

ABSTRACT

Mini-movies are trailer-length videos that blur the line between advertising and entertainment, allowing brands to integrate product messages into an entertaining format. Despite the growing use of mini-movies by tourism marketers in destination marketing, the effectiveness of this approach on inducing positive destination image remains relatively unexplored. This study examines the effectiveness of mini-movies in facilitating positive destination image while considering the influence of travel motivation and advertising disclosure via a 2 (travel motivation prime: presence vs. absence) x 2 (advertising: disclosure vs. non-disclosure) between-subjects experimental design. The methodology details the process of eliciting memorable tourism experiences to prime individuals' travel motivations and the findings indicate significant main and interaction effects of travel motivation and advertising disclosure on evaluations of destination image. The study discusses marketing implications for destinations that are looking to develop and leverage the impact of mini-movies in their branding strategies.

INTRODUCTION

The use of mini-movies by destination marketing organizations (DMOs) to build destination brands has grown rapidly over the past few years (Shani, Chen, Wang, & Hua, 2010). Mini-movies are trailer-length original content videos that blur the line between advertising and entertainment, allowing brands to integrate product messages into an entertaining format (Raney, Arpan, Pashupati & Brill, 2003). As a form of brand entertainment, mini-movies create a situation where entertainment is the advertisement (Chen, 2015). In contrast to promotional videos where the primary focus is oftentimes displaying destination attributes such as landscape and scenery, tourism mini-movies emphasize cinematic aesthetics and film attributes, highlighting storylines through the place, protagonist, and plot similar to those in film tourism (Pan & Tsang, 2014). The narrative nature of tourism mini-movies adds value to destination marketing by engaging audience with stories and conversations (Branded Content Marketing Association, 2014). Viewers who become absorbed or engaged in the storyline of mini-movies are transported into a different world, cognitively and affectively experiencing the constructed world in the story (Chen, 2015).

Despite the growing use of mini-movies by DMOs in emerging destinations such as Peru (BBC World News, 2012), the effectiveness of this approach on inducing positive destination image remains relatively unexplored. The goal of this study is to examine the effectiveness of mini-movies in facilitating positive destination image while considering the influence of travel motivation and advertising disclosure (i.e., as informed by reactance theory and the persuasion knowledge model. This is pursued via a 2 (travel motivation prime: presence vs. absence) x 2 (advertising: disclosure vs. non-disclosure) between-subjects experimental design on destination image. To the best of the authors' knowledge, this is the first study to-date to examine the interaction of travel motivation and advertising disclosure on destination image. In doing so, this study provides theoretical and managerial contributions to tourism marketing research and practice.

For example, research in film tourism suggests moviegoers could be motivated to travel to a destination by the characters, actors, plot, and setting after watching a film (Kim, Agrusa, Chon, & Cho, 2008; Pan & Tsang, 2014). Studies have examined destination attributes that can induce travel motivations (Dann, 1981), including external attributes such as beaches or tourism attractions (Crompton, 1979; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). However, research also suggests an individual's evaluation of destination attributes may vary depending on his/her

motivational state (Andreu, Kozak, Avci & Cifter, 2005). In this regard, this study provides theoretical contributions to this latter line of research (i.e., influence of travel motivations on subsequent evaluation of destination image) within the context of mini-movie marketing. Since tourism mini-movies are often shown on online advertising channels or video-sharing websites such as YouTube in which viewers seek out travel or destination-themed videos, this study contributes to the literature by examining whether the presence of prior travel motivation may influence viewers' perceptions of mini-movies and affect their subsequent formation of destination image.

Past studies have also assessed viewers' image of a destination *before* and *after* watching a full-length movie using pretest-posttest experimental designs (e.g., Hudson, Wang, & Gil, 2011). Methodologically, the nature of a pretest-posttest experimental design may not be as suitable for examining the effects of mini-movies on destination image since viewers are only exposed to a video clip of only several minutes compared to traditional films where viewers can experience (and then become motivated to travel) after a full-length production of over an hour. In light of this consideration, this study provides a methodological contribution by demonstrating the use of a factorial experiment that could be considered more suitable for studying the impact of short, tourism mini-movies on destination image.

Additionally, the manipulation process in this study provides details of an effective methodological procedure that can prime an individual's travel motivation. This is done by eliciting memorable tourism experiences versus completing a filler activity, and this procedure could be adopted by future studies in this area. By priming one's travel motivation *prior* to watching a mini-movie, this study provides experimental findings to extend the field's understanding of the impact of motivational states on destination image evaluation.

