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## **Segmentation by Experiential Familiarity and Travel Mode of the Chinese Outbound Market to Spain**

### **ABSTRACT**

Chinese travel markets are maturing with new travel trends arising as tourists become more experienced. This paper analyzes the possibilities of segmenting Chinese tourists' motivations and satisfaction in Western destinations by experiential familiarity and travel mode, namely Free Independent Travel and Group-tour Travel. Based on these variables, this study builds on a survey questionnaire of Mainland Chinese travelers to Spain. A quantitative analysis of motivations and satisfaction is performed. Comparison of means, one-way MANOVA and Principal Component Analysis are the main analytical techniques used to understand the a priori selected segments of tourists. The main results show significant differences among consumers: independent travelers are less satisfied with the Chinese language services, whereas group-tour travelers are, overall, less satisfied with the trip and the destination. The results also show that repeat visitors are motivated by different aspects of the destination, such as Spanish natural resources and beaches, which are less important for first-time visitors. Among the studied segments of consumers, the differences in motivation, satisfaction and sociodemographic profiles are discussed along with the practical implications of the research.

### **摘要**

随着中国出境游客旅游经验的日益成熟，中国出境旅游市场呈现新的趋势。本文试图通过对目的地的熟悉度和出游团队类型对中国赴西班牙的出境旅游者进行市场细分，并分析不同细分市场在出游动机和满意度方面的差异。研究表明，不同细分市场的游客呈现不同的人口统计学特征，其出游动机和满意度也不尽相同。具体来讲，自由行游客对汉语服务的满意度较低，然而跟团游的游客对旅行和目的地的整体满意度较低；重游者的更多是被目的地特色所吸引，如西班牙的自然资源和海滩，然而这些对于初游者而言并非很重要。作者在文章的最后探讨了本文的理论和实践意义。

**KEYWORDS**

Market segmentation; motivation and satisfaction; experiential familiarity; mode of travel; Chinese outbound tourism

关键词

市场细分；动机和满意度；熟悉度；出游模式；出境游

## **Introduction**

In recent years, the development of East Asian tourism has been an exceptional phenomenon, and the growth in this travel market is changing the tourism landscape worldwide (UNWTO, 2017). China is one of the largest potential markets to Europe (ETC, & UNWTO, 2013), with the affluence of Chinese travelers in Western destinations constituting a paradigm of current international tourism as destinations try to attract these new visitors and understand this market. Extensive literature on Chinese outbound tourism examines this source, yet—according to the literature review conducted by Jin and Wang (2016)—few studies cover the case of Chinese outbound tourism to Europe, which is an under-researched destination. This paper studies the case of Spain, where previous literature indicated that more research should be conducted to understand this new market (Andreu, Claver, & Quer, 2013; Lojo & Cànoves, 2015).

The motivation and satisfaction of new consumers are key factors in the tourism development of established destinations. Motivation has been considered the original trigger that sets off all the events that are involved in travel (Holden, 2006), and consumer satisfaction with the destination plays an important role in effectively managing tourism at the destination (Williams & Lew, 2015). Because of its central relevance, travel motivation and satisfaction have been recurrent themes in the tourism and hospitality literature (Johanson, 2008; S. Lee, Jeon, & Kim, 2011; Park, Lee, & Miller, 2015). In order to add value to the study of motivations and satisfaction as a strategic marketing tool, market segmentation offers techniques that can increase the understanding of a new tourism market (Dolnicar, 2004a). Despite the enormous body of research on tourism motivation and satisfaction regarding the Chinese market, research on marketing segments that consider a priori segmentation has not been conducted yet. The basis for successful marketing segmentation is to understand and satisfy the differences in consumer needs through different variables (Dolnicar & Kemp, 2009). An a priori segmentation leads to the identification of different groups of tourists according to prior knowledge, it has been used widely in tourism research (Dolnicar, 2004a, 2004b; Wedel & Kamakura, 2012). The basis of the first segmentation taken into account in this paper is the mode of travel: the importance of different modes of travel, such as Free Independent Travel or Group-tour Travel have been recognized as a determinant factor in Chinese tourism (X. Li, Meng, Uysal, & Mihalik, 2013; A.C.C. Lu & Chen, 2014). Experiential familiarity is selected as a second basis that affects

motivation and satisfaction. This decision is based on previous works (Cohen & Cohen, 2012; X. Li, Cheng, Kim, & Petrick, 2008; Oppermann, 1997; Tan & Wu, 2016) which have argued that familiarity remarkably affects travel experience and implies different marketing strategies.

Tse (2015) argued that previous research into Chinese tourism motivations tends to be linear and simple, and he states that new approaches should be developed. In addition, previous studies barely address the important dichotomy between either Group-tour Travel and Free Independent Travel or between first-time and repeat visitors in the same destination. To fill this gap, this study focuses on exploring the travel motivations and satisfaction of Mainland Chinese travelers to Spain adding the perspective of market segmentation. To understand the basic groups of tourists with similar needs, an a priori basis of segmentation has been selected by introducing variables for experiential familiarity and mode of travel (FIT or GTT). For this purpose, Mainland Chinese outbound tourists in Spain are the target group. The research question is: how does segmentation by experiential familiarity and mode of travel affect the motivation and satisfaction of Chinese tourism to Spain? If significant differences are found between these travel groups, the current study could help us better understand the Chinese outbound tourist experience for long-haul destinations. This will in turn have marketing implications for European tourism managers, specifically in terms of quality improvement for local tourism organizations in Spain.

## **Literature review**

### *Tourist motivations, satisfaction and a priori segmentation*

Understanding tourism motivations is a necessary element in tourism marketing with regard to the positioning of the destination, which is associated with the needs of the tourist, their expectations and the activities in which the visitor engages (Park et al., 2015). In this paper, the Push and Pull theory is used to study the motivations for traveling. This constitutes a two-dimensional approach to studying motivation, which has been commonly adopted in tourism studies (Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1981; Iso-Ahola, 1982; Kim, Lee, & Klenosky, 2003). Crompton (1979) proposed that travel is motivated by internal psychological forces that 'push' tourists and by external forces from the destination characteristics that 'pull' tourists to a specific destination. That is, the Push factors are the elements that drive people to engage in a trip, and the Pull factors are the elements and attributes of the destination that attract

the travelers. Previous researchers in Chinese tourism have identified push factors such as ‘seeing something different’, ‘increasing knowledge’, ‘rest and relaxation’, ‘experiencing a different culture’ and ‘shopping’ (Johanson, 2008). Pull factors that are investigated in tourism are linked to the attributes of the destination such as ‘visiting specific natural spaces’, ‘seeing the Wildlife’ or ‘local culture’ (Y. Zhang & Peng, 2014).

