk intensively influences the business environment</i>	35 – N = 279	35 – 45 N = 320	45+ N = 542	Z-score p-value
1. Totally agree	41	57	83	
2. Agree	166	199	339	
Total:1+2	207	256	422	0.0910* 0.2380** 0.4593***
3. Neutral position	53	35	72	
4. Disagree	18	24	46	
5. Totally disagree	1	5	2	
Chi square/p-value	10.0421* 0.0397	5.2517* 0.2624	5.4411*** 0.2450	

The prevailing opinion of all respondents is that *financial risk intensively influences the business environment*. Although the value of the test criteria (p-value = 0.0397) confirmed that there are statistically significant differences in the overall responses when comparing entrepreneurs younger than 35 and entrepreneurs aged 35-45 years, but p-value of the comparisons of three presented age groups (0.0910 / 0.2380 / 0.4593) confirmed at the significance level of 5% that *perception of financial risk does not depend on the age of the entrepreneur*. We found that there are no statistically significant differences in the affirmative replies of the entrepreneurs regarding financial risk according to their age. Due to this fact *null hypothesis was adopted, and sub hypothesis H2b was rejected*.

Table 3
Perception of credit risk in relation to the age of entrepreneur

<i>The importance of credit risk grew during the crisis</i>	35 – N = 279	35 – 45 N = 320	45+ N = 542	Z-score p-value
1. Totally agree	13	21	67	
2. Agree	139	194	290	
Total:1+2	152 (54.48%)	215 (69.19%)	357 (65.87)	0.0015* 0.0015** 0.6892***
3. Neutral position	98	73	143	
4. Disagree	25	29	39	
5. Totally disagree	4	3	3	
Chi square/p-value	12.3119* 0.0152	18.8965** 0.0008	10.7838*** 0.0291	

The prevailing opinion of all respondents is that *the importance of credit risk grew during the crisis*. Values of the test criteria for all three age groups (p-value = 0.0152*/0.0008**/0.0291***) confirmed that there are statistically significant differences in the overall responses of each of them. P-values of the comparison of three presented age groups (entrepreneurs under the age of 35 years vs. entrepreneurs aged 35-45 years, entrepreneurs under the age of 35 vs. entrepreneurs older than 45, and entrepreneurs aged 35 to 45 years vs. entrepreneurs over the age of 45 years) which were 0.0015*, 0.0015** and 0.6892*** confirmed at the significance level of 5% that *perception of credit risk does depend on the age of the entrepreneur*. Entrepreneurs under 35 more intensively perceive the influence of the credit risk in comparison to the older entrepreneurs. Our conclusion is that there are statistically significant differences in the affirmative replies of the entrepreneurs regarding the credit risk according to their age. Due to this fact *null hypothesis was rejected, and sub hypothesis H2c was adopted instead*.

Table 4
Perception of business risks in relation to the age of entrepreneur

<i>The importance of business risks grew during the crisis</i>	35 – N = 279	35 – 45 N = 320	45+ N = 542	Z-score p-value
1. Totally agree	12	28	41	
2. Agree	140	174	308	

Total:1+2	152	202	349	0.0316 0.0058 0.7114
3. Neutral position	84	53	104	
4. Disagree	40	61	87	
5. Totally disagree	3	4	2	
Chi square/p-value	18.8875 0.0008	15.9794 0.0030	4.6370 0.3266	

Most of the respondents agree with the statement that the *importance of business risks grew during the crisis*. Values of the test criteria for all three age groups ($p\text{-value} = 0.0008^*, 0.0030^{**}, 0.3266^{***}$) confirmed that there are statistically significant differences in the overall responses of the entrepreneurs younger than 35, and in the age group 35 to 45 with a very high significance level of 1% (the result is almost certainty). P-values of the comparison of three presented age groups (0.0316*, 0.0058** and 0.7114*** confirmed at the significance level of 5% that *perception of business risks does depend on the age of the entrepreneur*. Entrepreneurs under 35 less intensively perceive the influence of business risks in comparison to the older entrepreneurs. This trend is confirmed by the values of the test criteria. Our conclusion is that there are statistically significant differences in the affirmative replies of the entrepreneurs regarding the business risks according to their age. Due to this fact *null hypothesis was rejected, and sub hypothesis H2d was adopted instead*.

Alternative working hypothesis H2 stating that the perception of business risks depends on the age of the entrepreneur, while younger entrepreneurs less intensively perceive business risks in comparison to older entrepreneurs, was partially confirmed in relation to the credit risk and the evaluation of the level of business risks, but was rejected in relation to the market and financial risk.

The results of our research identified that while a desire for independence, taking over the family business, inheritance, hobby, doing what one enjoys and self-realization belong to the most common motives for doing business, *making money is the most important one*. While researching the influence of the age of the entrepreneur on the perception of different types of business risks we found that although entrepreneurs under 35 *more intensively* perceive the influence of the *credit risk*, and *less intensively* perceive the influence of business risks in comparison to the older entrepreneurs, the perception of market and financial risks *does not depend on the age of the entrepreneur*.

Our findings correspond with the results of Bonte, Falck, and Heblich (2007), who stated that younger entrepreneurs are less risk averse, which is the reason for a lower perception of the influence of business risks of the entrepreneurs under 35. Our finding that older entrepreneurs are less concerned about the credit risk is related to their finding that people in the age between 40 and 49 are the prime group for starting a new business due to the fact that they already have the startup capital, and corresponds to the findings of Velez (2009) who found that the desire to become an entrepreneur increases with age due to higher wealth accumulation during the life cycle.

Our finding that a desire for independence and independent decision making belongs to the most common reasons to start doing business confirm findings by Levesque and Minniti (2006), who found that regardless of age people they desire to try for their own business, in order to be more independent.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

This article explores significant factors of quality of business environment of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The aim of the article was to define and quantify the relationship between such important factors of business environment as motives for starting a business and the perception of selected types of business risks on the age of entrepreneur.

The results of our research identified that while a desire for independence, taking over the family business, inheritance, hobby, doing what one enjoys and self-realization belong to the most common motives for doing business, *making money is the most important one, especially for younger people*.

The prevailing opinions of all respondents of our research, carried out in the Czech Republic in 2015 on a sample of 1,141 respondents (business owners) are that *financial risk intensively influences the business environment, that SMEs perceive an intense action of market risk* and that *the importance of business and credit risks grew during the crisis*. While researching the influence of the age of the entrepreneur on the perception of different types of business risks we found that although entrepreneurs under 35 *more intensively* perceive the influence of the *credit risk*, and *less intensively* perceive the influence of *business risks* in comparison to the older entrepreneurs, the perception of *market and financial risks does not depend on the age of the entrepreneur*. The values of the test criteria for the comparison of the entrepreneurs regarding market risk under the age of 35 with entrepreneurs older than 45 got close to set significance level, which indicates some influence of the age, but not at the expected level.

Presented findings may help the commercial banks in the field of innovation of their approaches the area of the management of credit risk in order to support younger people in starting a new business. Our further research will be focused on the influence of other factors on small and medium sized enterprises and business environment.

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TRANSFORMATION OF THE SACRED: THE COMMERCIALIZATION, POLITICIZATION AND GLOBALIZATION OF BUDDHIST HERITAGE TOURISM IN CONTEMPORARY CHINA

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ABSTRACT

The study of heritage has transcended the documentation of places and the formulation of processes and practices for conservation and management, to inquire why people want to preserve the past, how people reinterpret the past and how heritage contributes to the formation of global, national, local and political identities, as Zhou Heping, China's Vice-Minister of Culture, stated that the Chinese cultural heritage, like Deng Xiaoping's socialism, must have unique Chinese characteristics. This paper argues that heritage has to be re-defined as a highly complex commercial and socio-political concept. Meanwhile, the research on heritage tourism today focuses mainly on the supply side of tourism, focusing largely on interpretation, conservation, and other elements of resource management, as well as the support services that exist for visitors at historical locations (Leask et al, 2006). This paper, with an interdisciplinary emphasis, explores the Buddhist heritage tourism in China in the context of commercialization, politicization and globalization. It examines the historical, theoretical and political issues associated with the interpretation of China's Buddhist heritage tourism: representative Buddhist sites, Shaolin Temple in particular, and their extrapolated commercial-spiritual significance, and engaging policies with their postmodern inclinations.