Given the nature of films, viewers may less likely regard the destination in the movie as "advertising" because the location is built into the storyline (Hudson & Hudson, 2006). In contrast, viewers may be aware that mini-movies are advertisements since they are generally shown on online advertising channels or video-sharing websites that may indicate it as "sponsored by" the advertiser (i.e., sponsored by the DMO or tourism marketer). In this vein, this study also examines whether the disclosure of the mini-movie as an advertisement prior to the video clip would influence tourists' evaluation of destination image.

Finally, from a managerial perspective, the results of this study could enhance marketers' understanding of viewers' reactions and formation of positive destination image. For instance, the marketing implications from this study would be beneficial for emerging and growing destinations that may not have dedicated film commissions to attract large-budget

film producers (Hudson & Tung, 2010), but are looking to leverage the impact of tourism mini-movies for destination branding.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourism mini-movies and destination image

Mini-movies are trailer-length original content videos that blur the line between advertising and entertainment, allowing brands to integrate product messages into an entertaining format (Raney, Arpan, Pashupati & Brill, 2003). They are considered a form of branded entertainment (e.g., Hudson & Hudson, 2010; Craig-Lees & Wong, 2008; Lehu, 2007) or advertainment (Craig-Lees & Wong, 2008). In mini-movies, brands are integrated into storylines and become part of the plot rather than an advertisement distraction (Hudson & Hudson, 2010; Urbach et al. 2004). Brands have been increasingly investing in self-produced mini-movies with film attributes to feature their products, shaping conversations and sharing stories with their audience (Branded Content Marketing Association, 2014). For example, in 2012, the Cannes Lions Awards added a category for Branded Content and Entertainment, defining it as the creation of, or natural integration into, original content by a brand (Canadian Media Production Association, 2013).

In the context of tourism, mini-movies seek to influence viewers' image of a destination by integrating destinations within their storylines similar to those in film tourism (e.g., Kim, Kim, Agrusa, & Lee, 2012; Pan & Tsang, 2014). While large budget, full-length movies may require a film commission to attract filmmakers to a destination (Hudson & Tung, 2010), mini-movies are normally only 3 to 10 minutes long that are created by marketers and generally shown on standalone online advertising channels or video-sharing websites such as YouTube (Chen, 2015). Compared to films, mini-movies have lower production costs and a shorter production cycle (Wise et al., 2008).

Academic interest related to mini-movies in marketing and advertising is growing (Gurevitch, 2009), and the narrative nature of mini-movies has been a primary focus of recent studies. For example, a recent study by Chen (2015) investigated the persuasive influence of narratives on consumer attitudes. The author examined whether or not the persuasiveness of mini-movies depends on narrative transportation. Narrative transportation is a concept from advertising research, defined as viewers' immersion into the story (Green & Brock, 2000). This concept suggests once viewers are transported into a fantasy world constructed by an advertisement's narrative, they tend to show stronger affective responses and less critical

thoughts (Escalas, 2003). In Chen (2015)'s study, the effects of narrative transportation were measured by three variables: consumer attitudes towards an advertisement, consumer attitudes towards a brand, and purchase intention. The results showed viewers' positive attitudes towards the brand were influenced by their attitudes towards the mini-movie. The authors concluded a good storyline is essential for mini-movies in order to "move" the audience into a fantasy world that a brand can construct.

The emergence of mini-movies has also gained research attention from communication and media scholars. In a review article, Gurevitch (2009) analyzed the complex relationship between advertisements and film spectacles. First, the author conducted an appraisal of early advertising practices and then presented the shift in advertising from a non-narrative nature in the early stage to a more complex communication film spectacle at the later stage as Hollywood movies began to integrate and promote brands indirectly in their storylines (Sengrave, 2004). Second, the author analyzed the mini-movie (or mini-narrative advertisement as referred by the author), "1984", and examined it in the context of a film rather than as an advertisement by citing an interview with the mini-movie's director. Third, Gurevitch (2009) discussed the critiques of mini-movies, referencing cultural researchers' worries about this form of advertising as an attempt to pass off marketing as art (Lawson, 2013) due to the ambiguity over formal boundaries of advertising and its pretension as films. Finally, the author concluded by suggesting mini-movies reinforce the ongoing and complex relationship between advertising and film spectacles.

In the context of tourism, the use of motion pictures (e.g., both films and mini-movies) as a source has been found to facilitate emotional and affective destination images for tourists (Belch & Belch, 2009). Motion pictures can construct favorable destination impressions by featuring landscape, and social and cultural points that tourists wish to explore (Riley & Van Doren, 1992). Tourists are often inspired by the setting shown in a movie, and visit the destination to recreate the experience (Riley, Baker & Van Doren, 1998). For example, Hudson, Wang and Gil (2011) found that 13% of tourists initially showed interest in a destination after seeing it in a movie.