Satisfaction is a reaction resulting from the consumption of tourism experiences, and it is a constitutive part of marketing theory. It is crucial for influencing future purchase intentions, the perceived image of the destination and word-of-mouth communication (Truong & King, 2009). In Tourism literature, satisfaction with the travel is analyzed following a cognitive approach, evaluating how expectations are met and as an emotional reaction to consuming an experience (Prayag, Hosany, Muskat, & Del Chiappa, 2017). Satisfaction is a function perceived by the tourist that arises from the relationship between expectations and actual travel experience (Truong & King, 2009). Consumer satisfaction is high when the services and the tourism product perform according to or higher than expectations and when the consumer experience is perceived positively. With one exception, no research to date has studied Chinese tourists’ level of satisfaction with the attributes and services of a specific Western European destination—the exception being the case of the United Kingdom (G. Li, Song, Chen, & Wu, 2012).

Smith (1956) stated that segmentation is a strategic tool that allows viewing a heterogeneous market as a number of smaller homogeneous markets. Segmentation allows grouping together individuals with similar characteristics. In marketing studies, segmentation is a key element for adding value to the study of motivations and satisfaction of consumers (Dolnicar, 2008). The benefits that segmentation offers to the destination lie in the ability to understand specific types of tourists (Dolnicar, 2004a), and it further offers competitive advantage in the global market of international destinations. Marketing researchers generally segment a market *a priori* or *posteriori*. In both cases, segmentation variables are the basis for defining groups of consumers. The *a priori* approach first defines the segmentation variables and then applies profiling descriptors to analyze the consumers. This segmentation technique can also be used to externally validate different segments (Woodside & Martin, 2013). The *a posteriori* approach assumes that there does not exist enough prior segmentation information, and it therefore lets statistical techniques (such as clustering or grouping techniques) generate segments (Dolnicar, 2008).

The first issue before selecting the segmentation technique is identifying the segmentation variables from the nearly infinite number of base variables. In this paper, two objective variables have been selected from the general understanding of Chinese outbound tourism literature. This approach represents the simplest model of analysis and—if suited to the research objectives and there is enough prior information—it is preferable to more complex segmentation methods (Dolnicar, Lazarevski, & Yanamandram, 2013). First, according to the previous literature, mode of travel has been identified as an important antecedent to travel experience. Different groups of Chinese travelers such as group-tour travelers, independent travelers or backpackers have different motivations for engaging in a trip (J. Chang, Wang, Guo, Su, & Yen, 2007; Y. Chen, Schuckert, Song, & Chon, 2016; Luo, Huang, & Brown, 2015; Ong & du Cros, 2012). Second, familiarity and previous travel experience with the same destination have been shown not only to have a significant effect on satisfaction and loyalty levels (X. Li et al., 2008), but they also affect destination choice and motivation for a new travel experience (Lau & McKercher, 2004; G. Lee & Tussyadiah, 2012).

#### *Group-tour and independent travel*

When buying international tourism services and products, one of the first decisions faced by the consumer is the choice between Group-tour Travel and Free Independent Travel. Woodside and Ahn (2013) argued that contracting travel arrangements via organized group packages is more popular among tourists from nations with a more highly collectivist culture, while independent travel is more frequently preferred by highly individualist nations. Cultural distance, differences in languages, and safety concerns can also affect the choice between group-tour and independent travel (Xiang, 2013). In China, the all-inclusive group tours were the only permitted form of leisure travel until the late 1990s, and they are still popular for travel to long-haul destinations. According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2014), 39% of the Mainland outbound travelers still prefer to choose a group tour when traveling abroad, and 31% choose a partially organized tour arranged by travel agencies who book their air tickets and make hotel reservations. Recently, the demand for independent travel has been growing, and Chinese tourists may be granted tourism visas to travel independently if they can demonstrate that they have enough financial means to travel and will return to China after the trip (Inkson & Minnaert, 2012). Page (2009) defined a ‘package tour’ as an all-inclusive product that comprises aircraft

seats, accommodation at destination, return transfer from airport to accommodation, services of a tour operator representative and insurance coverage. In this paper, group-tour travelers (GTT) are those tourists who visit the destination through a 'package tour' (Page, 2009) and as part of a group led by a tour guide. Wang, Hsieh, and Huan (2000) identified eight services that are usually provided by East Asian group tours: pre-tour briefing, airplane tickets, hotel and restaurant arrangements, coach services for traveling within the destination, sightseeing of scenic-spots, trips to shopping centers and the assistance of a tour guide. According to Weaver and Lawton (2014), group tours allow travelers to remain within culturally familiar elements and avoid the discomfort of cultural differences. Chang et al. (2007) analyzed the trends in outbound package groups in China and Taiwan, and they concluded that the group-tour packages in many Asian economies are evolving from homogenized to more personalized products. In the case of outbound travel to the Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong, package tours result in low tourist satisfaction and have been demonstrated to affect tourists' behavioral intentions over time (Y. Chen et al., 2016). In contrast to GTT, independent tourists are those who arrange their own transportation and accommodation at the destination. These tourists can also purchase air tickets and accommodation through a travel agency or an internet-based agency (Arlt & Burns, 2013). In this paper and according to Tsaur, Yen, and Chen (2010), a free independent tourists (FIT) are those tourists who 'plan[s] itineraries and handle[s] everything [. . .] by themselves, as opposed [to] tourists that purchase packaged tours. Backpackers, international students and young tourists have also been identified as part of the independent travel market because they do not buy package products (King & Gardiner, 2015). Thus, accessibility to information is one of the most critical features of a destination that can influence the decisions of independent travelers. Internet, travel guide books, magazines and films are the main sources of information for Chinese independent tourists (Xiang, 2013).