To the Chinese state and its ideologues, the spiritual or intangible nature of the religious heritage, which reflects the belief systems and social morality, has been used to enforce the Chinese pursuit of unity and harmony, to embody the nation, to boost the economy and to reconstruct national collective identities. Such efforts are obligatory, echoing and modifying the political urges and religious policies of the Maoist era, as verified by the "State Outline Program of Cultural Development in the 11th Five-Year Plan Period", issued by the Office of the Central Committee of the CPC and the Office of the State Council on 13 September, 2006. Moreover, amid politicization and increasing globalization, there has been a remarkable growth in religious (esp. Buddhist) heritage as a consumer product and a formidable part of the tourist industry in the past twenty years in China. Consequently, Chinese Buddhist heritage and its tourism have assumed a form of cultural fast food, a commodity, as well as a political tool for social stability and spiritual control. Describing practical applications, models and case studies of Shaolin Temple, this paper provides an insight into Buddhist heritage tourism in China to analyze the intricate tensions between commercialization, politicization, religiosity and globalization.

INTRODUCTION

The study of heritage has transcended the documentation of places and the formulation of processes and practices for conservation and management, to inquire why people want to preserve the past, how people reinterpret the past and how heritage contributes to the formation of global, national, local and political identities, as Zhou Heping, China's Vice-Minister of Culture, stated that the Chinese cultural heritage, like Deng Xiaoping's socialism, must have unique Chinese characteristics. This paper argues that heritage has to be re-defined as a highly complex commercial and socio-political concept. Meanwhile, the research on heritage tourism today focuses mainly on the supply side of tourism, focusing largely on interpretation, conservation, and other elements of resource management, as well as the support services that exist for visitors at historical locations (Leask et al, 2006). This paper, with an interdisciplinary emphasis, explores the Buddhist heritage tourism in China in the context of commercialization, politicization and globalization. It examines the historical, theoretical and political issues associated with the interpretation of China's Buddhist heritage tourism: representative Buddhist sites, Shaolin Temple in

particular, and their extrapolated commercial-spiritual significance, and engaging policies with their postmodern inclinations.

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New Trends of China’s Policies on Religion and Tourism

The Chinese government believes that, though atheistic in nature, the CPC now allows freedom of religious beliefs for the citizens under the Policy of Religious Freedom. China has a population of about 1.3 billion and is home to a 100 million (official number) believers, largely Buddhists, Taoists, Christians, Catholics and Islamites. “To properly understand and manage the religious affairs was vital to the work of the Party, the peace and stability of Chinese society and the process to build a moderately prosperous society of all respects,” Chinese President Hu Jintao said. “The Party’s secret in handling well China’s religious issues lies in its principles and policies,” said Ye Xiaowen, Director of the State Administration of Religious Affairs. “Their insertion in the Party Constitution shows the Party is sincere, and capable, of its implementation of policies on the freedom of religious beliefs” (China Tibet Tourism Bureau, 2008). With the new elaboration on religious work, according to Ye, the Party is determined to promote the active role of the religious circle in maintaining social harmony and boosting economic development.

After the founding of the People’s Republic of China in 1949, the Chinese attitudes to religion have been restrictive and even repressive (during the Cultural Revolution). But with the Reform and Open Policy carried out in the late 1970s onwards, China’s religious policy has been more liberalized, granting freedom to religious practices with government registration, in a Marxist belief that all religions would eventually die out with the social and economic development. CPC’s Central Committee issued a major document outlining religious policy during this Reform and Open period: citizens would enjoy freedom of religious belief, but within the five recognized religions and under the supervision of the government; religion as a personal affair could not interfere with or influence civil matters such as education; Chinese religious groups could not be subject to foreign organizations¹. In this vein, the government established the Religious Affairs Bureau (RAB) to manage and regulate religious affairs, objectively providing a channel for religious personnel to communicate with the government.

The Constitution of China stipulates that religious freedom is a right enjoyed by all Chinese citizens; the government prohibits interference in the normal religious life of the Chinese people; the government maintains that religious activities should be conducted in temples, mosques and churches. Meanwhile, to guarantee the legal protection of religion, the Constitution includes the criminal code of the state, stipulating that government employees who unlawfully deprive citizens of their freedom to conduct normal religious activities shall either be taken into custody or punished with a prison sentence of less than two years in serious cases. Thus, according to Kim Kwong Chan (2005, p. 89), the government defines religion as “a private matter which can be pursued in confined areas...a particular government ministry, the RAB, deals with government-sanctioned religious groups and activities...” Ultimately, the party’s objective is “to keep these groups within the political parameters established by the government as well as to lead these groups to support the sociopolitical objectives of the government.” After the formal adoption of the ‘Three Represents’ as the CPC’s orthodox doctrine at the Sixteenth CPC Congress in 2002, Chan (Ibid) notes the religious rhetoric of the CPC:

First, since longevity is of the nature of religion, it will exist for a long time, and the CPC should therefore actively guide religion to adapt to socialist society. Second, since the critical issue for religion in China is its mass nature (more than 100 million believers), the CPC should vigorously implement its policy on religious belief. Third, since religion is complex and unique, the CPC should emphasize the legislative nature of religious policy

and stress the independent nature of religion in China. As for non-sanctioned religions, although it is not explicitly stated as part of religious policy, it is understood by government officials that they will be suppressed by legal and administrative means either as 'evil cults' or as 'activity that endangers public security', as mentioned earlier.

At the same time, China's continuing economic reform since 1978 have substantially altered its economic structure, resulting in spectacular economic growth and a boom in tourism development. Tourism has become one of the industries with strongest development momentum in the global economy, and it constitutes the pillar industry of China's economic development. Tourism in China has undergone a rapid and prosperous development since the adoption of open-door policy and economic reform in 1978. By 1998, international tourism earned US\$14.1 billion of foreign exchange, a 53-fold increase from US\$262.9 million in 1978 (CNTA, 1998, 1999). By 1999 China had 7,035 hotels, 7,236 travel agencies, and tourism directly employed 1.9 million people (CNTA, 2000). In 2006, the revenue of China's inbound tourism achieved USD33.95 billion, with a year-on-year growth of 15.9%. The revenue from domestic tourism came to RMB 623 billion, seeing an increase of 17.9% year-on-year ('In-depth Report', 2007).

On the other hand, tourism, like any other sector in China, is tightly bound with Chinese politics, as the first principle of China's National Tourism policy states, "It is imperative to take Deng Xiaoping's theories and his economic thinking on tourism as guidance." Under this guidance, religious heritage tourism plays an important role in the developing system of Chinese tourism industry, enacting politics of nationalism with global connection and symbolizing the Chinese national spirit. Aijmer and Ho (2000), Hsiao (1960) and Dean (2003, p. 352) have noted that since the 1980s, there has been a growing trend of building and reconstructing of the Buddhist and Taoist temples with a view to solve anxieties and problems for people; temple revival is often for filling of a moral vacuum in modern day China and elsewhere in the global village; and religious sites not only manage to survive under state power, but also are sometimes able to prosper under the political mechanism, which indicates the power dynamics between local authorities and the state.

China has a set of tourism policies adopted ever since its open-door to the outside world, and these policies are managed and implemented with remarkable Chinese characteristics. According to Qiu Hanqin Zhang, et al (2002, pp. 38-42), these policies and regulations have covered almost all aspects of the tourism industry, including investment, start-up and operation of the tourism business, competition, consumer protection and qualification of tourism employees, etc. To Zhang (Ibid), tourism policy implementation in China can be concluded as a "top-down" and "trial and error-correcting" model:

These two concepts are closely related. The term "top-down" means that tourism policy decisions, to a large extent, are shaped in the top level of tourism administration. Then the tourism administration implements these policies and monitors the responses from enterprises. If there is no strong resistance, the implementation continues; if resistance occurs, government will revise the policy decisions and re-implement it. This reflects the concept of "trial and error-correcting". But, the adjustment and revision sometimes take a long time.

In contemporary P.R. China, the issue of tourism is complicated because of the political nature of the tourism industry. The governmental tourism bureaus macro-control the market and shape the management of tourism enterprises and their construction of tourist sites; meanwhile, there could be possible collaboration between the state and tourism enterprisesⁱⁱ, influencing in particular the representations of religious cultures.