Like films, tourism mini-movies seek to impress viewers (Hudson & Ritchie, 2006) and persuade them to visit a destination by drawing them into an experiential situation (Moyer-Guse, 2008). Tourism mini-movies typically feature the attractiveness of a destination to facilitate emotional responses in potential tourists' minds (Schiffman, O'Cass, Paladino, & Carlson, 2013). The use of imagery and stories in mini-movies can build an emotional link between a destination and its potential visitors, setting the foundation for tourists to form

positive destination images (Morgan, Pritchard & Piggott, 2001). The presentations of images, emotions and stories in a tourism mini-movie could be effective to capture tourists' attention (Chen, 2015) and tourism marketers are starting to adopt mini-movies as a vivid approach to foster positive destination image (Fan, 2012).

For example, in Tourism Australia (2009)'s "Come and Walkabout" branding campaign, the mini-movie tells a story about a stressed New Yorker finding herself amid the amazing landscapes in Australia. According to the managing director of Tourism Australia (2009), "the mini-film's story had a remarkable resonance for how we market the country as a travel destination." In this example, Tourism Australia is the storyteller, producer, and distributor for the mini-movie. Unlike sophisticated management required of destination film commissions and DMOs to work closely with film producers to resolve potential conflicts regarding the placement of the destination within the plot and storyline of a large-budget film, destination marketers arguably have more relative control over the production of their own mini-movies and can determine the level of destination brand integration into their storylines.

Influence of travel motivation on destination image

A tourist's image of a destination is an important consideration during the destination selection process (Hudson, Wang & Gil, 2011), and motivation to travel (or travel motivation) has been identified as an influential factor in destination image formation (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). Motivation is defined as the driving force within individuals that impels them to action (Schiffman et al, 2013). Motivation can influence tourists' evaluation of the affective component of destination image (Gartner, 1993) and people with different motivations can perceive the same destination in their own ways (Beerli & Martin, 2004).

To motivate individuals to satisfy their needs (i.e., to travel), individuals must be consciously made aware of their needs and be exposed to products and services that they perceive as essential to satisfy those needs (Goossens, 2000). Advertisements have generally been one approach to generate consumer awareness, and commercials are frequently used to arouse viewers' needs (Mill & Morrison, 1985). For example, Norway Tourism previously released a commercial with the theme of "touch." Through this commercial, tourists are invited to get a real feel and "touch" the adventure in Norway (Schiffman et al., 1997).

Individuals could also be motivated to travel when they are "pushed" into making decisions by internal psychological forces, or "pulled" by external destination attributes

(Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1977; Uysal & Jurowski, 1994; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). From a tourism marketing perspective, researchers have often focused their attentions on pull factors since they represent destination attributes that can induce travel motivations (Dann, 1981). For example, external attributes such as beaches or tourism attractions can arouse pull motivations (Crompton, 1979; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). However, tourists can also form an affective image of a destination that is consistent with the fulfillment of their internal motivations; for example, an image of a destination that provides opportunities for rest, relaxation and escape can align with an individual's internal desires for escape, rest and relaxation (Yoon & Uysal, 2005).

Overall, an individual's motivation could impact his/her subsequent formation of destination image. To examine the influence of travel motivation on destination image evaluation, this study primes participants with motivation to travel prior to watching a tourism mini-movie. This study posits that participants primed with a motivation to travel prior to watching a tourism mini-movie will form a more positive image of the destination than participants in the control condition (i.e., without the prime).

Influence of advertising disclosure on destination image

Existing studies have sought to evaluate and measure destination image, and identified factors that influence the formation of destination image. For instance, Beerli and Martin (2004) found that different information sources have different effects on destination image formation. Bolan and Williams (2008) suggested that certain impressions gained from one source of information could be more important than another source in shaping attitudes. Tourism mini-movie is an example of an approach that integrates product messages into an entertaining and informative format (Chen, 2015), blurring the line between advertising and entertainment while influencing tourists' impressions and formation of destination image (Raney, Arpan, Pashupati & Brill, 2003).

The basic form of video (including mini-movie) advertising is dichotomized into argument and drama depending on the level of storytelling and narrator presence (Deighton et al., 1989). With characters and plots, tourism mini-movies can be considered as a form of drama (Chen, 2015). The nature of drama gives mini-movies an advantage because viewers may perceive mini-movies as entertainment more than deliberate advertising (Hudson & Tung, 2015).