### *Experiential familiarity*

Familiarity, defined as knowledge of a product (Seo, Kim, Oh, & Yun, 2013), is a potential analytical tool in tourism research (Prentice, 2004). Consumers who are familiar with a destination tend to have a more pleasurable tourism experience (Baloglu, 2001). Thus, it is necessary for tourist destinations to use a reliable and valid measure of familiarity in order to better understand the consumers. The operationalization of the

familiarity construct involves identifying different types of familiarity. The main typology of inter-related types of familiarity stated by Prentice (2004) included seven perspectives: informational, experiential, proximate, self-described, educational, self-assured and expected familiarity. Experiential familiarity refers to knowledge based on past experiences at the destination, and it has been found to be an important construct that affects tourist behavior (Seo et al., 2013) and positively influences intentions to revisit (Tan, 2016). The most common way to measure experiential familiarity is by the numbers of visits to a particular destination and by differentiating between repeat and new visitors (X. Li et al., 2008; Oppermann, 1997).

Repeat visitors are different from first-time visitors because they have past experiences about the destination that provide them with additional information, thus different marketing strategies are required for both groups (Lau & McKercher, 2004; Oppermann, 1997). Oppermann (1997) analyzed international repeat and first-time visitors to New Zealand and concluded that significant differences can be found in travel behavior depending on the experiential familiarity. According to this author, repeat visitors stay longer but visit fewer spots within the destination and have a more relaxed visit. On the other hand, first-time visitors tend to be more active by visiting more attractions and taking part in a significantly higher number of activities at the destination. Li et al. (2008) systematically compared the travel behavior of first-time and repeat visitors via a two-phase online survey for US domestic travelers, and their results show significant differences in travel planning, activities, and satisfaction with the trip. According to their study, first-time visitors tend to travel greater distances than repeaters while at the destination. Also, first-timers are active planners who begin seeking information much earlier.

### *Research gap*

To date, no previous research has analyzed the motivations and satisfaction of Chinese outbound tourists while considering a priori segmentation variables for mode of travel and experiential familiarity. In the Chinese outbound tourism literature, several researchers have studied travel motivations and their satisfaction after a trip to a specific destination. As such, the countries where previous motivation and satisfaction studies have been conducted are Hong Kong (Nguyen & Cheung, 2016; Tsang, Lee, & Liu, 2014), Macau (Kim, Wan, & Pan, 2015; Park et al., 2015; L. Wang, Fong, & Law, 2015), New Zealand (Mohsin,



2008), Singapore (Kau & Lim, 2005), Hawaii (Agrusa, Kim, & Wang, 2011; Johanson, 2008), the USA (Hua & Yoo, 2011; Lai, Li, & Harrill, 2013), Canada (Z. Lu, 2011), Italy (Corigliano, 2011), the UK (G. Li et al., 2012) and Australia (Mao & Zhang, 2014; Y. Zhang & Peng, 2014). However, an analysis of the published literature shows two main limitations. First, several authors address their studies only toward GTT (Agrusa et al., 2011; Johanson, 2008; Ward, 2014; Y. Zhang & Peng, 2014) or toward independent tourists (G. Chen, Bao, & Huang, 2013; Luo et al., 2015; Prayag, Disegna, Cohen, & Yan, 2015). Second, the mode of travel for the tourist sample remains unspecified in many motivation studies (Corigliano, 2011; Lai et al., 2013; G. Li et al., 2012; Z. Lu, 2011; Tsang et al., 2014) and also in a number of analyses regarding satisfaction with the destination and tourist experience (Kim et al., 2015; Park et al., 2015; L. Wang et al., 2015). In motivation and satisfaction studies, not specifying which kinds of respondents are surveyed obstructs the possibility of correctly extrapolating the results. Consequently, this paper expands on the previous literature and tries to overcome these two limitations by including segmentation variables.

## **Methodology**

### *The instrument*

Chan, Hsu, and Baum (2015) argued that an initial qualitative stage is useful for capturing technical and functional domains for further quantitative analysis. Thus, qualitative methodologies are used in exploratory studies to identify the items that can be used as motivation and satisfaction categories. In previous works, motivation items have been generated through semi-structured interviews or focus groups conducted on Chinese tourists (Fu, Cai, & Lehto, 2016; X. Li, Lai, Harrill, Kline, & Wang, 2011; Tsang et al., 2014). On the other hand, a quantitative approach is used in this paper because it is most adequate when motivational and satisfaction items are adapted from previous literature and are used, first, to test a novel context (such as a different destination) (Park et al., 2015; Y. Zhang & Peng, 2014) and, second, to compare new segments of consumers (Dolnicar, 2008).

Therefore, this study builds on previous motivational and satisfaction items (Kim, Guo, & Agrusa, 2005; S. Lee et al., 2011; Y. Zhang & Peng, 2014) and uses quantitative analysis, specifically by employing a questionnaire survey to achieve the research objective of understanding differences in motivation and satisfaction between different segments of

Chinese tourists. The employed survey was designed in English and translated to Chinese by an English–Chinese translator. Then, two back translations to English were realized by two Chinese PhD students at the Autonomous University of Barcelona (Spain) to ensure the accuracy of the questionnaire.

The survey included three sections. The first section collected information related to the demographic profile of respondents, the number of previous trips to Europe and Spain, and the current way of travel organization, differentiating between GTT and FIT. Data obtained from this part were linked to the information from the second and the third sections of the survey to segment tourists and compare the results between them. The second part of the survey was aimed to evaluate motivational items, divided between Push and Pull elements. These items were adapted from the list of attributes on overseas destinations from Kim et al. (2005) and the list of Chinese tourists' motivations to travel abroad from Y. Zhang and Peng (2014). In the third section, nine satisfaction items were also included, building on the items from S. Lee et al. (2011). Previous studies have indicated that tourism satisfaction (S. Lee et al., 2011) and experiential familiarity (Kozak, Bigné, & Andreu, 2005) affect revisit intention. In this paper, three questions covering 'overall satisfaction', 'revisit intention' and 'recommendation intention' are included in the third section of the questionnaire in order to help further understand differences between the selected segments of consumers.

For the second and third section, a 5-point Likert scale was used to measure the importance of each item, with 1 being not important at all and 5 being extremely important. However, no perfect method exists for measuring psychological traits and attitudes. The measurements of tourism motivations and satisfaction in this study are used to identify differences in responses among distinct types of tourists. After adapting the items to this objective, the validity and reliability of the first version of the questionnaire were evaluated by means of a pilot test on 30 Chinese tourists who were approached at Barcelona Airport in March 2016. The results of the pilot study indicated agreement on the clarity of the questions being asked, and the feedback received was used to make minor modifications to better address the questions to Chinese tourists.