The Shaolin Abbot Becomes the CEO: Commercialization of Chinese Buddhist Heritage Tourism

Chinese Buddhism, or *Hanchuanfojiao*, can be dated to the various schools of Buddhism that have prospered in China ever since ancient times. It absorbed and assimilated the ideas of Confucianism, Taoism and other Chinese native philosophies so that this foreign religion was able to take roots in China, forming a natural part of Chinese civilization. Buddhism is instrumental in shaping the mindset of the Chinese people, affecting their life, world look and politics. Historically, Buddhism has prospered under imperial patronage and continues to flourish today with governmental sanction. It has left to the Chinese people a great legacy of Buddhist heritage sites. Today, there are still 2,100 Buddhist caves and niches, 100,000 Buddhist images, more than 3,600 inscribed tablets and 43 Buddhist pagodas in existence. The White Horse Temple, Qianxi Temple, Binyang Cave, Ten Thousand Buddhists' Cave, Lotus Cave, Fengxian Temple, the Four Sacred Buddhist Mountains of China etc. are all remarkable manifestations of the booming Chinese Buddhism.

The Shaolin Monastery or Shaolin Temple is a Chan Buddhist temple located at Song Shan in China's Henan Province. It has a history of 1500 years and is the birth place of Chinese Chan Buddhism, introduced by Bodhidharma who came to China from India. In addition, famous for its association with Chinese martial arts and particularly with the Hong Kong movieⁱⁱⁱ that popularizes and commercializes Shaolin Kung Fu, a physical manifestation of the Chan spirit, the Mahayana Buddhist monastery itself is also best known to the Western world for its heritage tourism. The fact is that at the beginning the Chinese government was unwilling to grant a favorable policy towards the Shaolin Temple. Yet in the 1980s when Shaolin kungfu gained popularity and tremendous commercial profits both inside China and around the world, the government came to modify its attitude to it with a profit-oriented strategy to promote and preserve Shaolin heritage. And this naturally leads to a dilemma, which is best expressed by *Independent Lens* ('Shaolin Ulysses') as follows:

Monks and Temple officials argued that the awe-inspiring physicality of kungfu could be used to draw people to Shaolin, leading them ultimately to the core Buddhist principles. They understood the showmanship of the monks as a necessary preservation of Shaolin teachings through promotion. Cynical observers, however, detected a crass commercialization both in Shaolin village and in the glitzy international tours that summarily depicted Shaolin history while showcasing acrobatic stunts.

Shi Yongxin, the abbot of Shaolin Temple, is known as the "CEO Monk," or "CEO in a cassock," because of his tendency to run the temple as a business. Under his management, Shaolin has gone into film production, e-commerce and kung fu shows, and he is among the first to send his monks to take MBA courses and get degrees. Shaolin Temple now has its own welfare foundation, magazine, movie and TV production team and martial arts promotion agency. Apart from the establishment of numerous schools nearby the monastery starting to teach Shaolin kungfu^{iv}, the famous brand "Shaolin" now comes to appear on a startling diversity of products ranging from snacks to sportswear. To deal with such commercial affairs, the Temple has set up a corporation to regulate the use of its name. In March, 2006, the Shaolin temple and a satellite TV station in Southern China jointly organized a global Chinese kung fu star competition, imitating an extremely popular reality TV amateur singing contest called Super Girl, which, in turn, is an imitation of American Idol. Braving the public criticism, Shi commented:

"Nowadays, there are too many agencies making films and TV soaps about the Shaolin temple. They do them mostly for commercial purposes. Their rendition of the history, culture and the spirit of Shaolin temple are not always accurate or complete. We hope our participation this time will guarantee the truth on what is reflected through historical or feature films, although we do need investment from outside."

When asked about the heritage tourism business carried out by the temple, Shi commented that "if we only rely on donations from Buddhists, we could hardly survive. It is only under the precondition that we manage tourist development well that we can save some funds for the maintenance of the temple and carry out cultural research and cultural relic protection as well as popularizing Buddhist principles. Tourism is our basic sustenance."

When Henan government officials awarded Shi with a spectacular sports sedan valued at approximately US\$125, 000 for his contributions to the local tourism industry, it raised increasing doubts that Shi is a monk dedicated to fortune rather than religion, the *Beijing News* reported on August 30. "I resorted to using commercialization to promote Shaolin culture," Shi says. "I believe that people who concentrate on hard work can understand me." Under the trend of commercialization and globalization, the abbot has cooperated with dozens of mainland universities, including Tsinghua University and Peking University; he has also maintained his cultural exchange with the international community by purchasing 12 square kilometers of land in Australia to build a Shaolin martial arts heritage center according to traditional Chinese construction methods.^v

As Chi-Chu Tschang (2007) points out, China's preference of a market economy has also encouraged many Buddhist temples to try their utmost to boost revenue. "The commercialization of Buddhism has already become quite common, and this is causing a great deal of concern for a lot of people because it goes against the function of Buddhism as a religion," Tschang quotes Xuan Fang, a professor at Renmin University's Institute for Studies of Buddhism and Religious Theory in Beijing. Tschang goes on to

argue that throughout history China's Buddhists have always been related to material wealth and commerce. Since the Tang Dynasty, temples have served as hostels or run vegetarian restaurants to supplement their traditional sources of revenues such as donations and sales of incense. Nowadays some Buddhist temples have come up with more creative ways to get more money from lay Buddhists, such as asking them to sponsor miniature gold Buddhas, halls, or roof tiles. One temple is selling one stick of incense for \$790, according to Chinese media reports.

With Shaolin Temple heritage as a case in point, the main arguments center round the following lines according to an online survey carried provided by *Beijing Review*^{vi}. According to Jiaping Fang (www.qq.com), Shaolin Temple is moving in line with the modern marketing rule, so people should not focus on the temple's commercial operation but should realize the significance of the Shaolin Temple's innovative practice. Fang thinks, with Shaolin Temple selling its products online, we should show more support and understanding to its business efforts; after all, we have many reasons to believe that in the near future, Shaolin Temple's commodities will become a brand of high reputation and a bridge for the spread and promotion of Chinese religious heritage. To Liang Yu (hlj.rednet.cn), the primary concern does not lie in whether Shaolin heritage should be promoted in a commercial model or not, but in whether this heritage can be developed and accepted by more people after it is run as a business. In the opinion of Zhoucha Zhao (www.sina.com.cn), Chinese traditions need to develop with time and splendor of a culture should aim to find its expression in new forms suitable for modernization. It is more than a historical heritage. Thus, to transform the Shaolin Temple into a leisure and entertainment venue and to run it as a business are not a big problem.

Amid the sea of commercialization, the Chinese government has also sensed the need to enshrine the institution of Shaolin. The government has applied to the UN to place "Shaolin Kungfu" on the "World Intangible Heritage" list, and it is also trying to add the physical Temple and surrounding structures on the "World Heritage List." To preserve the pristine aroma of the Shaolin Temple area, the government has relocated the kungfu schools and Shaolin paraphernalia shops to a nearby town. In general, under governmental management, the Shaolin Temple has tried its best to ensure its holistic survival through a philosophy that values both spectacle and preservation.^{vii}

Besides the historical Shaolin Temple, China has a long list of Buddhist Heritage tour destinations: the Four Famous Buddhist mountains^{viii}, the countless Buddhist monasteries, Buddhist heritage caves, Buddhist pagodas, Buddhist cultural festivals (both domestic and international), Buddha's Birthday celebrations, Leshan Giant Buddha, the largest stone sculpture of Buddha in the world, etc. What's more, China has also developed new and modernized Buddhist attractions in Buddhist communities with the aim to preserve the intangible Buddhist heritage. Nanshan Buddhism Cultural Tourism Zone is a typical instance of this trend. The China Travel Depot website introduces the Zone as follows. It is one of the most typical Buddhist cultural tourist attractions in China, located to the west of Sanya City in Hainan Province. The following three components make up this zone. The first one, Nanshan Buddhism Culture Park, boasts of a window on China's traditional Buddhist heritage culture. Next comes the Felicity and Longevity Culture Park with its marketed atmosphere of peace, harmony and long life. And the Nanshan Cultural Park highlights China's diverse Buddhist and folk customs. The most eye-catching feature of the zone is the three sided statue of Guan Yin Buddha and the numerous Buddhist Temples against the background of spectacular landscape and sea views. Featuring Chinese traditional Buddhist heritage, the Zone encompasses many religiously significant structures, such as Nanshan Temple, Nanhai Avalokiteshvara Statue, ancient Buddhism relics, Buddhism Cultural Exchange Center, Food Court for Vegetarians, and Boutiques for Buddhism adherents. The zone has been designated a Priority Project of China Tourism Development and earmarked for further development. The Zone's online advertisement (chinatraveldepot.com) highlights its commercial pursuit:

As a National AAAA Class Scenery Park, the tourism zone provides you with an ideal paradise where you can worship the Buddha, eat the vegetarian food and view the enchanting scenes. There are main scene parks in the area such as the Nanshan Buddhist culture garden, which displays traditional Buddhist culture and contains deep philosophy and moral meaning. Highlight of the tourism zone is a 108-meter high Kwan-yin Bodhisattva Statue on the sea.