Here, reactance theory from social psychology (Brehm, 1966; Clee & Wicklund, 1980) can provide insight into the persuasiveness of tourism mini-movies. "Reactance" describes

the motivational state of an individual who perceives his/her freedom of choice as being threatened. Individuals may form resistance to persuasions when they deem external attempts as trying to control their behavior or eliminate their freedom of choice (Lessne, 1989). Scholars in psychology initially applied reactance theory to explain a variety of situations with reactance effects, such as ineffective persuasion attempts (Brehm, 1966), psychological reactions to physical barriers (Brehm & Weintraub, 1977), and the desire to attain the unattainable (Wright et al., 1992).

Reactance theory has also been applied in the context of consumer behaviour and marketing. For example, in a study by Wendlandt & Schrader (2007), the authors investigated the determinants and effects of consumer reactance against loyalty programs. The authors developed a consumer reactance scale to help managers evaluate the effects of planned or implemented customer retention measures. In another study, Edward, Li, and Lee (2002) explored the concepts of forced exposure and psychological reactance in the context of “pop-up ads” on the Internet to understand why viewers decide to avoid them. Intrusiveness and interruptions were found to affect the perceptions of pop-up ads, which aroused feelings of irritation and avoidance. The study highlighted how consumers experience forced exposure situations, and provided implications for advertisers seeking to increase the effectiveness of online advertising.

As suggested by past research, reactance could stem from hard-sell pitches in media advertising (Clee and Wicklund, 1980). A highly explicit attempt to persuade could reduce the effectiveness of a communication strategy (Schwarz, 1986). When consumers are exposed to advertising claims, they may arouse skepticism and question the advertising claims based on prior beliefs; in doing so, they may resist the claims and form negative image towards a product (Koslow, 2000). In this regard, viewers’ critical reactions are directed towards the process of advertising, or the advertising tactics, which makes the experience negative (Edward, Li, & Lee, 2002). However, when advertisements are perceived as valuable and informative, they elicit less irritation and avoidance from viewers (Pasadeos, 1990; Edward, Li, & Lee, 2002).

Based on reactance theory, Friestad and Wright (1994, 1995) further developed the persuasion knowledge model, suggesting that a “change-of-meaning” could be triggered when consumers suspect persuasive tactics. When an advertisement’s persuasion technique is perceived as a threat to freedom, consumers tend to “change” the meaning of the advertisement, moving their perceptions of the advertised product and service to the opposite direction of the advertising effort. For example, viewers may cope with the persuasion tactics

by questioning the underlying claims of the advertisement, thereby reassessing their attitude towards the source (Kunda, 1990). Rational consumers normally discount overly positive claims (Goldberg and Hartwick, 1990), and skepticism towards tourism promotions could negatively influence the overall persuasiveness of an advertisement message (Rozier-Rich & Santos, 2011).

Overall, reaction theory is an appropriate consideration for this study as participants are exposed to persuasion in a tourism mini-movie. To re-emphasize, mini-movies offer information and entertainment value that aim to facilitate communication between advertisers and viewers, and could reduce consumers' resistance to embedded brand promotions as they generally attract voluntary viewing with the characteristics of an entertaining short film (Raney et al., 2003). Viewers voluntarily choose to be emotionally engaged with mini-movies in which they can feel relaxed from daily routine (Chen, 2015). Rather than being disrupted and persuaded to watch advertisements, viewers could perceive messages from mini-movies as less persuasion but more natural and real (Green & Brock, 2000).

Additionally, while some advertisements could seem displeasing and create resistance, other forms of advertisements could be attractive for consumers (Yankelovich Partners, 2004). Recent research suggests that storylines in mini-movies can help overcome resistance, fostering more consumer engagement and experience towards a product or service (Phillips & McQuarrie, 2010). The use of storylines in mini-movies is a form of branded entertainment which is not overtly recognized as an attempt to persuade (Raney et al., 2003). With characters and plots, mini-movies typically employ a narrative storytelling technique to reduce cognitive resistance (Green & Brock, 2000).

This study examines the influence of disclosing a tourism mini-movie as an advertisement *prior* to watching on viewers' evaluation of destination image. This study posits that by manipulating the presence versus absence of disclosure, participants who are informed that the tourism mini-movie is an advertisement prior to viewing would form a less positive image of the destination portrayed in the mini-movie than participants who are not informed that the mini-movie is an advertising (i.e., advertising: non-disclosure condition).