### *Sampling*

The target population is Mainland Chinese travelers who have traveled to Spain for leisure in the last three years, from 2014 to 2016. Travelers going to Spain for business or study were not considered, neither was

anyone traveling before 2014. Respondents were reached through an online survey distributed via WeChat. WeChat is the most used social media and instant messaging application in China, with more than 730 million Chinese users in 2016 and accounting for 80% of the Mainland Chinese online population (China Daily, 2017). The high number of active users indicates that this is an efficient channel for reaching the targeted population. Snowball sampling was used to obtain a representation of individuals from various backgrounds, with the target being first-time visitors, more experienced travelers, young tourists, FIT and GTT.

Initially, 45 Chinese outbound travelers who have traveled to Spain in the last two years were identified via the researchers' personal connections, and snowball sampling was used to expand the sample: respondents were asked to share the online survey with their acquaintances. This method has the advantages of avoiding experimenter selection bias and providing ease in collecting experimental data (Tung & Ritchie, 2011). Snowball sampling is a technique that has been widely used in Chinese tourism studies because of the difficulty in conducting a survey among different segments of Chinese tourists and because it is possible to avoid extracting the sample entirely from the authors' personal social contacts (J. Lu, Hung, Wang, Schuett, & Hu, 2016; Song & Hsu, 2013). Distribution of the questionnaires began on 29 March 2016 and the survey was closed on 29 April 2016, with 600 responses recorded and 437 of them completed. To overcome reliability weaknesses associated with online surveys, the following strategic steps were taken: sample screening, IP address verification, and removal of invalid responses (T.-Z. Chang & Vowles, 2013). Screening questions were constructed to sort out unwanted respondents who did not travel to Spain for leisure from mainland China. IP addresses were tracked back using Qualtrics online survey software. Respondents from repetitive or similar IP addresses were removed. All the data were first screened individually to remove questionable responses, excessive missing values, and removal of inconsistent responses by selected pairs of questions. After following these steps, 360 questionnaires were considered acceptable and usable.

### *Data analysis*

A descriptive analysis was performed first to obtain sociodemographic profiles of the respondents. Following previous literature, principal component analysis (PCA) was used to identify underlying dimensions

in Push and Pull motivations (Y. Zhang & Peng, 2014). PCA is the most common form of factor analysis used in tourism studies, particularly as an exploratory tool for uncovering the underlying dimensions within a set of items (Hosany & Gilbert, 2010). Varimax rotation is used to maximize the difference between derived components and to achieve simplicity (Bronner & de Hoog, 2011; Turner & Vu, 2012). Subsequently, a series of one-way Multivariate ANOVA (MANOVA) were performed to analyze the differences in motivations and satisfaction. Sociodemographic characteristics, mode of travel, and previous trips to the destination were used as categorical independent variables. One-way MANOVA examined whether the motivation and satisfaction items demonstrate any differences between the segmentation and sociodemographic variables (Park et al., 2015; Woodside & Martin, 2013). Significant differences were found based on the travel mode and previous travel experience. Finally, a series of one-way ANOVA was used to identify the differences and their significance in each individual item (Lu & Chen, 2014; Zhang & Lam, 1999; Y. Zhang & Peng, 2014). The results were analyzed using the software SPSS and they are displayed in the Results section by means of tables and figures to facilitate comparing and characterizing segments.

## **Findings**

### *Demographic profile and tourism experience of the respondents*

Table 1 summarizes the respondents' demographic profile, previous travel experience and mode of organizing their travel. Among 360 participants, the percentage of females (59%) was to some extent more than that of males. More than 70% of those sampled were below 40 years old, which indicates the prominence of young travelers. Their occupations were diverse. Office workers accounted for more than half of the respondents and students were one fifth of them. A dominant proportion had a bachelor's degree or above (95.6%), and 45.8% had postgraduate studies. It is interesting to note that tourists traveling to Spain are highly diverse in terms of income, age, relationship status and place of residence. In our sample, 76.9% of the tourists traveled independently. Most of the surveyed tourists were on their first trip to Spain (67.8%), even though almost half of the sample had already traveled to Europe three or more times. A separate descriptive analysis was performed by first considering

the responses of FIT and GTT. Figure 1 displays the comparison of the means in demographic and previous travel experience items between these two segments. In our sample, the average age of FIT is 24.5 years while that of GTT is 42 years. The level of education and income is similar for both groups, but FIT have a slightly higher level of education and monthly salary. Finally, FIT are more experienced than GTT, have traveled two or more times in Europe and have also traveled to Spain more.

### *Underlying motivation factors*

In this study, two PCA with Varimax rotation were performed to generate new push and pull factors. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients were applied to test the consistency of the new factors. The coefficients reported in Table 2 range from 0.63 to 0.79. Only one pull factor is lower than the agreed lower limit of 0.7, and that is 'ideal climate, beaches and nature' with a coefficient of 0.63—which, despite being lower, can still be considered acceptable (Y. Zhang & Peng, 2014). Based on the KMO measure of sample adequacy (0.80) and the significance of the Bartlett test ( $p < 0.000$ ), the first procedure generated a two-factor model of Push items when Eigenvalues were set at greater than 1. Individual items have a high loading ( $> 0.55$ ) and the two factors explained 60.0% of the variance. As shown in Table 2, the first factor was labeled 'novelty and relaxation' (Eigenvalue = 3.40; variance = 42.50%) and the second factor 'shopping and socializing' (Eigenvalue = 1.40; variance = 17.45%). The PCA performed on the Pull items was also based on the KMO measure of sample adequacy (0.84) and the results of the Bartlett test ( $p < 0.000$ ). Items with low factor loadings ( $< 0.55$ ) were candidates for deletion and two of them were discarded from the rotated component matrix ('Spanish shopping facilities' and 'Spain is a peaceful and safe destination'). The remaining individual items have high factor loading ( $> 0.63$ ) and the two generated factors explained 53.92% of the variance. The first and second Pull factors were labeled, respectively, 'Ideal climate, beaches and nature' (Eigenvalue = 3.31; variance = 41.40%) and 'Spanish heritage and culture' (Eigenvalue 1.00; variance = 12.53%). The results indicate that the motivation elements can be reduced to four main elements (from more to less importance among the Mainland Chinese tourists traveling to Spain): novelty and relaxation (mean =

4.45); culture elements (4.04); ideal climate, beaches and nature (4.02); and shopping and socializing (3.32). Two principal component analyses were performed. The first procedure generated two factors for Push items and the second generated two factors for Pull items.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics and travel experience of the respondents.