The Monk Negotiates with the Ideologue and the Politician: Ideology and Politics of Chinese Buddhist Heritage Buddhism

According to Ryckmans (2008), two important ideological factors have contributed to a Chinese environment particularly conducive to lasting pursuits of historical and religious heritages: 1) that China's dominant ideology - Confucianism - extolled the values of the past; and 2) that China from a very early age developed an extraordinary sense of history - it actually possesses the longest uninterrupted historiographical tradition. Ryckmans (Ibid) mentions the fact that Confucius considered Antiquity as the repository of all human values; therefore, as he notes, the Sage's mission was not to create anything anew, but merely to transmit the heritage of the Ancients. And Buddhism is one of the most representative in this line. Besides, Buddhism's growing influence has promoted a steady growth in the value of Buddhism's cultural and religious capital. Zhe Ji (2004) has noted that from the 1990s onwards, China's local authorities have sought to co-operate with Buddhism, expecting profit by its heritage capital through attracting investors and promoting tourism. But Ji also senses that the state did not cease to control the Buddhists although, motivated by economic interests, it did contribute to promoting and reconstructing Buddhism: the monasteries thus found new legitimacy and new space for development.

The relationship between Buddhism and the Chinese politics has been undergoing a complex and ever-changing relationship; it cannot be simplistically ascribed to the loosening or liberalization of political ideology. Although control and restrictions do exist, negotiations, compromises, and support are being carried out by the government for economic as well as social reasons like the building of a "harmonious society." Countless buildings, reconstructions and renovations of Buddhist monasteries have taken place all over China. Meanwhile, ideologically speaking, Buddhism, like other religions of China, used to be considered superstitions, accused of exploiting the masses and being parasites, so it has to be remolded and transformed into politically acceptable ideology. Therefore, as Ji (Ibid) has shown, slogans like "combining Chan with agriculture"^{ix} are instigated into Buddhist activities. Under this guideline, Ji goes on to narrate that monks are encouraged to do agricultural labor so as to contribute to building the state and show their patriotism; and with the development of economy and especially China's entry into the WTO, the government begins to see considerable opportunities in Buddhist economy, particularly in the case of Buddhist heritage tourism. The Chinese government contends that tourism has invigorated Buddhism, citing money spent on restoring more than 1,700 religious sites. Thus, it is not difficult to reach an agreement in terms of an aligned monetary interest on the part of the monks, the local government and the Communist state.

Ji (Ibid) summarizes that an essential ideological slogan has evolved that stresses a religious economy based on Buddhist cultural capital: Cultivate the good earth and make merit. This slogan carries the meaning of lay believers donating or contributing to the Buddhist temples and services so as to accumulate virtues. Practices of this principle are often found in activities like lay people going to the temples to ask the monks to carry out simple religious rituals as a way of interpreting Buddhist oracles or gaining merit for themselves and their close relatives. For instance, Kau Cim is one such traditional Buddhist fortune telling practice. It is originated in ancient China and is best known as "Oracle of Guan Yin" in Buddhist traditions. It can give those inquirers answers from the sacred oracle lot, or informally called Fortune Sticks by westerners. As a result, monks with acknowledged high virtues and profound understanding of the Buddhist truth can always attract more donations from lay believers, or in other words, more cultural capital. To Ji, the Buddhist monks, fully aware of the nature of their religious capital, take great care to display their historical heritage; and these days they consider it essential to piece together their own histories, to celebrate the anniversaries of their foundation or those of their great Masters of past years.

It might be argued that the state's favouring policies and liberalizing attitudes towards rebuilding Buddhist heritage sites and popularizing Buddhist doctrines and practices are means by which to exploit Buddhist heritage tourism for the maximum of economic benefits. In this respect, Ji (Ibid) has provided relevant examples as follows. On nearly all the Buddhist Mountain Sanctuaries, such as Mount Emei in Sichuan and Mount Heng in Hunan, Buddhism is at the heart of strategies for developing tourism. In Shaanxi, every year since 2001, the authorities in the city of Baoji have been organising a tourism festival at the Famen Temple. In 2003, the Zhejiang government did not hesitate to invent a festival called the Festival of the Bodhisattva of the South Sea on Mount Putuo, in order to stimulate the development of the tourist economy. As Ji summarizes the whole practice, the state uses its political power as capital to decide which practices and discourse were suitable for financial rewards. And in the case of Buddhism, its capital is founded on the symbolic power of its heritage sites, enabling it to mobilise believers or amateurs of Buddhist culture. The state's political capital cannot be directly exchanged for the economic capital of the Buddhist believers because it must first be converted into

religious cultural capital. So the state, and in particular local government, is obliged to seek an alternative method of transaction with the monasteries. While the state can seize some Buddhist resources using its political power, it is nevertheless indispensable for it to co-operate with the monks, because the exploitation of the Buddhist cultural capital demands that Buddhist authority should grant it symbolic recognition.

Despite all this, it has to be noted that when economic interests wrought from Buddhist heritage tourism or other Buddhist practices are in conflict with political ideologies or basic state policies, the former has to give way to the latter. In the introduction to the book *God and Caesar in China: Policy Implications of Church-State Tensions* (2004), Kindopp explains that the Chinese "policy framework established after 1978 provides limited space for religious believers to practice their faith but also calls for comprehensive control measures to prevent religion from emerging as an independent social force," which is the tension at the heart of authoritarian government. "Religious faith commands an allegiance that transcends political authority, whereas the Communist Party's enduring imperative is to eliminate social and ideological competition." Yet, unlike Christianity, which has Western, imperialistic undertones, Buddhism, as a religion that sees all worldly pursuits as empty and illusory, must be counted as the least "harmful" to the dominant communist ideologies and thus is given relatively higher degrees of freedom. Moreover, the domestic Buddhist heritage tourism is also capable of counterbalancing the negative effects of the modern worshipping of money and materialistic possessions that lead to corruption of both the common masses and the government officials. So as an antidote to this moral decadence and as a filler in the moral vacuum, when it is no longer possible to return to the ideology of the Communist state of the Maoist era, Buddhism, especially its commercialized and popularized tours, is employed by the government to heighten people's moral consciousness and recall a collective national spirit.

In contemporary China, a fundamental nationalistic ideology becomes the binding force in China, guiding the operation of issues ranging from economy, politics and religion to even the Olympic Games. Bruce Kapferer focuses on how nationalist ideology, as a type of social theory used to make sense of the world, objectifies and sacralizes the nation; in particular, the notions of boundedness, continuity, and homogeneity are essential to the analysis of the reasoning about Chinese culture (Quoted Tuohy, 1991). Tuohy (1991) points out that several nationalistic terms keep appearing in Chinese Party and government discourses that resonate with Handler's notion of nationalism: patriotism (爱国主义), Love of Motherland (热爱祖国), and nationality self-esteem (民族自尊心); Love of Motherland is a rudimentary part of the moral ideology "needed on the part of every member of a nationality" and carries with it love of the country's rivers and mountains, citizens, culture, progress and prosperity, and so on (196). Therefore, Buddhist heritage tourism industry, as one integral manifestation of Chinese history and classical culture, has become instrumental in maintaining and promoting the nationalistic spirit of unity, continuity and harmony. The commercial exploitation of the Buddhist heritage can both boost the economy and, what's more important, "enhance nationality self-esteem, strengthen citizens' patriotism, assimilate the experiences of our predecessors, and build on their wisdom and good qualities" (Lin 1989, p. 65). The party's aim to integrate religion into the ideological doctrine of a socialist harmonious society is here most clearly illustrated.

The Temple Goes to the World: A Global Glimpse of Chinese Buddhist Heritage Tourism

Yao (2008) points out that China's traditional culture is being globalized at an increasing speed and with an overpowering vigor, even though there is an ongoing debate about whether the commercialization of the Shaolin Temple, or any other sort of Buddhist heritage tourism, is a means to survival in modern time or selling the sacred soul of the ancient site. The great international influence of Shaolin Kung Fu proves that it is an important symbol of Chinese culture, and it is argued that China's characteristic Buddhist heritage should play an important role in spreading Chinese culture around the world. *Beijing Review* (2006) has recorded Shi Yongxin when he comments that against the globalisation backdrop, Shaolin Temple has the responsibility to respond to the economic and cultural dominance of the Western world. Otherwise, Shaolin would not be able to maintain its social influence, which would fall short of the expectations of Shaolin's ancestry. Since Shaolin was born and has grown through international cultural exchange, it is aimed at becoming the global centre of the Chinese Chan Buddhist sect and a venue of international communication, said Shi. The *Review* (Ibid) features Liao Baoping, a columnist at *Guangming Daily*, as uttering the following: Buddhism is essentially a type of culture; culture evolves with multiple factors of modernity, so has Buddhism. Monks are not gods; they are humans with flesh and blood. The global TV competition for selecting new kung fu stars is essentially about the commercialization of a culture in a globalized world.