METHODOLOGY

This study examines the effectiveness of mini-movies in facilitating positive destination image while considering the influence of travel motivation and advertising disclosure via a 2 (travel motivation prime: presence vs. absence) x 2 (advertising: disclosure vs. non-

disclosure) between-subjects experimental design. To assess destination image (i.e., the dependent variable), this study adopts the measurement scale from Hudson, Wang and Gil (2011). Hudson, Wang and Gil (2011) used this scale in their experiment to measure the impact of the film, *Motorcycle Diaries*, on the perceptions of viewers towards South America. This scale is well-suited to the context of this study (i.e., tourism mini-movie); more specifically, the scale items used in Hudson, Wang and Gil (2011) pertain to South America, which is appropriate as this study focused on the South American destination of Peru. This study measured the complete set of 34 items on a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree) and not modify the scale except for changing the wording of the destination from “South America” to “Peru.”

Participants and design

This study was conducted over the course of nine months by two researchers. In total, 156 participants were recruited to participate in this experiment (107 females and 49 males; 76.9% of participants between the ages of 21 to 25; 95% of participants are undergraduates). Participants were recruited via convenience sampling at a large university in Asia across various locations on campus. For example, some participants were approached at a cafeteria while others were invited at a student hall. Some participants viewed the mini-movie individually while others watched it in a group setting during the daytime.

To ensure the destination of the mini-movie was not disclosed to participants prior to viewing, participants were not screened with questions that inquired about their previous tourism experiences to Peru or South America. This was done to minimize the risk of disclosing the destination to participants as one of the conditions of this study is advertising: non-disclosure. None of the participants have visited Peru, which is an important consideration in studies related to destination image as evaluations of destination image could be influenced by prior experiences and/or repeat visitation (Echtner & Ritchie, 1993).

Many recent studies related to film-induced tourism have used experimental designs. For example, Hahm and Wang (2011) examined the impact of a film on the featured destination's image via a one-group pretest-posttest quasi-experiment. Participants were asked to complete a pretest questionnaire on the destination image of Japan prior to watching 50 minutes of the film, *Lost in Translation*. After the film, participants were again asked to evaluate their image of the destination. In another quasi-experiment, Mathisen and Prebensen (2013) recruited participants to answer a web survey before and after exposure to a promotional film of a dog-sledge race in northern Norway. This film lasted 10 minutes. As the authors noted, a

limitation of their study was the duration of the film as a shorter or longer lasting film may impact attitudes differently. In a more recent study, Yang, Bergh, and Lee (2015) investigated the relationship between viewers' immersion into a story and their affective place image, cognitive place image, and intention to visit Tokyo. The authors indicated the use of a posttest-only control group experimental design to eliminate pretesting effects such as the effects of prior observation on later observation.

Overall, the use of a factorial experimental design in this study is considered appropriate for examining the impact of a tourism mini-movie on inducing destination image. The nature of a pretest-posttest experimental design may not be suitable as it would induce considerable pretesting effects (Yang et al., 2015); for example, participants' pretest assessment of destination image may affect their posttest evaluation since they may remember their initial ratings given that they are only exposed to a video clip of only several minutes. Furthermore, it may be less appropriate to consider the change in participants' evaluation of destination image before and after a few minutes from a mini-movie compared to traditional films that typically offer a full-length production of over an hour. In light of this consideration, participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions in a 2 (travel motivation prime: presence vs. absence) x 2 (advertising: disclosure vs. non-disclosure) between-subjects experimental design.

The tourism mini-movie, "*Whatever you need is now in Peru*", from the Peru Tourism Bureau was chosen for this study. The storyline features a hard-working businessman watching a video that he made 20 years ago when he was a young adult journeying through Peru. This mini-movie was chosen for several reasons. First, the video features many aspects of the destination including various landscapes, places of historical and archaeological interest, as well as activities and facilities that are relevant for tourists' evaluation of destination images. Second, the advertising nature of the mini-movie is only revealed at the end of the video; that is, the DMO of Peru is undisclosed throughout the video clip until the end, which is a relevant consideration for the condition of this study (advertising: disclosure vs. non-disclosure). Third, the protagonist in Peru's mini-movie is a young adult with a storyline intended to resonate with youth travelers. This bodes well with the demographic of participants in this study.

Procedure

Participants were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions. For participants in the condition, 'travel motivation prime: presence', they were primed with the motivational state

based on an autobiographical memory recall procedure. The procedure, as described below, is adopted from a recent psychology study (Gino & Desai, 2012) but modified to be suitable for the context of tourism research. Participants in this condition were given the following instructions:

“Please think about your most enjoyable and memorable tourism experience. Why did you choose this trip and what happened in your trip? Please write down a few paragraphs including as much details about what you did as possible.”