Demographics ( <i>n</i> = 360)							
Item		Number	Percentage (%)	Item		Number	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	213	59.2	Employment	Civil servant	14	3.9
	Male	147	40.8		Self employed	30	8.3
Age	18–29	208	57.8	Office worker	Office worker	195	54.2
	30–39	70	19.4		Student	80	22.2
	40–49	30	8.3		Housewife	2	0.6
	50–59	31	8.6		Retired	35	9.7
	60 or older	21	5.8		Unemployed	4	1.1
	Undisclosed	1	0.3		Undisclosed	47	13.1
Place of origin	Beijing	33	9.2	Monthly income (Yuan)	No income	50	13.9
	Shanghai	88	24.4		< 3,000	17	4.7
	Guangdong	13	3.6		3,000 – 6,000	78	21.7
	Other	222	63.5		6,000 – 9,000	63	17.5
	Undisclosed	1	0.3		> 9,000	105	29.2
Relationship status	Married	145	40.3	Trips to Europe	First	113	31.4
	Widowed	2	0.6		Second	73	20.3
	Divorced	4	1.1		Third or more	171	47.5
	Partnership	59	16.4		Undisclosed	3	0.8
	Single	135	37.5		Undisclosed	3	0.8
	Undisclosed	15	4.2		First	244	67.8
Education	High school	11	3.1	Trips to Spain	Second	41	11.4
	Professional	24	6.7		Third or more	69	19.2
	Graduate	147	40.8		Undisclosed	6	1.7
	Postgraduate	165	45.8		Independent	277	76.9
	Undisclosed	13	3.6		Tour group	83	23.1

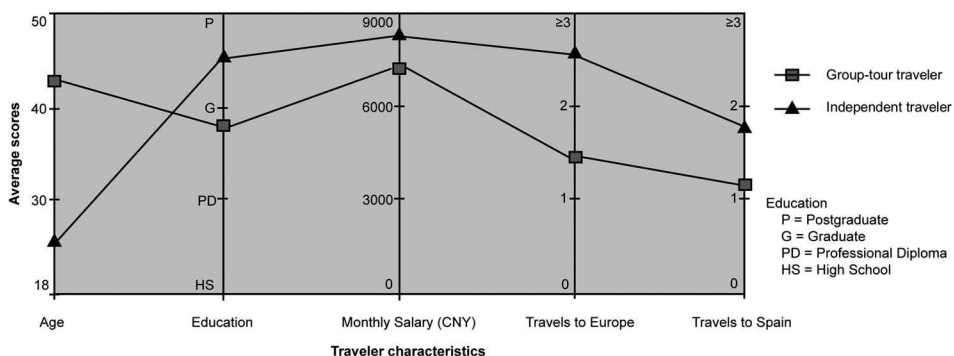


Figure 1. Comparison of demographics between independent and group-tour travelers.

Table 2. Principal component analysis: factor loadings and statistics.

	Initial variables	Push factors (factor loadings)		Pull factors (factor loadings)	
		Novelty and relaxation	Shopping and socializing	Ideal climate, beaches and nature	Heritage and culture
<b>Expectations</b>	Visiting new places and sceneries	0.83			
	Resting and relaxing	0.74			
	Increasing my knowledge and experiences	0.74			
	Experiencing Western culture	0.75			
	Socializing		0.76		
	Shopping		0.68		
	Visiting friends or relatives		0.58		
	Prestige and status		0.81		
<b>Attributes</b>	Spanish architecture and monumental heritage				0.75
	Spanish culture and lifestyle				0.71
	Suitable for traveling with family and friends				0.63
	Beautiful beaches and sun			0.81	
	Natural and green spaces			0.75	
	Ideal climate and clean environment			0.66	
<b>Statistics</b>	Mean factor score (standard deviation)	4.45 (0.54)	3.32 (0.77)	4.02 (0.62)	4.04 (0.62)
	Eigenvalues	3.40	1.40	3.31	1.00
	% of variance explained	42.50	17.45	41.40	12.53
	Reliability (Cronbach's alpha)	0.79	0.71	0.63	0.70
	Measure of sampling adequacy (KMO)	0.80		0.84	

#### *Comparison of motivational items among different segments*

A series of one-way MANOVA were performed to analyze the differences between different sociodemographic groups and travel characteristics. Table 3 indicates that significant differences were found based on both travel mode and previous travel experience of the respondents. A new series of one-way MANOVA indicates that relevant differences appear while comparing the new factors obtained through the PCA analysis of the same segments.

After the series of one-way MANOVA, the differences in the means of individual motivational items and factors were obtained using the one-factor ANOVA procedure for each factor (travel mode and previous travel experience). Table 4 shows that FIT have a perception of higher motivations for visiting the destination, as several items are significantly higher for the FIT. The results suggest that, because traveling independently implies greater personal involvement, tourists need to know more about the destination's attributes and to feel more motivated to travel. In addition, group travelers reported they were not motivated to travel to Spain to visit friends or relatives (mean = 2.38), but FIT highlight this item with much higher scores (mean = 3.28). For both groups, the least important motivational factor is 'shopping and socializing' (F2), which has negative values for GTT (mean = 2.93) and neutral to important values for FIT (mean = 3.42). For both groups, the most important factor is 'novelty and relaxation' (F1), followed by 'heritage and culture' (F4) and 'ideal climate beaches and nature' (F3). The results also indicate that motivation scores depend on previous travel experience. Repeat visitors are motivated by visiting friends and relatives, but they also appreciate various other attributes of the destination, such as the ideal climate and Spanish shopping facilities.

Figure 2 shows that all the tourism segments similarly most appreciate the novelty and relaxation motivational factor on their long-haul trip. In the same way, all the travel segments are least motivated by the 'shopping and socializing factor'. The results indicate that Spain is not viewed as a destination for shopping and socializing among first-time travelers and GTT, whose scores are near indifference, while the motivation score in these areas increases for more experienced travelers, such as second-time and third-or-more-time visitors. Overall, more experienced travelers show the highest levels of motivation and appreciation of Spanish attributes than less experienced travelers.



