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Title of paper: "The pleasure's all mine: A comparative analysis of hedonic travel behaviour within night-life tourism"

The academic discourse on hedonism as a feature of travel motivation has largely focussed upon deviance and hedonistic egoism (Wickens, 2002; Currie, 1997 and Bellis and Hale, 2000) where hedonism is equated with overindulgence and moral decay (Veenhoven, 2003). Attention is given to the marketing implications for the supply of tourism and the societal impacts when problematic relations with the host community arise (Swarbrooke and Horner, 2007). The notion of ethical hedonism, however, which is less widely supported, takes a less critical view and views hedonism as natural and healthy (Veenhoven, 2003) whereby people have the right to pursue pleasure as a way of life without harming themselves or others (Onfray, 2007). Advocates of hedonism offer that pleasurable experiences lead to stress reduction and health preservation (Warburton, 1996).

Existing research would suggest that hedonic travel motives are more dominant within the youth market (Swarbrooke and Horner, 2007; Tutenges, 2012), however Goulding's research on lived nightlife experiences (2004) notes a rise in 'cognitively young thirty-something's' as an under-researched, hidden sector, where attitudes to leisure are changing, disposable incomes are high and the quest to maximise net pleasure is strong. Whilst the impact of cognitive age and travel experiences receives some attention in respect of seniors (Iyer *et al*, 2008; Sellick and Cleaver, 2004; Le Serre *et al*, 2013; Gonzalez *et al*, 2009), sparse attention is paid to the impact of cognitive age in the 30 – 40 years of age travel market. There is a significant gap in existing knowledge where travel behaviour, hedonism and this market is concerned.

This research aims to evaluate the extent and nature of hedonism as a motivating influence on travel behaviour. It will take an exploratory and inductive approach (Bryman and Bell, 2011) to uncover the extent to which the desire to encounter pleasure, of various forms, bears influence over the travel decisions and behaviours of young consumers. Comparative research will be

undertaken with their predecessors, the 'cognitively young thirty-something's' (Goulding, 2004), to create a narrative of their experiences and comprehend the nature of hedonism within youth tourism and the implications thereof upon the self and the other.

The research employs a mixed methodology, embracing the benefits of technology and social media to connect with these subcultures (Poynter, 2010). Social media is being used to study the communities and discourse of young people's travel experiences via observations of the anticipation, planning, consumption and reflection communicated in Facebook groups, via Twitter and travel blogs (Chau, 2012). Web based surveys are being used to capture primary data to support the analysis, with follow up focus groups planned for Summer 2016 in Ibiza and the UK.

It is anticipated that the research will offer greater understanding of the nature of hedonism as a feature of travel motivation and how this compares between age segments engaging in similar nightlife pursuits whilst on holiday. This will have implications for the supply and design of the night-life economy within tourism destinations as well as destination branding implications. With the night-life economy representing a significant element of destination appeal (Tutenges, 2013), and little still known about the meanings attached to nightlife experiences and travel, research potential arises.