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Green events, value perceptions, and the role of consumer involvement in festival design and performance

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This study explores the dimensionality of event attendees' "green" involvement in festival settings. Given growing interest in environmental issues, it explores relationships between eco-friendly services, and visitor perceptions, intentions, or choices, using the theory of involvement, and involvement–value relationship studies. Special attention is given to comparative advantages attained by events having green policies and practices, and to assessing how much attendees will pay for those practices through event spending. A green involvement scale was developed, tested, validated and refined, before being used at the major Macau Food Festival, obtaining a 406 person data set, which was analyzed by factor analysis and structural equation modeling. Results had both theoretical and managerial implications. There is a strong linkage between green involvement and perceived value. To obtain maximum comparative advantage, however, marketing efforts must focus on promoting green initiatives. For example, attendees who take an interest in and feel connected to environmental issues in their life will spend significantly more. *Green design and waste management* were the most important drivers of perceived green value, followed by *green food* and *green environment and activities*. Our findings show that festival attendees will pay 28% more for green food if they perceive the event offers them green values.

Keywords: involvement; green; environmentally friendly; waste management; festival; scale development

Introduction

A significant body of literature is available on environmentally friendly (eco-friendly or green) initiatives in the tourism and hospitality industries (Kim & Han, 2010). Findings often point to the relationships between eco-friendly services, perceptions, intentions, or choices (Han, Hsu, & Sheu, 2010; Park & Boo, 2010). However, little research focuses on consumers' involvement with green initiatives. The theory of involvement commonly acknowledges that involvement is a state of motivation which compels people to engage and to acquire a certain product or service (Gursoy & Gavcar, 2003; Zaichkowsky, 1985). Hence, understanding the role of green involvement (or personal involvement with green attributes and activities offered by a service provider) should advance the literature pertaining to sustainability and hospitality services. In this research, we focus on the context of event services, in particular food festivals. Our research investigates event attendees' green involvement in food festivals and how it could influence their value perceptions about this type of event.

Being "green" could improve the competitive advantage of the service provider (Ottman, 1993). Despite some authors acknowledging that consumers are willing to pay

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more for eco-friendly services (Ashton, Scott, Solnet, & Breakey, 2010; Kapelianis & Strachan, 1996; Kim & Han, 2010), little research has documented how much more they are willing to pay for such services and green initiatives. Research is especially sparse in regard to event services. Hence, there is lack of understanding of spending changes if green initiatives are embedded in the service encounter. This research seeks to explore the antecedents of change in spending on green initiatives at event festivals.

This research seeks to fill the gaps in the literature by: (1) developing a scale that assesses green festival involvement from an event attendee's perspective, (2) exploring the effect of green festival involvement on attendees' perceived green values, and (3) examining the direct and indirect effects of such events on financial outcomes (i.e. spending changes). In summary, this research aims to understand the effect of green festival involvement and its role in value perception and changes in spending. Multiple studies are conducted to systematically develop the green festival involvement scale and to test its criterion effects on event attendees' value perceptions and change in spending.

Literature review

Green festivals

There has been an acute increase in sustainability awareness and initiatives (Kim & Han, 2010; Wan, 2007). In the context of the event industry, there is an increasing interest in adopting green initiatives to improve an event's competitiveness (Whitfield & Dioko, 2012). The Event Marketing Institute shows that 83% of the event planners either have already engaged in eco-friendly event practices or have planned to adopt such practices within the next 12–18 months (Kirkwood, 2008). The term “green event” is defined as “an event that has a sustainability policy or incorporates sustainable practices into its management and operations” (Laing & Frost, 2010, p. 262). One of its roles is to assist companies in fulfilling their social responsibility, improving their brand image, and gaining competitive advantage in the fierce marketplace (Kirkwood, 2008). Additionally, adopting green strategies in the event industry is crucial in order to gain a competitive edge in the bidding process, especially for mega events (Laing & Frost, 2010).

Since being green plays a key role in business success, “green events” have attracted much attention from both academic researchers and industrial practitioners (Kirkwood, 2008; Laing & Frost, 2010; Whitfield & Dioko, 2012; Whitfield, Dioko, & Webber, 2014). Some service providers and event organizers have made an earnest endeavor to promote events such as food festivals as green (Green Festival, 2012). Food festivals particularly deserve attention, as they are very popular events compared with other types of festivals (Xie, 2003). Park, Reisinger, and Kang (2008) state that food festivals are considered major tourist attractions and travel motivators. Human activities often center around food: the “food festival has always been a central source of cohesion and cultural meaning for human communities” (Lewis, 1997, p. 73).