For participants in the other condition, ‘travel motivation prime: absence’, they were not primed with the activity to recall a memorable tourism experience. Instead, participants were asked to complete this filler memory recall activity (Gino & Desai, 2012):

“Please think about your morning routine. Please write a few paragraphs describing what you usually do.”

This manipulation process took approximately 10 minutes. Participants were asked to indicate on a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree) their level of agreement to a two-item manipulation check (i.e., “the writing task made me want to go on a vacation” and “the writing task motivates me to travel”) aimed at measuring their motivation to travel as aroused by the memory recall activity.

After the memory recall activity – and before showing the tourism mini-movie – participants in the condition, ‘advertising: disclosure’, were given information about the advertising nature of the video clip. Participants were informed:

“This mini-movie is an advertisement designed by Leandro Raposo, the creative director of McCann advertising agency based on extensive market research. It aims to serve as a perfect platform to reach out to key audience and increase awareness to convince audience to come and visit Peru” (Peru International Campaign Launch, 2012).

For participants in the other condition, ‘advertising: non-disclosure’, participants were not provided with this information. Instead, they were just asked to: *“Please watch this video.”*

For all participants, after watching the mini-movie, they were asked to evaluate their destination image of Peru based on the measurement scale adopted from Hudson, Wang and Gil (2011).

RESULTS

Manipulation check

Eighty-six participants were involved in a pre-test to assess the effectiveness of the priming procedure on inducing a positive motivational state. Participants included 72 females and 14 males with 82.6% of participants between the ages of 21 to 25. The participants were recruited via convenience sampling at the same university. The pre-test results from the two-item manipulation check ($\alpha = .941$) indicated that participants who were randomly assigned to recalled their memorable tourism experience in the condition, 'travel motivation prime: presence', were more motivated to travel ($M = 5.02$, $SD = 1.14$) than those randomly assigned to the condition, 'travel motivation prime: absence', who were asked to complete the filler activity ($M = 2.33$, $SD = 1.28$), $t(84) = 10.319$, $p < 0.001$.

Measure of destination image

Participants were asked to evaluate their destination image of Peru after watching the mini-movie using the measurement scale adopted from Hudson, Wang and Gil (2011). The mean, standard deviation, and reliability of the scale are shown in Table 1. Consistent with the original measure, the eight factors are comfort/security, interest/adventure, natural state, cultural facilitation, resort atmosphere/climate, cultural similarity, inexpensiveness, and lack of language barrier. The reliability scores for six of the eight factors were greater than .70 (Nunnally, 1978). They are comfort/security ($\alpha = .81$), interest/adventure ($\alpha = .78$), natural state ($\alpha = .75$), cultural facilitation ($\alpha = .71$), cultural similarity ($\alpha = .85$), and lack of language barrier ($\alpha = .78$). While the reliability score for the factor, resort atmosphere/climate, showed a relatively low score of .52, Cronbach's alpha for the factor, inexpensiveness ($\alpha = .69$), was only marginally below .70. This suggests reasonably good reliability for six of the seven factors. Inclusive of all measurement items, the overall reliability of the destination image scale is .87. The composite means for the factors, natural state ($M = 5.92$), interest/adventure ($M = 5.72$), and inexpensiveness ($M = 4.68$) were the

highest among the eight factors.

--- Insert Table 1 here ---

An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to assess the main and interaction effects of travel motivation and advertising disclosure on the overall destination image of Peru (see Table 2). Overall destination image is a composite score, taking into account the scores of all items in the scale.

--- Insert Table 2 here ---

The results indicate a significant main effect of travel motivation on destination image, $F(1, 152) = 10.721; p = 0.001$. Participants formed a more positive overall destination image of Peru when they were primed with a motivation to travel prior to watching the tourism mini-movie ($M = 4.90, SD = .46$) than those who were primed with the filler activity ($M = 4.64, SD = .53$).

The results also indicated a main effect for advertising disclosure, $F(1, 152) = 5.407; p = 0.021$. Participants who were *not* informed the mini-movie is an advertisement prior to watching the video formed more a positive overall destination image of Peru ($M = 4.89, SD = .50$) than those in the disclosure condition who were told that the mini-movie is an advertisement prior to watching ($M = 4.68, SD = .49$).