Table 3. Multivariate significance test results.

Wilks' lambda effect	Value	<i>F</i>	Hypothesis d.f.	Error d.f.	Significance	Partial eta squared
<i>MANOVA for all 16 motivational items</i>						
Travel mode	0.770	2.7	32	620	0.000	0.122
Times in Spain	0.803	1.468	48	919	0.023	0.071
<i>MANOVA for 4 motivation factors obtained through the PCA</i>						
Travel mode	0.915	4.006	16	706	0.000	0.043
Times in Spain	0.916	2.619	12	932	0.002	0.029

Table 4. Effects of previous travel experience and travel mode on motivations.

Motivational items		Travel mode		Times in Spain		
		Independent	Group	1	2	>2
Expectations	Visiting new places and sceneries	4.57	4.55	4.54	4.61	4.63
	Resting and relaxing	4.59	4.27**	4.44	4.66	4.68*
	Increasing my knowledge and experience	4.51	4.07**	4.37	4.34	4.59
	Experiencing Western culture	4.34	4.27	4.31	4.22	4.46
	Socializing	3.71	3.24**	3.49	3.71	3.90*
	Shopping	3.50	3.38	3.45	3.41	3.60
	Prestige and status	3.23	2.75**	3.06	3.20	3.25
	Visiting friends or relatives	3.28	2.38**	2.86	3.41	3.54**
Attributes	Spanish architecture and material heritage	4.26	4.27	4.27	4.17	4.32
	Beautiful beaches and sun	4.16	3.98	4.05	4.12	4.36*
	Ideal climate and clean environment	4.14	3.90*	3.96	4.37	4.34**
	Spanish culture and lifestyle	4.01	3.82	3.87	3.90	4.35**
	Natural and green spaces	3.96	3.82	3.87	3.95	4.09
	Suitable for traveling with family and friends	3.91	3.42**	3.67	3.93	4.23**
	Peaceful and safe place	3.52	3.21	3.34	3.49	3.80**
	Shopping facilities	3.43	3.22	3.26	3.46	3.70**
F1	Push. Novelty and relaxation	4.48	4.29*	4.41	4.46	4.53
F2	Push. Shopping and socializing	3.42	2.93**	3.22	3.43	3.57**
F3	Pull. Ideal climate, beaches and nature	4.06	3.88	3.94	4.00	4.30**
F4	Pull. Heritage and culture	4.08	3.90*	3.95	4.15	4.27**

\* = 0.01 <  $p$  ≤ 0.05; \*\* =  $p$  ≤ 0.01.

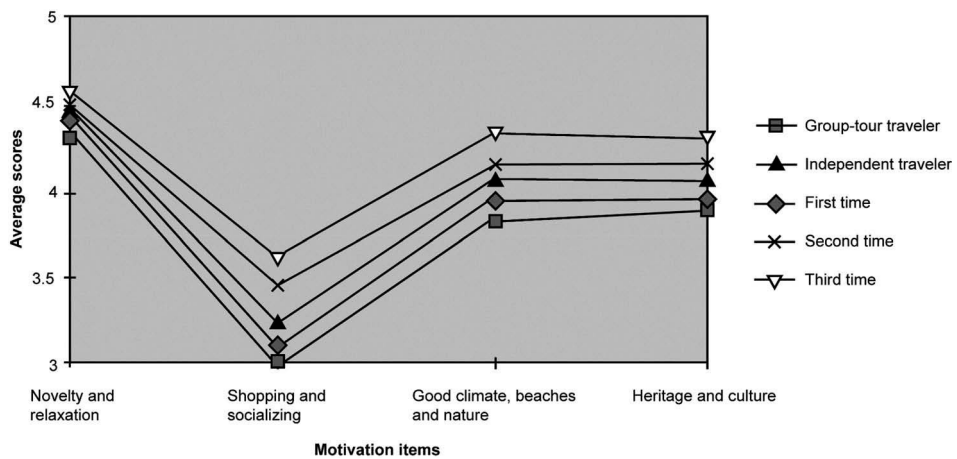


Figure 2. Comparison of motivation factors between different travel segments.

### *Perceived quality of the destination and satisfaction with the travel experience*

Table 5 shows the results of a series of one-way MANOVA performed to compare the significance of the differences between different travel modes and different previous travel experience. According to this procedure, significant differences were found based on travel mode, but not based on the number of times in Spain.

Table 6 shows the results of the one-factor ANOVA test that is used to examine whether there are differences between tourism segments on the individual satisfaction items. For all groups, the Chinese tourists are more satisfied with the ‘experiences of beautiful scenery’ and the ‘historical and cultural legacy of the destination’, with mean values of between 4 (satisfied) and 5 (extremely satisfied). The lower mean scores of the destination are related to the quality of Spanish tourism services in the Chinese language, followed by shopping services, information about the destination and accommodation services, with mean values of between 3 (neutral) and 4 (satisfied) for all groups. FIT are similar to repeat visitors in that they are more satisfied with the trip overall, more prone to visit Spain again and have higher intentions of recommending the trip, in particular when compared to GTT and first-time visitors.

Figure 3 shows that, overall, FIT report higher satisfaction with the destination than GTT; and repeat visitors are more satisfied with the destination than first-time visitors. Only one item is an exception to this

trend: the satisfaction with Chinese language information is lower among FIT when compared to GTT. FIT are more relaxed at the destination, value the shopping services more and are more prone to visit the destination again; but they are especially dissatisfied with the services in the Chinese language. GTT report lower scores, want less to visit the destination again, and feel the trip was less relaxed.

Table 5. MANOVA tests: significance results for satisfaction items by segments.

Wilks' lambda effect	Value	F	Hypothesis d.f.	Error d.f.	Significance	Partial eta squared
Travel mode	0.716	4.297	24	566	0.000	0.154
Times in Spain	0.891	0.927	36	833.93	0.594	0.113

Table 6. Univariate ANOVA tests: comparison of satisfaction in mean scores.