The case study of the Buddhist heritage such as Shaolin Temple reveals the measures that a developing country like China has taken to get involved in the vehement globalizing trend. In the Chinese Buddhist heritage tourism, we can see the religious-commercial-political dynamics at full play to secure China as a country of heritage and spirit as well as an indispensable international player. The globalization of Buddhist legacies like the Shaolin Temple is an effective means by which to make full use of China's religious legacies for economic and political purposes in response to the Westernization, or rather Western cultural imperialism. The processes of secularization and commercialization in the form of tourism contribute to the globalization of the Chinese Buddhist heritage, all the while aided by a modernizing China entering the global economy. With the increasing and deepening effect of globalization, it is only natural for Buddhists to take up socially engaged Buddhism and to adapt themselves to the new phenomenon by globalizing their heritage sites and organizations. In this way, Chinese Buddhist heritage tourism enacts a post-modern scenario by dynamically synthesizing the secular and sacred, the traditional and the modern, the political and the commercial, as well as the local and the global.

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ⁱⁱ This point is adequately illustrated in Li, Jing 2004, 'Tourism enterprises, the state, and the construction of multiple Dai cultures in contemporary Xishuang Banna, China', *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, volume 9, no 4, pp. 315 – 330.

ⁱⁱⁱ In 1982 came the Jet Li movie "Shaolin Temple," inspiring a wave of tourism the Chinese government supported; it even helped rebuild the temple as a Buddhist heritage tour destination.

^{iv} There are about 70 kungfu schools, of which the largest has 15,000 students. The local economy has been greatly boosted by tourism and the martial arts a\schools.

^v This part is partly based on Guo Qiang, "Shaolin Temple Goes Commercial" <chinadaily.com.cn>.

^{vi} The following survey results are based on Yao Bin, "Should the Shaolin Temple Be Commercialized?" *Beijing Review*, NO. 31, JUL. 31, 2008.

^{vii} For an in-depth analysis of this topic, please refer to *Beijing Review*, vol. 49, no. 21, May 25, 2006, pp. 44-45, on which my comment is based.

^{viii} Pu Tuo Shan, Buddhist mountain of the east, Zhejiang province, 284 meters, sacred to Kuan-Yin, the Bodhisattva of Compassion; Wu Tai Shan, Buddhist mountain of the north, Shanxi province, 3061 meters. Sacred to Manjushri, the Bodhisattva of Wisdom; Emei Shan, Buddhist mountain of the west, Sichuan province, 3099 meters, sacred to Samantabhadra, the Bodhisattva of Benevolent Action; and Jiu Hua Shan, Buddhist mountain of the south, Anhui province, 1341 meters, sacred to Kshitigarbha, the Bodhisattva of Salvation.

^{ix} On the occasion of the reunion organised for the thirtieth anniversary of the Buddhist Association of China in 1983, Zhao Puchu, the Association's President, re-interpreted the slogan in these terms: "To adapt Buddhism to Chinese society, the Venerable Masters of Buddhism in our ancient history have, after several centuries of research and experimentation, established the rule 'combine Chan with agricultural work'. Quoted from Zhe Ji, "Buddhism and the State: The New Relationship."

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT, STIGMA AND SOCIAL IDENTITY

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ABSTRACT

Unemployment is one of the leading social problems of Georgia. The highest level of unemployment is among young population within the 20-24 year age group (30.5%) followed by the age group of 25-29 (23.5%). Women unemployment rate is lower compared to men (10.4% and 14.0%) (Geostat, 2016).

According to the study of ETF (2015), the about 1/3 of the young population in Georgia is neither in education nor employment (NEETs). Female NEET rate is higher than Male rate.

The aim of the research was to study attitudes and perceptions of the youth about their unemployment, social status and stigma. For this purpose, five focus groups were carried out with 42 participants (age group 18-29) in 2015 in Georgia.

The research shows that the most of the participants think that the main reason for their unemployment is a lack of jobs in the country, followed by a mismatch between a received qualification and the Labour Market needs.

Employment is critical for the youth. They think that it is crucial to their economic independence, social inclusion and for having social networks. Thus, unemployment status has a negative influence on their self-esteem and self-confidence. Participants think that unemployment makes them vulnerable. In general unemployment status is inferior to them. They have more positive attitudes towards employed youth regarding success, popularity and freedom than to the group of unemployed peers.

Participants point out about having not harmonized relationships with the family members, lack of social networks with friends and social support. They do not feel comfortable to be depended financially on the family members. Most of the participants have an impression that people around them express a lack of initiative to communicate with them that is because of their unemployment status.

To fill the time gap because of unemployment the youth try to participate in various informal courses, follow hobbies and keep themselves busy.

Youth think that they are active in searching employment opportunities as they use different strategies such a registration on the unemployment database, participation in job fairs, sending CV to the companies, attend the various training courses to update their skills, though their attempt is mostly not successful. Despite the failure, young participants quite optimistic in getting employed. In general, they have the optimistic attitude towards their future.

Keywords: *youth unemployment, stigma, social identity.*

TAX AMNESTY FOR SOCIAL CONTRIBUTION. ROMANIAN PRESENT CONTEXT AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

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ABSTRACT

The social contributions hold an important role in the system of the resources for the public budget. In the present context, social contributions influence the mobility of the human resources and determine political attitudes. When they determine high pressure on the taxpayer, the objectives of social contribution regulation is misunderstood and generates social insubordination. The role of executive is to observe and to correct such conduct, proposing the right solution for reinstalling the rule of law.

The fiscal amnesty is a method for the state legislative authority to cancel particular tax liability, when justified motivation demands it. Despite its reasonability, it is an extra-ordinary measure, mainly because of the possible side effect of discouraging the conduct of the honest taxpayers. Therefore the regulation for tax amnesty should be wisely and prudently adopted. The Romanian fiscal amnesty in 2015 is analyzed, starting with its motivations, the applicable procedures and the possible misinterpretations. The fiscal authority role and actions are presented, in comparison with the action of the beneficiaries of the law. Also, the results amnesty generated and the influence on the taxpayers' activity are analyzed, through the relevant case law already generated on the topic. The negative influence of the tax amnesty is pointed out as a result of the research.

Keywords: contributions, fiscal amnesty, regulation.

INTRODUCTION SECTION

The public budget policy is an exclusive state prerogative, both for the incomes and for the expenditure actions. The state, through its representatives, has to collect money and is entitled to spend them, in accordance with the current necessities and its current governing program. Considering the direct effects and its particular importance, tax policy has to be transposed in normative acts, in order to generate mandatory liabilities for the taxpayers.

Still, in some particular case, when the state representatives realise that the fiscal liabilities are too hard to comply with and the taxpayers are very tempted to avoid the payments, alternative solutions might be used. In order to move on with their daily activities, the taxpayers need to ease tax burden. In this case, a solution to rebalance the general budgetary collect/spend mechanism is to consider an amnesty regulation. Some legally stated fiscal liabilities are to be cancelled, in order to facilitate the continuity of the activity of the taxpayers and to insure further payments to the budget, despite the present diminish of the budgetary incomes. It is a measure of short time loss, in favour increasing, in long time perspective, the budgetary incomes.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Naturally, fiscal policy should reflect the critical point of view of political power of the state concerning taxes and implicitly, the direction of action for the government, triggering options regarding the criteria for determining tax contributions and specific techniques of taxation as those related to spending for public, economic and social actions. Therefore, the scope of fiscal policy includes both obtaining fiscal resources available to public authorities and making public expenditure on account of such resources. [1]

Interventionist role of the state budget is, in fact, permanent and its development depends on various circumstances. It is constantly due to the nature of the budget, as act that authorizes the public revenues and expenditures each year and that inevitably has social and economic effects on both the payers of taxes and charges on beneficiaries of the budget. Contextual developments of the role of the state budget are more pronounced in phases of economic restructuring and in the time of modernization of public services. During these pressured times, the decision for revenues and annual expenditures is remarkable as a financially policy option of parliaments and governments of each country. The types and proportions of the authorized expenditure on the estimated revenue ground these options and the law approving the budget of each state finally expresses them. [2]

