

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF ST. AUGUSTINE, FL: HERITAGE ATTRACTION TYPES

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Abstract

Heritage tourism is a fast growing segment of the tourism industry. Heritage tourists are a sought after visitor group as they tend to stay longer and spend more money than the typical tourist (Confer & Kerstetter 2000). The purpose of this study is to determine if there are 'types' of heritage attractions at St. Augustine, Florida. A second purpose of this study is to determine if travel behavior characteristics of tourists are related to visitation to particular heritage attraction types. We found that sites within St. Augustine fall into three heritage types labeled: 1) "Spanish Heritage Sites"; 2) "Park and Beach Sites"; and 3) "Transportation Heritage Sites". The results of our study support previous research that different heritage visitors are drawn to various heritage attraction types (Jewell & Crofts 2001; Kerstetter et al. 1998) and differ in behavioral and visitor characteristics.

1.0 Introduction

Heritage tourism is a fast growing segment of the tourism industry (Light & Prentice 1994) and is expected to continue to grow (Boyd 2002). Heritage destinations not only face stiff competition from other heritage sites but other destination types (Confer & Kerstetter, 2000), as well as increasing demands for services from visitors (Fyall & Garrod 1998). In order to compete successfully, heritage destination personnel must learn business and marketing skills (Caldwell, 1996). Academicians and practitioners have taken a very narrow view of what constitutes 'heritage'. To maximize a destination's appeal, the notion of heritage must be expanded beyond that which is built. Other forms of heritage including; culture, industry and national environments (including National Parks) must also be emphasized (Boyd 2002).

Kerstetter et al. (1998) identified four types of industrial heritage attractions. They identified 'flood sites', 'railroad sites', 'battlefields and forts', and 'mines' as uniquely different as it related to visitor characteristics and trip behavior. Their results revealed that visitors to 'flood sites' were more likely just 'traveling through' or on a day trip. 'Flood site' visitors also reported taking fewer trips over the previous 12 months as compared to visitors of the other attraction types. Others have attempted to segment the heritage visitor through recreation specialization. Kerstetter et al. (2001) explored the notion of recreation specialization within heritage tourism. They identified a continuum of heritage specialization (low, medium, high). Their results showed that visitor characteristics and travel behavior vary depending on the level of heritage specialization (Kerstetter et al. 2001). Confirming the work of Kerstetter et al. (2001) Jewell & Crofts (2001) showed that a destination could be organized for the general leisure traveler and for the more specialized heritage tourist. They found that the motivations of visitors to heritage sites varied. Their results showed a segment of visitors motivated by relaxation. A second group was interested in gaining knowledge of the past, but they were motivated by pleasure. Seeking knowledge from the past motivated the third group identified.

The purpose of this study is to determine if there are distinct heritage attraction types within St. Augustine, Florida. Additionally, if distinct heritage attraction types are uncovered, a second purpose of this study is to determine if travel behavior characteristics of tourists are related to visitation to particular heritage attraction types.

2.0 Methods

In 2001-2002, data was collected on 52 days at different sites in an around St. Augustine. A random sample of travelers from each site was asked to complete an "intercept interview." One adult from each travel party was identified (alternating male and female) and asked to complete the interview as they left the site. Quotas per day were created to more accurately reflect the estimated ratio of weekday and weekend travelers (approximately 50% on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, 50% during the week). The research instrument consisted of questions such as: "What was your primary mode of

Table 1.—Demographics of Sample

Demographics	N	%
Gender		
Male	563	51.5
Female	531	48.5
Education		
Less than high school	6	0.6
High school graduate	187	17.2
Technical school	26	2.4
Some college	323	29.7
College degree	363	33.4
Some graduate school	68	6.3
Advanced degree	110	10.1
DK/RF	5	0.5
Race or Ethnicity		
Caucasian or white	945	86.4
African American or Black	50	4.6
Hispanic or Spanish	79	7.2
Native American or American Indian	2	0.2
Asian	11	1.0
Pacific Islander	3	0.3
Multi-racial or mixed race	3	0.3
Other	1	0.1
Income		
Less than \$24,000	54	4.9
\$24,000 to \$34,000	105	9.6
\$35,000 to \$49,000	195	17.9
\$50,000 to \$74,999	281	25.7
\$75,000 to \$99,999	164	15.0
\$100,000 to 124,999	107	9.8
\$125,000 and above	65	6.0
DK/RF	121	11.1
Who is traveling with you?		
Alone	71	6.5
Friends	176	16.1
Family	729	66.6
Family and Friends	102	9.3
Tour Group	12	1.1
Other	4	0.4
Marital Status		
Single	264	24.2
Partnered/Married	789	72.2
Widow/widower	400	3.7

travel to here from your home city?” and “What was the main purpose of your trip?” Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics were run to profile the sample. Second, a principal components factor analysis

with a varimax rotation was run to determine if people were visiting ‘types’ of heritage sites. Finally, a multiple analysis of variance was run (ONEWAY) to determine the relationship between type of heritage site and travel behavior characteristics.

Table 2.—Factor Analysis Results with Varimax Rotation

Item (Attraction)	1	2	3
Factor 1: Spanish Heritage Sites			
Old St. Augustine Village	.667		
Oldest House Museum	.641		
Colonial Spanish Quarter	.637		
Lightner Museum	.626		
Old Florida Museum	.611		
Ghost Tours	.437		
Castillo de San Marcos (The Fort)	.416		
Factor 2: Park and Beach Sites			
Anastasia State Park		.669	
Ocean Pier Visitor's Center		.623	
St. Augustine Lighthouse & Museum		.579	
Fort Matanzas National Monument		.547	
Factor 3: Transportation Heritage Sites			
St. Augustine Authentic Attractions (Green trolley)			.833
Florida Heritage Museum			.716
Eigen value	3.11	1.69	1.63
% of common variance	13.49	8.28	8.12
Cumulative Variance	13.49	21.78	29.89
Alpha	0.71	0.50	0.67

3.0 Results

The sample of visitors to St. Augustine and the Beaches was primarily Caucasian. Typically visitors were married/partnered (72%) traveling with family (67%). The sample was fairly educated with more than 63% either attending college or having graduated from college. Reflecting this, income levels were fairly high, with more than a third of the sample earning between \$50,000 and \$99,000 (Table 1).