Although the event industry has flourished, consumers have increasingly recognized the seriousness of environmental problems including the depletion of the stratospheric ozone layer, as well as overconsumption of non-renewable resources, and global air pollution (Kim & Han, 2010; Wan, 2007). In turn, environmental awareness has led to changes in customer buying behaviors and favorable attitudes toward eco-friendly products and services (Han et al., 2010). A significant research body shows that consumers increasingly prefer green products and services and are willing to pay a premium for them (Kapelianis & Strachan, 1996; Laroche, Bergeron, & Barbaro-Forleo, 2001).

Green events are particularly capable of drawing people, for several reasons. First, green seekers have a positive attitude toward green practices. They also look for opportunities to act in an environmentally friendly way, express environmental concerns, and engage in green activities, demonstrating their devotion to protecting the environment (Manaktola & Jauhari, 2007). Second, green seekers like to attend green events because of the perceived environmental benefits that they could obtain from them (Ottman, 1993). These green seekers often find importance and relevance of green products and services to them, and therefore spend time seeking green knowledge and a higher level of awareness of green events and initiatives (Amendah & Park, 2008). Based on Ajzen's (1988) theory of planned behavior, consumers' environmental purchasing intentions and behavior are influenced by several factors, including the individual's knowledge and motivations, the ability to perform the behavior, and the opportunity to behave in an environmentally friendly way. At green festivals, green features are manifested not only in food products, but also in entertainment, performance and education, festival themes, decorations, and transport arrangements (see next paragraph) (Laing & Hogg, 2008; The CSR Newswire, 2013). All these green attributes help portray a unique image and message of a green food festival, providing distinct differentiation that influences consumer choice, especially amongst green seekers (Manaktola & Jauhari, 2007).

Green initiatives in a food festival

In respect to event services, resources used in events can create severe environmental damage. They can generate substantial traffic flows and overcrowd transportation systems (Park & Boo, 2010). Substantial food waste, heavy cooking smoke, excessive use of plastic bags, cardboard, and styrofoam for food storage and display can all harm the environment (Laing & Frost, 2010; Wan & Chan, 2013).

As a result, event practitioners often look for other attributes to promote being green (Whitfield & Dioko, 2012). For example, some food festivals provide local, organic, and vegetarian food (Laing & Frost, 2010; The CSR Newswire, 2013). Other green initiatives emphasize waste management, providing recycling bins and small food portion options; reducing the use of plastic bags, cardboard, and styrofoam; using biodegradable or reusable dishes; and encouraging attendees to bring their own utensils (Chancey, 2009; Laing & Frost, 2010; Wallace, 2005). Green initiative attributes also include activities that bring awareness of reduction of pollution and energy usage. Other measures include encouraging attendees to ride bicycles and utilize public transportation as well as restricting smoking in the venue (Hu, Parsa, & Self, 2010). Some festivals offer entertainment performances and educational programs that seek to encourage environmental protection, healthy diet, and a green lifestyle (Green Festival, 2012; Laing & Frost, 2010). Another set of commonly used green attributes concern the design and decoration of food booths and event venues (The CSR Newswire, 2013). They include the use of green-related themes, recycled decoration materials, and the elimination of unnecessary decorations. In summary, green festivals embrace attributes related to eco-friendly venue design, waste management, green education programs and activities, and green products.

Conceptualization of green involvement in festivals

The theory of involvement stems from 1970s marketing research, focusing mostly on consumers' brain processing and interaction with the media (Krugman, 1971). More recent research adopts the theory to apply to products/services in respect of involvement of

individual consumers (Bloch & Richins, 1983). The literature acknowledges that there are different types of involvement, including personal, physical, and situational (Zaichkowsky, 1985). Yet, the central premise of the theory of involvement rests on the relevance a product or service holds for a consumer, either based on the person's intrinsic needs and interests or based on impulsive desire on a specific occasion.