When the fiscal pressure exceeds certain limits, return on taxes may diminish, since taxpayers will manifest phenomena of resistance to taxation. In times of higher tax burden, taxpayers will get to perform operations that do not comply with tax, accounting or otherwise, entering the field of tax evasion. [3]

Fiscal policy is closely related to the allowance or budgetary policy, to be developed jointly by the competent public authorities. Fiscal connection with the social policy stems from the fact that some social objectives shall be fulfilled through fiscal measures, such as tax cuts, tax relieved, application of deductions from taxable material etc. [4]

In the present time, we may observe the governments' preoccupation to relief the tension on the social security and health budgets, the growth of the income not being a valid solution. [5] Therefore, the fiscal amnesty may be an option for supporting the private actors of the market, helping them to continue their activity and insuring, in long term, budgetary incomes. The law in force ensures, at least on declarative level, the concentration of financial capital on public services and supplier operation, with the respect of transparency. [6]

In the context of EU integration, we have to notice that the tax regulation prerogative is mainly reserved to Member State's competence, accordingly to the principle of subsidiarity. [7]

THE RATIONAE OF ADOPTING THE LAW ON FISCAL AMNESTY

Tax amnesty is not a new method to rebalance the incomes of the public budget; it has been used before for different type of fiscal liabilities.

Tabel 1 Examples of recent tax amnesty regulations

		year of tax amnesty law	subject
1	Australia	2007, 2009	repatriated funds
2	Belgium	2004	income tax for individuals
3	Canada	2002, 2007	tax related offence, unreported incomes
4	Germany	2004	tax evasion
5	Greece	2010	all debts could be paid only up to 55%
6	Italy	2001, 2003, 2009	mainly, repatriated assets
7	Portugal	2005, 2010	tax evasion
8	Russia	2007	tax crimes
9	South Africa	2003	tax evasion
10	Spain	2012	undeclared assets/in tax havens
11	United States	2009, 2012	federal tax amnesty program

Previous experiences in improving tax collection using tax amnesty determined Romanian fiscal authority to act in this way during 2015. Backed by four former delimitation criteria for independent and dependent activities, provided by Art. 7 (2) tax code (criteria which, moreover, are irrelevant in terms of taxation), tax authorities proceeded to the reclassification as dependent activities for independent professions organized as individuals. It is the case of those particular situations when independent professions are paid in subsistence allowances or they collect *per diem* incomes.

Usually, dependent activities are entitled to collect salary and, almost in every fiscal system, the income taxes paid for salary are obviously higher than those paid as authorized individuals. Yet the risks of business are different. In Romania, for instance, an independent individual does not receive annual leave or sick leave allowance unless he/she has paid contributions to public/private health system. These individuals have to pay different taxes and are obliged to contribute to the public system pensions. [8]

We have to state that the motivation for adopting tax amnesty regulation aroused from the fiscal authorities necessity to justify their conduct. Their logic has entirely a different nature: according to their subjective interpretation of the former fiscal code, the income tax is reinstated, without giving pension contribution period, because taxes are higher. Additionally, their behaviour is justified by the advertisements and statistics of how effective, fair and cooperative are the fiscal authorities, in collecting money and helping the state budget to grow. [9]

The question that legitimately appeared is whether the reinstatement given by the new regulatory requirements is correct, as the regulation was highly interpretable. Clearly, taxpayers against whom the order is addressed to reinstate their activities went to the court of law, demanding justice and the fiscal authorities loses many of these cases. In these circumstances, we wonder if, somehow, the real beneficiaries of this amnesty law are precisely tax authorities who should justify abusive and discretionary manner in which they acted in all the litigant situations. It is not difficult to distinguish who is responsible for aberrant circumstances created: the tax authority and not the taxpayer, who only used the regulation in their own favour.

After long debates and pros and cons, Law no. 209 was finally published in the Official Gazette on 20 July 2015. Although the law itself was named Law for cancellation of debts, public perception is that of the amnesty tax law.

THE CONTENT OF THE LAW ON FISCAL AMNESTY

The first estimated effects of the amnesty law should be that hordes of criminals would benefit from its effects, discouraging the honest taxpayers. This unfortunate effect is present if we consider the "generosity" of the legislative authority, present in the following situations when the regulation states that the payments are not due:

- For the main tax liabilities, as well as for related accessories, established by tax decision issued and communicated to the taxpayer as a result of the reconsideration/reappointment of an activity as dependent;
- For principal tax liabilities and/or related accessories, established by tax decision issued and communicated to the taxpayer as a result of receiving amounts of money during the delegation and posting by employers who have worked on territory of another country; The pursuit of an occupation in another member state of the EU is the general right of any European citizen. [10] The amnesty law does not affect in any way the content of the EU regulation in this respect.
- For differences in tax added value added on the income for intellectual property rights and related accessories, established by tax decision issued and communicated to the taxpayer as a result of overruns and/or failure to register as a VAT taxpayer. If the taxpayer has exercised his right to deduct, under the law, when completing the first tax return application, after the decision for VAT taxpayer was issued, the tax authority does not cancel differences in value added tax and related accessories.

For all three categories mentioned above, the cumulative tax obligations are concerned, due to fiscal periods before 1 July 2015 and not paid until the entry into force of this regulation, on July 23, 2015 respectively.

- For health insurance contributions and the accessories concerned, established by the tax decision issued and communicated to the taxpayer, payable on a monthly basis by the individuals for whom the income is less than the minimum, for the fiscal periods between 1 January 2012 and end of the month before the coming into force of the law and which are not paid until the entry into force of the law. These provisions are applicable to persons who have no income and for whom the monthly basis for calculating the contribution of health insurance is the legal minimum wage.

The new regulation states that the competent tax authority automatically performs the cancellation of all tax obligations listed above by issuing a decision to cancel the tax liability, which shall be communicated to the taxpayer.

PROCEDURES FOR APPLYING THE TAX AMNESTY

In the legal order of the EU, Romania included, the free movement of employers determined some particularities in tax collection. [11] Starting one month after the publication of the law, the Romanian government issued 4 procedures for application of the tax amnesty law. The documents refer to the cancellation of tax obligations for employees who received daily allowances abroad (considered by the fiscal authorities wages) and people who had earned below minimum wage and were required to pay contributions for health the minimum wage. [12]

We mention that in the same period was adopted the Law no. 225/2015 [13], exempting certain categories of persons to pay individual contributions to health and identify some cases where the provisions of these two laws overlap. In this case, the fiscal authorities have adapted the application procedure for effective implementation of both laws. For law enforcement purposes, they were taken a total of four procedures that can take into account the framing of a taxpayer in one or more situations stipulated by Law no. 209/2015. [14]

We present the 4 procedures, in the same order as they are included in the regulating document.

5.1 The main procedural issues

The tax audit structures or structures which are issuing administrative acts containing tax liabilities subject to cancellation, will perform a punctual identification of those who fall under the amnesty law. If there are other taxes that are not covered by amnesty in the reporting tax audit documents or tax decisions, the fiscal authority representatives will extract those obligations subject to cancellation. The persons responsible has to draw a list, which will be signed, duly approved and subsequently communicated to the precise department, which manages the particular taxpayer. There will be separate accounts for obligations to be cancelled that were previously communicated to the taxpayer, and accounts for those that have not been communicated yet.

5.2. The procedure to identify individuals for whom the health contribution is cancelled

This procedure comprises two parts: taxpayers who have earned income lower than the minimum gross salary (for who the obligation to pay health contribution is cancelled) and taxpayers who were granted by Law no. 225/2015 cancelling health contributions (mainly referring to children up to 18 years, pupils and students aged up to 26 years, pregnant women and young mothers).

Before cancelling the tax liability, the legal procedure requires verification if these people have achieved the following revenue categories: rental and leasing; investments; prizes and gambling incomes; fiduciary operation, according to Title III of the Tax Code; other sources as specified in art. 78 of the Tax Code. [15]

After completing these procedures, the fiscal authority representatives will prepare a final list that will be communicated to the compartment with verifying and controlling responsibilities. People

who have benefits from tax amnesty law will receive a decision for cancel tax liabilities previewed in the normative act.