The results of the factor analysis revealed 6 factors with eigen values exceeding 1.0. When the scree plot was referenced, only three factors fell cleanly above the break line. These three factors were tested for reliability. The seven items that represented Factor 1 included various museums and a district called the 'Colonial Spanish Quarter' and was named, "Spanish heritage sites." The four items that represented Factor 2 included the 'Ocean Pier Visitor Center' and 'Anastasia State Park' and was named "Park and Beach sites." Two items represented Factor 2 including the 'Green Trolley' and was named

"transportation heritage sites." Coefficient alpha values for the three factors ranged from .50 to .71 (Table 2).

The relationship between the heritage site dimensions and travel behavior characteristics (including; type of trip, first time vs. repeat visit, season visited, overall satisfaction, likelihood of returning, number of activities participated in, and number of heritage activities participated in) was analyzed. Results showed a significant difference between trip type, number of activities participated in, and number of heritage activities participated in for all three factors. Those visiting 'Spanish Heritage Sites' were most likely to stay overnight. Visitors to 'Park and Beach Sites' participated in the most activities, while visitors to 'Spanish Heritage Sites' engaged in the most heritage activities. A significant difference was shown between first time vs. repeat visit and the likelihood of return between Factor 1 ('Spanish Heritage Sites') and Factor 3 ('Transportation Heritage Sites'). Those visiting both 'Spanish Heritage Sites' and 'Transportation Heritage Sites' were more likely to be first time visitors, with this inclination more predominant

Table 3.—Relationship between Travel Behavior and Site Dimensions Using One-way Analysis of Variance

		Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
Type of trip	Day trip	.21	.13	.17
	Overnight	.39	.25	.26
		F=104.93***	F=50.85***	F=12.97***
First time visited	Yes	.38		.26
	No	.29		.21
		F=25.15***		F=12.97***
Overall Satisfaction	Somewhat	.28 ^a		
	Very	.35 ^b		
	Extremely	.33		
		F=3.39*		
Likelihood of returning	Very	.39		.27
	Extremely	.29		.21
		F=36.87***		F=5.8*
Season	Spring	.38 ^b	.27 ^b	.28 ^b
	Summer	.28 ^a	.24 ^b	.19 ^a
	Fall	.28 ^a	.11 ^a	.23
	Winter	.39 ^b	.26 ^b	.25
		F=14.93***	F=26.02***	F=3.33*
Number of activities participated in	1-3	.24 ^a	.11 ^a	.18 ^a
	4-6	.31 ^b	.17 ^b	.25
	7-9	.41 ^b	.31 ^b	.24
	10+	.44 ^b	.46 ^b	.28 ^b
		F=23.98***	F=67.62***	F=2.15*
Number of heritage activities participated in	0	.17 ^a	.15 ^a	.13 ^a
	1	.26	.18	.20
	2	.35 ^b	.22	.26
	3+	.46 ^b	.27 ^b	.29 ^b
		F=44.78***	F=9.05***	F=6.31*

* significant at .05; *** significant at .001

in visitors to ‘Spanish Heritage Sites’. Visitors to both ‘Spanish Heritage Sites’ and ‘Transportation Heritage Sites’ indicated their likelihood to return as predominately ‘very’ or ‘extremely’ likely (Table 3).

4.0 Discussion

In summary, three ‘types’ of heritage attractions were found: Spanish Heritage Sites, Park and Beach Sites, and Transportation Heritage Sites. The results support previous research findings that destinations can contain distinct heritage attraction types (Kerstetter et al. 1998). Previous research has shown that visitors to heritage sites with more knowledge and experience relating to heritage typically stay longer and visit more sites (Confer & Kerstetter 2000). The results of the present study show that visitors to ‘Spanish Heritage Sites’ and ‘Transportation Heritage Sites’ were more likely to be first-time visitors. Managers of the various attractions representing these two site types would be served to

better educate their visitors. Better signage, brochures and interpretation would help in this respect.

Kerstetter et al. (2001) identified a continuum of heritage specialization which they identified as low, medium and high. Their results showed that visitor characteristics and travel behavior vary depending on the level of heritage specialization. The present study showed that visitors to ‘Spanish Heritage Sites’ participated in more heritage activities. Future research would be served by looking into the possible association between heritage attraction type and level of specialization. Because ‘Spanish Heritage Site’ visitors are shown to participate in more heritage activities, does that mean that they are highly specialized?

Another interesting future research direction would be to explore the relationship between heritage site type and visitor perceptions of the site as part of their personal heritage. In a study of visitors to the Wailing Wall, Poria

et al. (2003) found that those visitors with a strong connection to the site were more likely to revisit, more willing to pay user fees, typically more satisfied and more likely to recommend visitation to friends and family. An interesting question for future research would be to determine if there is an association between heritage site type and visitor perceptions of personal 'ownership'. This study showed that there are distinct types of heritage sites within St. Augustine, Florida. Specific attributes important within each site that represented the factors were not studied. Heritage research would be served and site managers given a better understanding of visitor behavior if specific attributes associated with each of the sites representing the three heritage site types could be determined by future research.

5.0 Citations

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