Among various involvement concepts, personal involvement seems most relevant to tourism and hospitality research (Havitz & Dimanche, 1997; Prayag & Ryan, 2012); hence, it is the central focus of the current study. Personal involvement refers to a state of arousal, motivation, and interest toward a specific object (e.g. product, service, or event) (Havitz & Dimanche, 1997). Zaichkowsky (1985) defines the concept as "inherent interests, values, or needs that motivate one toward the object" (p. 342). People who are involved in a particular product/service pay more attention to it and perceive higher importance and relevancy of the product/service to them. Such importance often compels them to acquire and spend more time and effort to obtain information about the product/service, and they are more likely to purchase it (Beatty & Smith, 1987). Schiffman and Lazar (2004) note further that "a consumer's level of involvement depends on personal relevance that the product holds for that consumer. . . high-involvement purchases are those that are very important to the consumer" (p. 235). In addition, although there exist many different operational definitions of involvement, scholars argue that the construct should be assessed by the degree of personal importance to the product or service offering (Bloch & Richins, 1983; Schiffman & Lazar, 2004). Therefore, we applied this operational definition to the green involvement scale developed in this study.

Personal involvement has also gained attention in the leisure and tourism literature. For example, Havitz and Dimanche (1997) define leisure involvement as a motivational state that compels people to think about their leisure and recreation activities, which in turn affect their actual participation and behavior. In his hedonic tourism motivational model, Goossens (2000) states that involvement in travel is evoked by push and pull motives which compel tourists to search for relevant information about a destination or trip and to pursue their travel needs. In turn, involvement would lead to a favorable response toward a trip or destination. The work of Gursoy and Gavcar (2003) suggests that tourist involvement is a multidimensional construct which includes three facets: interest/pleasure, risk probability, and risk importance. Although Gursoy and Gavcar do not provide a conceptual definition of the construct, they seem to agree with the definition from the mainstream to refer to tourist's personal relevancy and importance. Prayag and Ryan (2012) adopt the definition from Sherif (1967) referring to personal involvement as an attitude, which is formed and learnt during interaction with the social environment, and which often leads to different consumer responses and loyalty behaviors (cf. Laurent & Kapferer, 1985). Prayag and Ryan's study further provides empirical support for the linkage between personal involvement of a place, place attachment, and loyalty intention.

There are differences in personal involvement between green and other event attributes. Using Pegg and Patterson's (2010) music festival study as an example, it is suggested that country music, a variety of activities, and festival atmosphere (e.g. a casual, relaxed, family-friendly place) are elements important to event-goers. Other studies (Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Kim, Suh, & Eves, 2010) show that good taste and news experience are important attributes that people seek in food-related events, often leading to pleasure and satisfaction. Bell and Marshall (2003) further operationalize food involvement as the extent to which people enjoy talking about food, entertain thoughts about food during the day, and engage in food-related activities. However, green event attendees are looking for more than just regular food. As mentioned above, they crave foods that are green, and

they seek out opportunities to participate in green-related activities and programs, prefer recyclable decorations and dinnerware, and enjoy reducing waste and energy consumption (Amendah & Park, 2008; Laing & Frost, 2010). In turn, attending events offering green initiatives is often perceived by attendees as being socially responsible and contributing to environmental sustainability; thus, the presence of these initiatives is important to them (Ottman, 1993).

Based on the above literature, we define green festival involvement as event attendees' personal involvement with green attributes and activities offered by a festival. Our conceptual definition is consistent with Bloch and Richins' (1983) conceptual model of importance which posits the pivotal role of product/service importance and relevancy on personal involvement. Our definition also suggests that the concept should contain multiple facets to represent the multitudes of green attributes and activities.

Hypothesis development

Green festival involvement and perceived value

The extant literature has acknowledged that consumers who perceive that a service is important and relevant to them exert more effort to learn about it, engage more in the interaction process with the providers, have favorable dialog and communication with the provider in the service delivery process, and perceive higher value of the service received (Brodie, Hollebeek, Juric, & Ilic, 2011). Although there are many types of perceived value, this study focuses on the functional aspect which emphasizes the utility and performance of a specific product or service. Whittaker, Ledden, and Kalafatis (2007) further define perceived value as "an offering's ability to fulfill the function that it has been created to provide, as well as the benefits associated with owning it" (p. 347). Because functional value is particularly associated with extrinsic attributes, such as benefits associated with green attributes employed in events, it follows that event attendees could better evaluate the services received in exchange for their payment. Accordingly we define "green value" as the functional aspects of what people perceive as environmentally friendly in respect to the money they spend.