Items	Travel method		Times in Spain		
	Independent	Group	1	2	>2
<i>Satisfaction items</i>					
Beautiful scenery	4.53	4.33*	4.47	4.41	4.58
Historical and cultural legacy	4.40	4.42	4.38	4.41	4.49
The trip was relaxed	4.25	3.67**	4.06	4.15	4.26
The trip was comfortable	4.07	3.64**	3.91	3.95	4.14
The trip had a good price	4.06	3.72**	3.94	3.85	4.15
Accommodation services	3.96	3.70*	3.87	3.78	4.06
Accessible tourism information	3.89	3.67*	3.77	3.97	3.99
Shopping services	3.75	3.54	3.62	3.71	3.94*
Services in Chinese language	3.32	3.54**	3.36	3.45	3.29
<i>Loyalty items</i>					
I am overall satisfied	4.25	3.88**	4.12	4.23	4.28
I want to visit Spain again	4.48	4.03**	4.28	4.46	4.63**
I will recommend the trip	4.43	4.00**	4.28	4.39	4.50

\* =  $0.01 < p \leq 0.05$ ; \*\* =  $p \leq 0.01$ .

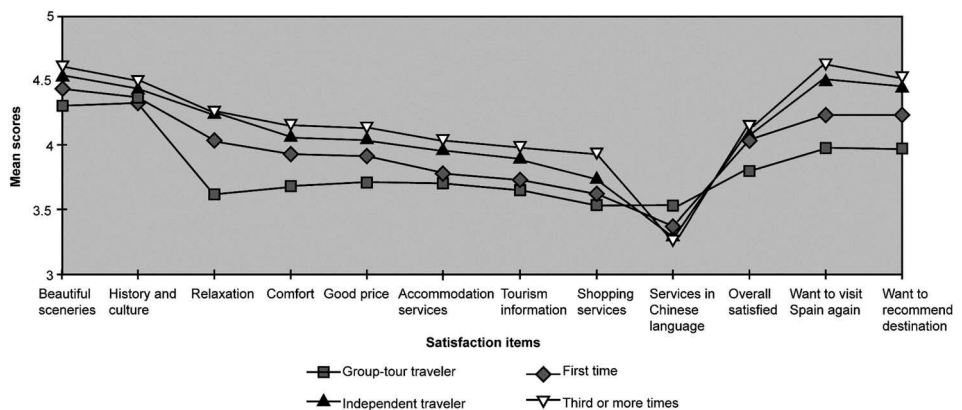


Figure 3. Comparison of satisfaction by travel method.

## Discussion and conclusions

This study set out to contribute to the literature by applying a priori segmentation variables to the study of Chinese outbound tourism motivations to Spain and satisfaction with the travel experience. Experiential familiarity and mode of travel were selected as the segmentation variables. As mentioned in the literature review, the current findings add to the growing literature on motivation and satisfaction that was lacking in terms of differentiating tourist segments. Thus, this research extends our knowledge of the different basic segments of tourists, focusing on the differences between GTT, FIT, first-time visitors and repeat visitors. The study has raised the importance of differentiating between typologies of Chinese outbound tourists and has found significant differences between segments. Hence, failing to segment travelers may lead to fragmented or non-generalizable findings. On a theoretical level, this study confirms that experiential familiarity and mode of travel are valid segmentation tools.

The findings of this study show significant differences in the independent variables between the analyzed tourist groups. Previous studies found that repeat visitors tend to give higher motivational scores to visiting the destination and higher satisfaction scores after the trip (X. Li et al., 2008). However, segmentation by independent travel produces a similar result: FIT are more motivated to visit the destination and more satisfied with the trip. The results also show that FIT and GTT have different previous travel experience and demographic profiles. FIT have more social

motivations and, similar to repeat visitors, are motivated by a wider range of destination attributes. GTT are essentially motivated by visiting new places, scenic landscapes and famous sightseeing spots. FIT are more satisfied with the destination and the trip, but are more exigent about tourism information in the Chinese language and accessibility of information, which are the worst valued elements of Spain as a destination. On the other hand, GTT are less satisfied overall with the destination, and they especially give the worst ranking to the trip's relaxation factor. Destination marketers can extract practical guidance from the findings of the study by orienting their marketing efforts toward different segments and acknowledging their preferences.

This study found that, for the outbound travel market in Spain, repeat visitors are mostly FIT, but first-time visitors can be divided into FIT and GTT. FIT are significantly younger ( $p < 0.01$ ) and tend to have more travel experience on long-haul travel. Correspondingly, a relationship exists between experiential familiarity and the choice of travel mode. It has been stated that the overall tendency in Chinese outbound tourism is the sharp reduction in the number of group package travelers and the increase in FIT (King & Gardiner, 2015). For instance, Singapore, which is culturally and geographically closer to China, receives roughly 90% of Chinese tourists who travel independently (Singapore Tourism Board, 2017). The results of this study suggest that—because of the greater cultural, idiomatic and geographical distance to the destination and due to the lack of previous travel experience—there is an important segment of Chinese tourists that still prefer to travel with a group-tour package.

The findings of the study further show differences in motivation and satisfaction between FIT and GTT. In addition to visiting new places and sightseeing, FIT are more motivated by their inner desire for increasing their knowledge and experiences, socializing, acquiring prestige and status, and visiting friends and relatives. Therefore, FIT give more importance to the fact that the destination is suitable for traveling comfortably with family and friends or alone. These results show that GTT do not give as much importance to developing new knowledge, acquiring new experiences, and socializing factors. A possible explanation for these aspects is that the GTT remains inside a 'group bubble' that protects him or her from external inconveniences, unexpected issues and cultural differences at the destination (Weaver & Lawton, 2014). The results suggest that group travelers and first-time visitors are similar in their main motivations: They are more motivated by the act of visiting new places per se, and they are eager to visit

characteristic scenic landscapes and complete a long list of must-do activities at the destination.

Similar to previous studies, this study's results show that repeat visitors are more motivated by visiting friends and relatives (X. Li et al., 2008; Oppermann, 1997). Furthermore, the findings of this paper show that repeat visitors are more interested in a wider range of secondary attributes of the destination: repeat visitors value more than first-time visitors the ideal climate, beautiful beaches, local culture and lifestyle, and shopping facilities. With these results, it is possible to indicate that the destination is superficially known to first-time visitors, who have a lower number of motivational factors for traveling. Since repeat visitors are able to more greatly appreciate the wide possibilities of the destination and its different attributes, they report a higher range of motivations.