Additionally, the results reveal a significant interaction effect of travel motivation and advertising disclosure on destination image, $F(1, 152) = 11.648, p = 0.001$. As shown in Figure 1, participants who were primed with a motivation to travel but *not* informed the mini-movie is an advertisement prior to watching (i.e., advertising: non-disclosure condition) indicated a significantly more positive overall destination image of Peru ($M = 5.10, SD = .38$) than participants who were motivated to travel but disclosed of the advertising nature of the video prior to viewing ($M = 4.67, SD = .43$). For participants who were primed with the filler activity (i.e., not motivated to travel), disclosing the advertising nature of the mini-movie prior to watching actually resulted in similar – albeit slightly more positive – overall destination image of Peru ($M = 4.68, SD = .60$) than those who were not informed that the mini-movie is an advertisement prior to watching ($M = 4.60, SD = .49$).

--- Insert Figure 1 here ---

DISCUSSION

Marketers are increasingly interested in developing mini-movies, and research is growing in this area (e.g., Chen, 2015; Gurevitch, 2013). This study contributes to this line of work by investigating the effectiveness of mini-movies in facilitating positive destination image while considering the influence of travel motivation and advertising disclosure via a 2 (travel motivation prime: presence vs. absence) x 2 (advertising: disclosure vs. non-disclosure) between-subjects experimental design.

The manipulation process in this study detailed an effective methodological procedure to prime an individual's motivation to travel. This procedure involved eliciting individuals' memorable tourism experiences in one condition (i.e., travel motivation prime: presence) while asking individuals in the other condition to complete a filler activity (i.e., travel motivation prime: absence). In this regard, this study provides a methodological contribution to tourism research by demonstrating the use of a priming procedure that could be adopted in future studies investigating the influence of travel motivations (or motivated travelers) on destination image or other dependent variables such as satisfaction or intention to visit.

Findings from the first main effect showed viewers primed with motivation to travel prior to watching a tourism mini-movie formed a more positive destination image than those who were primed with a filler memory recall activity. Results from the second main effect showed viewers who were given information about the advertising purpose of the video clip (i.e., advertising: disclosure' condition) prior to viewing formed a less positive image of the destination than participants in the non-disclosure condition. The findings also indicate an interaction effect between travel motivation and advertising disclosure on the effectiveness of the mini-movie for inducing positive destination image. This suggests that viewers' reactance to persuasion attempts by the tourism mini-movie could be influenced by their current motivational state. When participants were motivated to travel, disclosing the advertising nature of the mini-movie prior to watching resulted in significantly lower destination image evaluations than those who were not informed a priori.

Interestingly, the findings also showed that by disclosing the advertising nature of the tourism mini-movie prior to viewing, viewers who were not motivated to travel actually evaluated the overall image of the destination similarly – albeit slightly more positive – than those who were not informed of the advertising intent. In other words, for viewers who were

not motivated to travel, awareness that the mini-movie is an advertisement actually facilitated a marginally more favorable overall destination image. A possible explanation for this finding is that for viewers who were not motivated to travel, they perceived less loss of freedom from the explicit advertisement in the mini-movie compared to individuals who were primed with a positive motivational state.

The findings in this study provide theoretical contributions to the literature in several ways. First, this study provides experimental evidence on the impact of travel motivations on subsequent destination image formation within the context of a tourism mini-movie. This supports previous research that an individual's evaluation of destination attributes may vary depending on his/her motivational state (Andreu, Kozak, Avci & Cifter, 2005; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). Second, this study contributes to the literature on the influence of reactance on persuasion; more specifically, as informed by reactance theory, this study suggests motivated travelers could form resistance to tourism promotions when they perceive their freedom is limited by persuasion attempts. Taken together, this study contributes to the literature on destination image by demonstrating that one's overall assessment of destination image could depend on his/her reactance to the persuasion attempt as well as his/her motivational state prior to watching a tourism mini-movie. In this regard, this study demonstrates an interaction effect of travel motivation and advertising disclosure on destination image.

From a practical marketing perspective, the results of this study would be of particular interest to tourism marketers who wish to utilize mini-movies to promote their destinations. For instance, some marketers may be tempted to share the advertising nature of mini-movies at the onset in the belief that motivated tourists may perceive it as a relevant information source to fulfill their needs (e.g., infomercials). However, the study findings suggest that this marketing approach could be more effective if motivated viewers do not recognize that the mini-movie is an advertisement in the first place.

A possible explanation for this finding is the role of motivations in tourists' decision-making process. A positive motivational state may drive individuals to search for signs in external communication material that could contain the promise of solving their needs (Gnoth, 1997). Since consumers perceive motion pictures as more credible than traditional advertisements (Hudson & Ritchie, 2006), if the credibility of a mini-movie is reduced by disclosing the underlying advertising intention to individuals prior to their viewing, individuals may activate their reactance and "change" the meaning of the advertisement (as per the persuasion knowledge model), moving their image of the destination to the opposite

direction of the advertising effort. The findings suggest that when tourism marketers are targeting viewers who are motivated to travel, they should refrain from explicit disclosure of the advertising intent of the video at the beginning of the mini-movie.