The involvement–value relationship is rooted in the work of Petty and Cacioppo (1981), who observe that highly involved consumers in a specific product category generally have a higher value perception of that product or product category. They therefore spend more time and effort searching for information on the product category than their less involved counterparts. From a conceptual standpoint, the literature pertaining to the linkage between involvement and value often notes an effect of involvement on hedonic response, which suggests that consumers perceive better value and are more likely to be satisfied with a product or service if they are more involved in such a product or service (Bloch & Richins, 1983; Goossens, 2000).

Empirical research from Michaelidou and Dibb (2006) shows that a consumer's involvement in clothing is highly related to that consumer's perceived symbolic value of the branded product (i.e. the benefits that consumer may receive via its use), since consumers consider clothing as self-expression. O'Cass and Choy (2008) also show that consumers' involvement is positively related to their perceived brand status and value (i.e. quality, price, and prestige), which in turn affect their purchasing behaviors. O'Cass and Choy's study further points out the importance for retailers to communicate their brand values relevant to the target consumers, particularly for those highly involved in the specific product category, because this will affect consumers' willingness to pay a higher price for the brand.

The literature is beginning to delineate the linkage between consumer involvement and perceived value in the tourism and hospitality settings. Empirical evidence from Hightower, Brady, and Baker's (2002) study shows that personal involvement in a sport event leads to a higher level of perceived event value through better service quality and positive affection. Chen and Tsai (2008) examine the effects of involvement on consumers' perceived value and loyalty regarding TV travel product shopping in Taiwan; they show that the greater the involvement of a consumer, the greater the perceived value of the product, which in turn results in higher consumer loyalty. Prayag and Ryan (2012) also note that tourists' perceived hedonic and symbolic values of a trip are attributed to their involvement with a product/service.

Although studies on the relationship between festival attendees' involvement and perceived value do not exist, based on the literature above, it can be reasonably assumed that attendees who perceive a green event is important to them would be more interested in it and hence perceive higher value in it. It follows that people who are more involved in (i.e. realize the importance of) green initiatives would perceive an event to have better value if it contains some green components.

Hypothesis 1: Attendees' green involvement in a festival (green festival involvement) is positively related to their perceived value of the event (green value).

Green festival involvement and consumer spending

Personal involvement does affect not only consumers' perceived value, but also their purchase decisions and behaviors (Chen & Tsai, 2008; Tarkiainen & Sundqvist, 2009; Zaichkowsky, 1985). Consumers with high-involvement purchases are likely to display attitudinal loyalty and to spend more on merchandise that they view as important and relevant to them (Hu & Yu, 2007). In particular, Hu and Yu's study finds that shopping involvement determines the difference in craft purchase behaviors including shopping expenditure. Less involved shoppers lack shopping interest and spend less, with lower purchase frequencies. But shopping enthusiasts value craftsmanship more and spend significantly more in tourism shopping. Similar findings are reported by Yuan, So, and Chakravarty (2005), who show that wine enthusiasts (those highly involved in wine) not only have a strong personal preference in wine, but also spend significantly more money on purchasing wine than wine novices (those with limited personal involvement).

In respect to green products and services, there is an increasing demand to associate green with financial outcomes and consumer spending; because being green is not only a marketing campaign (Goodman, 2012), but also a major source of revenue, as consumers are more inclined to pay for it (Flatters & Willmott, 2009). The Boston Consultant Group (Anonymous, 2009) reports that consumers are still willing to pay more for green products even during the financial crisis. Rosenbaum and Wong (2012) examine tourists' spending behaviors on green hotel services; they find that although tourists are more likely to stay in a hotel if it is eco-friendly (cf. Kim & Han, 2010), they are only willing to pay an average of 3% more for green services. Amendah and Park (2008) observe that consumers who are more involved in environmental issues are more likely to purchase green products.

Due to the global trend in green consumption and green events (Green Festival, 2012; Laing & Frost, 2010; Park & Boo, 2010), as well as the literature on the relationship between consumer involvement and spending, it is reasonable to assume that attendees' green festival involvement is positively related to their event spending. In particular, this

study examines the perceived change in spending if attendees are offered green attributes in an event. Hence, we explore both the relationship between green festival involvement and change in event spending.