5.3. Cancellation procedure of tax liabilities at the request of the taxpayer

If there are cases of individuals who might benefit from amnesty laws (Law no. 209/2015 on the amnesty and/or Law no. 225/2015 on the exemption from payment of health contributions) and for whom *ex officio* procedure was not carried out, they are entitled to request application of the exemption from payment of health contributions. In this regard, the core element of the procedure is getting by individuals from health fiscal authority a document attesting the insured status without paying contributions. Subsequently, the individual will address fiscal authority to obtain exemption from payment of health contributions. The final decision will be communicated, in printed format, to the individual in case.

5.4. The procedure for issuing the decision to cancel

The last part of the normative act we have analyzed includes the format for the decision to cancel of tax liabilities, respectively fiscal authority internal communication, archiving, use and storage of documents procedures, prepared for the actual implementation of the tax amnesty. We observe that in this fiscal amnesty law procedure that the main role is reserved to the fiscal authority, which is obliged to act *ex officio*. Still, in order to prevent any abuses for deliberately non-acting, the law includes this 4th procedure, providing the possibility to initiate the procedure for the beneficiary of the law.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Romanian tax amnesty regulation in 2015 was the solution for releasing the fiscal over-pressure on the small and medium businesses. The entrepreneurs that used their employees' work abroad, in the context of the EU free market, were mainly targeted. In the context of previous fiscal authority activity, there are some questions to be answered, related to the true beneficiary of the law. Considering the past misconduct, it seems that the fiscal authority itself is the main beneficiary of the amnesty and not the employers and the employees.

The amnesty laws generated the short-time effect of encouraging accurate taxation for the developing economic activity and the long-time effect of improving public budget income. The general idea that the tax amnesty is a minor present loss for insuring a major future tax collection was confirmed in the example of Romanian tax amnesty in 2015.

Some critics are to be mentioned. First, the regulation to implement the amnesty deserved some improvements (e.g. *ex officio* procedure had no sanction for non-implementation). Second, there are some side effects observed in the activity of disciplined taxpayers, who considered they were disadvantaged.

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A REASEARCH ON ENGLISH LEARNING FOR UNDERGRADUATES USING THE NINTENDO DS

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ABSTRACT

Abstract—The Nintendo DS handheld game console, which was developed by Nintendo and has been sold worldwide since 2004, is a game console which features/incorporates dual touch screens, voice-recognition features and innovative controls, and has been used not only as a video game device but also in the fields of education and as an education tool. In this study, research regarding Nintendo DS software for learning English was conducted with the objective of exploring the possibility of introducing and utilizing such software as an education tool in universities. The latest Nintendo 3DS LL console was leased out to university students, and one software cartridge was assigned to be used freely at home. An anonymous survey was conducted using questionnaire sheets. The result was that when not only the students who were proficient in English, but also the students who initially displayed little interest in learning English using the Nintendo DS, actually started using it, they began to realize that it was fun and helpful to work with.

Keywords—e-Learning, English education, Nintendo DS

INTRODUCTION

The Nintendo DS, which was developed by Nintendo and has been sold worldwide since 2004, exceeded 30 million units in the total number of consoles sold in Japan in 2010, and its successor device named the Nintendo 3DS also appeared [1]. The Nintendo DS is such an innovative game console as features/incorporates dual touch screens, voice-recognition features and so on, and as Nintendo had stated its intention for it to become a “machine that enriches the livelihood of its owner,” it has been used not only as a video game console but also in the fields of education and as an education tool [2][3].

In recent years, as globalization progresses, the need for English communication abilities has become more and more important. In addition to countless paper-based exercise books as educational materials, various educational software has been released as a form of e-learning.

In this study, research regarding Nintendo DS software for learning English was conducted with the objective to explore the possibility of introducing and utilizing such software as an education tool in universities.

RESEARCH

The following two types of research were conducted on university undergraduates with regard to the use of the Nintendo DS for English education.

1.1. Research 1

First, research was conducted on whether there were any differences in attitudes towards using the Nintendo DS for education between students that were proficient in English and those who were not, and also between the different year groups.

1.1.1. Research Method

An anonymous survey was conducted using questionnaire sheets.

[Subject] Engineering faculty of F University located in Fukui prefecture

Freshman: English proficiency level group: A-class 21 students, C-class 42 students

Sophomore: English proficiency level group: S-class 24 students, A-class 39 students, B-class 56 students

Proficiency class grading is composed of S/A/B/C for freshman, and S/A/B for sophomore.

[Survey period] Mid-April to Early May 2012

The questions asked included two questions concerning the Nintendo DS itself and four questions on education using the Nintendo DS.

1.1.2. Results and Observation

First, it was asked whether they were interested in the Nintendo DS game console itself. As a result, as shown in Table 1, the Freshman A-class students showed the highest interest, with 76% of its students responding positively, followed by Sophomore S-class students with 63%. The positive rates were higher with classes that had higher proficiency. In contrast, 27% of the students in the Sophomore B-class answered “No interest,” which, combined with “Not very interested,” came to 60%, which was the only class for which more than half expressed disinterest in the console.

Table 1 – Are you interested in the Nintendo DS?

Q. 1		Very interested	Somewhat interested	Not very interested	No interest	No answer	Total
Fresh	A-class	5 (24%)	11 (52%)	2 (10%)	3 (14%)		21 (100%)
	C-class	5 (12%)	18 (42%)	15 (36%)	4 (10%)		42 (100%)
Soph	S-class	3 (13%)	12 (50%)	8 (33%)	1 (4%)		24 (100%)
	A-class	2 (5%)	18 (46%)	14 (36%)	4 (10%)	1 (3%)	39 (100%)
	B-class	7 (13%)	13 (23%)	19 (33%)	15 (27%)	2 (4%)	56 (100%)

Then, when it was asked if they owned a Nintendo DS (regardless of the model), 57% of the students in the Freshman A-class and 67% of the students in the Freshman C-class said they owned one, showing that 10% more students in the C-class owned a Nintendo DS. For Sophomore students, 50% of S-class, 51% of A-class, and 52% of B-class said they owned one. All classes showed that roughly 50% of students owned one, and there was little difference between the different classes. As it can be seen in Table 1, when considering that 54% of the students in the Freshman C-class and 36% in the Sophomore B-class showed some form of interest towards the Nintendo DS, it can be deduced that there are students in these classes that own a Nintendo DS but have no interest in them.

Next, it was asked whether they had used educational Nintendo DS software before. The ratio of students that responded affirmatively were: 43% in the Freshman A-class, 40% in the C-class, 42% in the Sophomore S-class, 36% in the A-class and 30% in the B-class, which indicates that the ratio of students that had used such software increases along with higher proficiency levels in both year groups. Also, over 40% of the freshman students in all class groups had experience using such software, which showed that there were generally more students in this year group than among the sophomore students that had experience using such software.

When we limited the software to English educational software, the ratio of students that responded affirmatively was: 24% in the Freshman A-class, 12% in the C-class, 17% in the Sophomore S-class, 10% in the A-class and 18% in the B-class. Except for the Freshman A-class, the percentage of those that had experience using one was below 20%. Also, it can be noted that over half the students that had experience using educational software had experience using English educational software.

Next, it was asked whether they have an interest in using English educational Nintendo DS software. As shown in Table 2, 100% of the students in the Sophomore S-class said that they would like to use such software. 76% of the students in the Freshman A-class and 54% of Freshman C-class students responded positively, so 22% more students in the higher proficiency classes in the freshman year showed an interest in using such software. While 29% of the students in the C-class said they “Absolutely (did) not” want to use such software, the percentage of students showing an interest in using such software were comparatively higher in the freshman year students than the sophomore year students, where the percentages were 38% for the A-class and 39% for the B-class.

Table 2 – Would you like to use English educational software?

Q. 5	Very much	Maybe	Not very much	Absolutely not	Total
Fresh A-class	4 (19%)	12 (57%)	2 (10%)	3 (14%)	21 (100%)
C-class	5 (12%)	18 (42%)	7 (17%)	12 (29%)	42 (100%)
Soph S-class	3 (13%)	21 (87%)			24 (100%)
A-class	2 (5%)	13 (33%)	17 (44%)	7 (18%)	39 (100%)
B-class	3 (5%)	19 (34%)	20 (36%)	14 (25%)	56 (100%)

Finally, it was asked which software they would prefer between Nintendo DS-based software and PC-based software. As shown in Table 3, students that preferred PC-based software in the Freshman A-class and Nintendo DS-based software in the Freshman C-class were both 4% higher than those who answered otherwise. For sophomores, all classes answered higher for Nintendo DS-based software. Especially in the B-class, although 34% of the students answered “Neither,” there was a larger 30% difference between the respective preferences for the two software.