Furthermore, marketers may seek to attract potential tourists by advertising their mini-movies through social media platforms. Social media platforms allow marketers to target viewers by analyzing their browsing history (AdAge, 2014). Mini-movies could be targeted to those with a recent browsing history that shows a considerable amount of travel information research. In this regard, these individuals are likely motivated potential travelers, and this study suggests that a tourism mini-movie could more effectively induce a positive destination image to this market segment if the video clip does not hard-sell the destination at the onset.

Conversely, marketers may wish to generate awareness for their destination among potential tourists who may not be motivated to travel at this moment. In this case, tourism marketers may not have to worry about the negative influence of disclosing the advertising intention of the mini-movie as non-motivated viewers may have less reactance to persuasion. Disclosing the advertising nature of the tourism mini-movie could possibly capture the attention of non-motivated viewers and generate awareness towards the destination, allowing them to form a positive destination image after watching.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study provides insights into the effectiveness of tourism mini-movies in facilitating positive destination image while considering the influence of travel motivation and advertising disclosure. Nevertheless, there are limitations to this study that needs to be acknowledged. First, the small sample in this study was generally drawn from undergraduate students from a large university. This sample could restrict the generalizability of the results to the broader population. Second, the external environment of the experiment was not highly controlled. For example, some participants viewed the tourism mini-movie at a student hall while others watched the video clip at a cafeteria. The conditions in the environment (e.g., external noise and other distractions) could have directed participants' full attention away from the mini-movie.

Third, participants were recruited via convenience sampling at different locations. Participants recruited from the student hall could have been international or exchange students, and their level of English language proficiency could be different from other

participants. Since the mini-movie of Peru is in English, this consideration may impact their interest or perception towards the mini-movie, and subsequently, influence their destination image of Peru. Fourth, this study examined the influence of travel motivation and advertising disclosure towards destination image within one case of a tourism mini-movie. There are other forms of communication such as print advertisement, and this study did not compare the findings in this context with other forms of communication.

Fifth, evaluations of destination image could be influenced by prior experiences and/or repeat visitations (Echtner & Ritchie, 1993). Since participants were not screened for previous experiences to Peru, the lack of prior travel history to the destination was largely a function of the sample of participants in Asia. In this regard, this study did not examine the effectiveness of tourism mini-movies for inducing positive destination image between those with and without prior travel experience to a destination.

Finally, this study did not examine the interaction effects of each of the eight dimensions of destination image across the four conditions. This study identified eight dimensions in the destination image of Peru: comfort/security, interest/adventure, natural state, cultural facilitation, resort atmosphere/climate, cultural similarity, inexpensiveness, and lack of language barrier. For example, there may be interaction effects of travel motivation and advertising disclosure on comfort/security. The limitation here, however, is that this study did not consider these interaction effects, a priori, and thus, presenting further analysis through multivariate analysis of variance may risk the possibility of drawing spurious relationships and conclusions in a post hoc basis.

There are many avenues for future research. For example, future research could take past travel experiences into consideration when investigating the impact of tourism mini-movies on destination image. In this study, participants have never visited Peru; yet, evaluations of destination image could be influenced by prior experiences and/or repeat visitation (Echtner & Ritchie, 1993). A second avenue for future research is to conduct the study in a cross-cultural perspective. As Hudson, Wang, and Gil (2011) demonstrated in their experiment of the immediate impacts of a film on the perceptions of viewers from different countries, Canadians reported significantly higher desire to visit South America than US and Spanish participants after watching the film, *Motorcycle Diaries*. Future research should take this into consideration and extend the research in mini-movies across different nationalities.

A third avenue for future research is to explore the effectiveness of mini-movies on inducing positive destination image compared to full-length films. While viewers of full-

length movies could be motivated to travel to a destination by the characters, actors, plot, and setting after watching a film (Pan & Tsang, 2014), mini-movies are normally only 3 to 10 minutes long that are created by marketers and generally shown on standalone online advertising channels or video-sharing websites such as YouTube (Chen, 2015). In this regard, evaluations of destination image could vary depending on the type of cinematics, or video-based communication mediums and channels. Finally, in this study, the prime for travel motivation was treated as a dichotomous manipulation (i.e., presence vs. absence). A fourth avenue for future research is to manipulate the level of motivation in order to provide more depth into the implications of travel motivation on the evaluation of destination image.

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