Hypothesis 2: Attendees' green festival involvement is positively related to their change in spending if green attributes are employed (spending changes or Δ spending).

Perceived value and spending

Customer perceived value can be defined as “the consumer’s overall assessment of the utility of a product based on perceptions of what is received and what is given” (Zeithaml, 1988, p. 14). There are two important concepts regarding customer’s perceived value. First, it is a result of the consumers’ pre-purchase expectation, evaluation during the transaction, and post-purchase assessment. Second, perceived value involves a trade-off of benefits received to sacrifices made (Zeithaml, 1988). Benefits include product reliability, service quality, and convenience; sacrifices include time and money spent (Lemon, Rust, & Zeithaml, 2001; Rosenbaum & Wong, 2010).

Value is commonly acknowledged as an antecedent to consumer behaviors such as satisfaction and loyalty (Chen & Tsai, 2008; Zeithaml, 1988). It often acts as a signal to consumers that influences their purchase intentions, since their judgment is primarily based on incomplete information (Kardes, Posavac, & Cronley, 2004). Poor perceived value can lead to lower purchase intentions (Gounaris, Tzempelikos, & Chatzipanagiotou, 2007). Dodds, Monroe, and Grewal (1991), for instance, reveal that price, brand, and store information have direct associations with perceived value, which in turn influences consumers’ willingness to shop in retail stores. In respect to event services, Rosenbaum and Wong’s (2010) study demonstrates a direct linkage between perceived event value and attendees’ satisfaction. Siu, Wan, and Dong (2012) further report that the perceived value (i.e. value-for-money) enhances the positive impact customer satisfaction has on customers’ desire to stay in convention centers. In particular, customers’ perceived level of sacrifice has a direct effect on their desire to stay and willingness to spend.

From an eco-product and -service perspective, green perceived value is often defined as the overall net benefit of the trade-off between product or service that consumers receive, and the associated cost in respect to their environmental needs, desires, and expectations (Patterson & Spreng, 1997). Several studies have demonstrated the relationship between perceived green value and purchasing behaviors. Chen and Chang (2012), for example, examine Taiwanese consumer purchase experience of electronic products and acknowledge that perceived green value is positively related to green purchase intention. Koller, Floh, and Zauner (2011) test the relationship between consumers’ perceived ecological/green value and post-consumption behavior. They find that ecological value has indirect impacts on customer loyalty, including consumer spending, through the mediating role of functional, emotional, and social value perceptions. Perceived ecological value helps trigger consumers’ affective and behavioral responses e.g., “green to feelgood” and “green to be seen” (p. 1154) and would, therefore, motivate them to spend more. Other studies also show a linkage between perceived value and consumer spending in that customers are willing to pay more than 5% for environmental benefits (Reinhardt, 1998), especially if they could enjoy such benefits directly rather than indirectly through contributing to society as a whole (Ottman, 1993). Research in the hospitality industry further indicates that some guests opt to stay and spend more in green hotels because they

sense emotional benefits of saving the environment for the next generation (Hotel Online, 2002).

In respect to the financial outcomes of green events, the literature commonly acknowledges a positive effect of green initiatives on people's willingness to pay more. Prior research shows that 48% of event-goers would pay more to attend greener events because they recognize the benefits of adopting green practices (Laing & Frost, 2010). Challis (2013) investigates attitudes and behaviors of a large sample of event-goers to festivals from 32 countries worldwide and shows that 49.8% of festival-goers would pay an increased ticket price to reduce the festival's environmental impact. Hubbard, Mandabach, McDowall, and VanLeeuwen (2012) report that wine festival attendees are willing to pay more if the festival could offer locally produced foods, as it helps enhance the perceived sustainability of the hosting city. Accordingly, we believe that there is a positive relationship between perceived green value and change in event spending.

Hypothesis 3: Attendees' perceived green value of an event is positively related to their change in spending if green attributes are employed (Δ spending).