Table 3 – Which English educational software would you prefer: PC-based software or Nintendo DS-based software?

Q. 6		Nintendo DS	PC	Neither	No answer	Total
Fresh	A-class	9 (43%)	10 (47%)	2 (10%)		21 (100%)
	C-class	14 (33%)	12 (29%)	15 (36%)	1 (2%)	42 (100%)
Soph	S-class	14 (58%)	10 (42%)			24 (100%)
	A-class	16 (41%)	12 (31%)	11 (28%)		39 (100%)
	B-class	27 (48%)	10 (18%)	19 (34%)		56 (100%)

1.2. Research 2

Next, research was conducted on what the students thought after actually using English educational software, and the differences in thinking between students that were proficient in English and those who were not.

1.2.1. Research Method

After using the software, an anonymous survey was conducted using questionnaire sheets.

[Subject] Engineering faculty of F University located in Fukui prefecture

Freshman: English proficiency level group A-class 10 students, C-class 10 students

[Survey period] December 11, 2012 - February 6, 2013

During said period, the period between December 11 and January 7 was considered “Period 1,” the period between January 8 and 21 was considered “Period 2,” and the period between January 2 and February 6 was considered “Period 3.”

[Software]

1. *Eigo ga Nigatena Otonano DS Training Eigozuke* (Nintendo, January 2006)
2. *NOVA Usagi no Game de Ryugaku!?* DS (Konami Digital Entertainment, February 2007)
3. *Eigo ga Nigatena Otonano DS Training Motto Eigozuke* (Nintendo, March 2007)
4. *Eigo wo Taberu Fushigi na Ikimono* Marsh (Dimple, October 2007)
5. *Zombie Shiki Eigo Ryoku Sosei Jyutsu ENGLISH OF THE DEAD* (Sega, May 2008)
6. *Motto TOEIC® TEST DS Training* (IE Institute, June 2008)
7. *Gakken Eigo Zanmai DS* (Gakushu Kenkyusha November 2009)
8. *Steve Soleici no Business Eikaiwa Pera-pera DS Training* (IE Institute, March 2010)
9. *Eigo de Tabisuru Little Charo* (Nintendo, January 2011)
10. *TOEIC® Test Chosoku Training* (IE Institute, April 2012)

(in software release date order)

The latest Nintendo 3DS LL console (the latest model at the time of this research) was leased out to each subject, and assigned one software cartridge chosen arbitrarily from the 10 listed in the above to be used freely at home for each class and each period. At the end of each period, an anonymous survey was conducted using questionnaire sheets. The same questionnaire sheet was used for all three periods. The questions asked included one question concerning handheld game consoles, and one question on education using the Nintendo DS, and nine questions on the Nintendo DS software that was assigned.

Software No. 10 supported 3D, so it was notified that the subjects using this not to use it continually for an extended period of time.

1.2.2. Results and Observation

First, it was asked whether they had interest in handheld game consoles such as the Nintendo DS and PSP (PlayStation Portable). As can be seen in Table 4, the result was that 94% of students in the A-class and 83% in the C-class answered positively, which showed a high degree of interest for both

classes. Especially notable was the A-class, where 61% of the students answered “Very much.” On the other hand, 10% of the students in the C-class answered “None.”

Table 4 – Do you have interest in handheld game consoles?

Q. 1	Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Not very much	None	Total
A-class	18 (61%)	10 (33%)	1 (3%)	1 (3%)		30 (100%)
C-class	13 (43%)	12 (40%)	2 (7%)		3 (10%)	30 (100%)

Then, it was asked if they had interest in education (not limited to English) using the Nintendo DS. As is seen in Table 5, 77% of students in the A-class and 60% in the C-class expressed interest. Especially notable was the A-class, where 33% of the students answered “Very much.” However, both classes showed lower interest for the use of the Nintendo DS for education in comparison to their interest in handheld game consoles shown in Table 4.

Table 5 – Do you have interest in education using the Nintendo DS?

Q. 2	Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Not very much	None	Total
A-class	10 (33%)	13 (44%)	6 (20%)		1 (3%)	30 (100%)
C-class	4 (13%)	14 (47%)	9 (30%)		3 (10%)	30 (100%)

Next, asking whether they knew of the software that was assigned to them, there were seven cases where the subject replied that they already “Knew” about it. On how they came to know about the software, six cases said they came to “Know of it by themselves through the internet/magazines,” and there was one case where it became known “Through hearing from friends.”

Then, it was asked whether they had actual experience using the assigned software before, and only one subject in the A-class answered positively, and it was for “Software for personal use at places such as home.”

Next, it was asked whether they had interest in the assigned software before actually using it. As it can be seen in Table 6, that the result was that 64% of students in the A-class and 50% in the C-class expressed interest in it beforehand. Although those that answered “Very much” were 10% higher in the C-class than in the A-class, 27% in the C-class said they had “Not at all (no)” interest towards it.

Table 6 – Did you have interest in the assigned software beforehand?

Q. 5	Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Not very much	None	Total
A-class	2 (7%)	17 (57%)	4 (13%)	7 (23%)		30 (100%)
C-class	5 (17%)	10 (33%)	6 (20%)	1 (3%)	8 (27%)	30 (100%)

The results of whether they enjoyed using the software are given in Table 7. 60% of students in the A-class and 57% in the C-class said they “Enjoyed” using the software. Although the A-class has 3% more students saying they enjoyed it, the ratio of students that answered “Very” were 6% higher in the C-class. Note that in both classes, 13% of the students answered “Not very” enjoyable, but none answered “No (Not enjoyable).”

Table 7 – Did you enjoy using the assigned software?

Q. 6	Very much	Somewhat	Neither	Not very much	No	Total
A-class	5 (17%)	13 (43%)	8 (27%)	4 (13%)		30 (100%)
C-class	7 (23%)	10 (34%)	9 (30%)	4 (13%)		30 (100%)

For the question regarding whether they thought the assigned software was useful for improving their English abilities, as it can be seen in Table 8, that 83% of students in the A-class and 73% in the C-

class answered that it was “useful” and 17% more students in the C-class than in the A-class answered “Very useful.” Although 17% of the students in the A-class and 27% in the C-class answered “Neither,” none of the students for both classes answered “Not very” or “No (Not)” useful.

Table 8 – Do you think the assigned software was useful for improving your English?

Q. 7	Very	Somewhat	Neither	Not very	No	Total
A-class	4 (13%)	21 (70%)	5 (17%)			30 (100%)
C-class	9 (30%)	13 (43%)	8 (27%)			30 (100%)

However, when it was asked whether they would like to use the assigned software in the future, as it can be seen in Table 9, only 43% of the students in both classes responded positively, while 23% of students in A-class and 17% of C-class answered negatively.

Table 9 – Would you like to use the assigned software in the future?

Q. 8	Very much	Maybe	Neither	Not very much	Never	Total
A-class	6 (20%)	7 (23%)	10 (34%)	6 (20%)	1 (3%)	30 (100%)
C-class	7 (23%)	6 (20%)	12 (40%)	5 (17%)		30 (100%)

When it was asked “How would you like to use it?” to those that answered positively (multiple answers allowed), there were eight cases for the A-class and nine cases for the C-class where they answered “for personal use,” five cases for the A-class and three cases for the C-class where they answered “For use with friends,” two cases for the A-class and one case for the C-class where they answered “For use with family members” (all three cases being “With younger brother/sister”) and three cases for the C-class where they answered “For use as educational material with other people.”

On the other hand, when the reason was asked to those that answered negatively (multiple answers allowed), there was one case for the A-class and three cases for the C-class where they answered “Did not think it would help improve my English.” There was one case for both the A-class and the C-class where they answered “The controls were too awkward,” and one case in the A-class who answered “There was no game in it.” There were five cases for the A-class and one case for the C-class where they answered “Others.” These included answers such as “It was not very stimulating having to do voice training with a game,” “The mini-games seemed like a routine exercise,” “It took time to play,” “I couldn’t keep up with the game,” and “The atmosphere was wooden.” In the C-class, we noted answers such as “We were expecting a more basic kind of education, but that was not the case.”

II. CONCLUSION

In this research, it has become apparent that for English education using the Nintendo DS, although both students that are proficient in English as well as those who are not showed little interest in the beginning, when they started actually using it, they began to realize that it was fun and helpful to work with. We would like to introduce this in our lectures, and to conduct research on its effect.

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