#### *Why Europe is different*

In general, Chinese tourists' Push motivation for traveling abroad is focused on their inner needs. Ma (2009, p. 153) found that 'relaxation, looking for new things, appreciating cultural and historical sites and events as well as looking for fun are the major reasons for Chinese outbound tourists. Consistent with previous research, this study has confirmed that, for Chinese outbound tourists, the desires to discover new places and relax are often considered the main Push motivations. However, it is important to understand how the choice of different destinations implies the existence of different underlying Pull motivations (Kozak, 2002).

Among the motivational items that are considered more important for Chinese outbound tourists, traveling to more culturally similar destinations such as Macau and Hong Kong, are visiting friends and relatives (H. Zhang & Lam, 1999) and, in the case of Macau, also fun, gambling, and entertainment (Park et al., 2015). In this study, those items are not depicted as the most important motivational items for Chinese tourists to Europe. In Spain, Chinese tourists are being targeted because they are considered high-spending tourists (Ying, 2016) and because of their shopping motivations. However, the results of this study suggest that shopping is not their first motivational item when choosing the destination. For short-haul travel, such as Chinese tourists traveling to Singapore, the motivations are 'escape/relax, adventure/excitement and exploration' (Kau & Lim, 2005); but, according to this study, long-haul travel involves greater motivation to discover new things, new destinations and different

cultures. As stated by F. Li and Ryan (2015), the trip to a culturally distant destination is driven by a desire to know a ‘mysterious or different’ place. In the analysis of Pull motivational items for long-haul Western destinations, other elements appear as top reasons for travel. Natural attractions, such as Niagara Falls in the US and Canada or the Great Barrier Reef and tropical rainforest in Australia, are found to be top motivations for traveling to those countries (Hua & Yoo, 2011; Z. Lu, 2011; Y. Zhang & Peng, 2014). In addition, security at the destination and the reputation for safety also affect the choice of Western destinations. In 2016 there were 20% fewer Chinese tourists to Paris and 41.2% fewer tourists from Japan due to the terror fears coming from previous terrorist attacks in France (The Local, 2017). In addition to natural resources and safety, the results of this study show that what makes Europe different is its history and heritage. European destinations, such as Spain, are regarded as rich in cultural and material heritage wealth, and this is the top Pull motivation for first-time visitors. In Spain, for second- and third-time visitors, first place is occupied by the ideal climate, beaches and sunny weather, followed by material heritage and Spanish culture and lifestyle. Despite the differences based on experiential familiarity, the results are consistent with the attributes of Europe that are more valued by the Chinese tourists: the cultural difference and the rich heritage (Andreu, Claver, & Quer, 2014).

#### *Practical and managerial implications*

A number of practical implications arise from this research. The standard knowledge regarding Chinese tourism in Spain considers these travelers to be shopping tourists because of their high expenditure pattern (Lojo, 2016; Ying, 2016). However, the results of this study show that shopping is not the main motivation for visiting Spain: even though the tourist really appreciates the shopping opportunities, they are ranked as low important motivational items. This study shows that, for first-time visitors (and for both the GTT and FIT groups), the most important Pull motivational elements are Spanish architecture and heritage as well as the culture and lifestyle of a different and new destination.

In addition, this study has found that different attributes of the destination are valued by Chinese tourists who are more familiar with the destination. For instance, Spain’s Official Tourism Agency does not consider that the Chinese tourist may be interested in the beaches and natural resources of the country (Turespaña, 2016); however, this study’s findings show that repeat visitors consider the ideal climate, the beaches and sun to be the

most important motivational Pull items for visiting Spain. From a marketing perspective, these study findings can help destination managers and marketers better direct the tourism product to different kinds of tourists and identify segments. In response, Spanish tourism managers should take action to better promote the different attributes of the destination to different segments. In order to motivate additional travel in the future, it is also important that the first-time visitor has enough information available while at the destination to be able to realize the wide range of attractions that the country has to offer. Following from the results, it is to expect that the new, young and independent Chinese traveler will be more interested in experiences rather than shopping in Europe. Different artistic, heritage and natural resources should be promoted in the first place along with elements from Spanish culture and lifestyle, such as sports and gastronomy.

Regarding satisfaction with the destination and the revisit intentions of travelers, this study is consistent with the results of Y. Chen et al. (2016), which established that Chinese GTT report lower satisfaction on short-haul trips. In this study, the biggest difference appears in the trip's contribution to relaxation, the intention to revisit the destination again and positive word-of-mouth. GTT enjoy the destination less and are also less relaxed and satisfied. According to previous studies, GTT visiting Spain prefer multi-destination itineraries, which incurs a tight schedule and visiting more than one city on some journeys, which can lead to exhaustion (Lojo, 2016). In this study, GTT report higher satisfaction than FIT with the Chinese language services. This result further supports the idea that GTT remain inside a comfort bubble and do not face language issues at the destination. In contrast, FIT and repeat visitors indicate the lowest satisfaction item with the availability of services in the Chinese language. For example, as of June 2017, the official tourism website of the city of Barcelona does not offer information in Chinese, Japanese or Russian. The results show that if European destinations want to be more competitive, they must dedicate still more effort to facilitating independent travel by providing tourism information in the Chinese language along with Chinese-speaking staff while also increasing the accessibility of information.

#### *Limitations and future research*

Although this study provides important insights into the segmentation between experiential familiarity and travel mode for motivations and satisfaction in Chinese outbound long-haul travel, several limitations may



interfere in the ability to generalize the results to a wider population. First, even though snowball sampling has been recognized as a valuable technique in exploratory and descriptive studies (Voicu & Babonea, 2007), it is not exempt from limitations. This technique may produce selection bias, depending on the first elements of the referral chain, which is the main constraint in non-probabilistic samples. Secondly, another limitation is the division of travel modes between only two variables: GTT and FIT. Because intermediate travel modes exist—such as partially independent travel organized by travel agencies, or group tour without a group guide—further comparative studies will be valuable for understanding this unique and large outbound market. This study also highlights the importance of researching group-tour travel arrangements to improve the performance of the organized trip and to increase traveler satisfaction. Collaboration between travel agencies and destination tourism managers should be addressed. Finally, it is of particular interest to develop qualitative studies in order to, first, grasp the inner differences in behavior and attitude between travel segments for outbound destinations and, second, deepen the knowledge into motivational and satisfaction items for these tourists to specific destinations.

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