Study 1: scale generation and refinement

Scale item generation and initial refinement

This study follows the scale development process recommended by Churchill (1979). In the first stage of the development process, the authors searched the literature (e.g. Chancey, 2009; Hu et al., 2010; Mealey, 2012; Wallace, 2005) and compiled a list of items appropriate for the current research context. It generated 21 items pertaining to green involvement in festivals. Next, we recruited a panel of three experts with domain knowledge and expertise in event management or event tourism research, and asked them to evaluate the items and ensure content validity. The panel revised some items and added two additional items, to arrive at a total of 23 items. The authors further revised the 23 items and agreed upon the changes. The scale items were initially developed in English. One author then translated them into both Traditional and Simplified Chinese. Another two authors revised the translated version independently. Each item was assessed by 7-point semantic differential scale ranging from 1 (very unimportant) to 7 (very important), referring to the statement "How important are the following green attributes to you in a festival?"

Scale refinement and validation

To further refine the scale and examine the reliability and validity of it, we collected data by means of self-administered survey. Respondents were recruited by referral sampling, as the authors distributed the questionnaire to their friends and students. The questionnaire typically required three to five minutes to complete. No incentives were offered.

A total of 181 respondents completed the survey. Nine were removed due to lack of experience in festivals. The remaining 172 respondents had attended at least one festival in the past year; and on average attended more than four such events. The respondents included 70% women and 30% men, 45% between the ages of 21 and 30 and another 45% between the ages of 18 and 20. Most (72.4%) were studying or holding a bachelor's degree, while 27.6% had up to a secondary-school education; and most (80%) were residents of Macau, while the rest came from mainland China (14.7%), Hong Kong (2.4%), and other Asian regions (2.9%).

Next, we performed exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to refine and validate the 23-item scale. We used principal component analysis with promax rotation for EFA. Promax rotation was used because we assumed that the underlying factors were correlated. The results suggest that nine items should be removed from the scale due to low primary factor loading or high cross-loading. The remaining 14 items loaded on four factors: *green food*, *green design and waste management*, *green activity and energy use*, and *green environment*. Table 1 presents the factor loadings, dimensionality, and scale reliability. Although the results generally show that the green involvement scale is valid and reliable, external cross-validation is needed to confirm the findings.

Study 2: scale cross-validation

Sample

To cross-validate the green involvement scale developed in Study 1, we collected additional data using a person-administered face-to-face survey. Respondents were recruited from

Table 1. Item descriptions and factor loadings for study 1.

	Factor loading	Variance explained	Cronbach's alpha
<i>Green food</i>	$\gamma^a = 1.23$	8.80%	.71
Locally produced food being the focus of the festival	.78		
The provision of organic food	.87		
The provision of vegetarian food	.71		
<i>Green design and waste management</i>	$\gamma = 4.80$	34.29%	.83
The use of compostable and reusable dishes and flatware	.51		
Being able to bring our utensils	.61		
Provide education program about green lives	.75		
Offer green related themes	.74		
Offer green materials used for the decoration of displays or stalls	.70		
Provide simple decor to reduce unnecessary decoration	.93		
<i>Green activity and energy use</i>	$\gamma = 2.06$	14.74%	.73
The availability of shuttle buses	.84		
The availability of public transport	.68		
Offer entertainments that promote a green culture	.72		
<i>Green environment</i>	$\gamma = 1.08$	7.74%	.78
Offer cooking smoke-free environment	.89		
Offer second-hand smoke-free environment	.87		

Note: Items with primary loadings greater than or equal .50 and secondary loadings less than or equal .30 are retained. All other loadings of .30 or below are not reported.

Total variance explained = 65.58%.

Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin measure of sampling adequacy = .81.

Bartlett's test of sphericity = 963.09₍₉₁₎, $p < .001$.

^a γ = eigenvalues.

attendees of the Macau Food Festival, selected because it was one of the largest festivals in the region, lasting over three weeks in November and held annually since 2000, drawing several hundred thousands of tourists and residents. To generalize the findings to both residents and tourists, a quota sampling method was used, with half of the sample as tourists and another half as residents. The interviews were conducted by trained Chinese–English bilingual field investigators. Respondents were approached on leaving the venue.

The sample includes 406 complete responses, a response rate of 70.4%. Of the respondents, 62.6% were female and 37.4% were male; most respondents (67.0%) were between 18 and 27 years of age; 50.2% had some college education and 48.4% had high-school education; and 47% had a monthly income below US\$650; 49.0% were local residents, 27.3% from mainland China, 9.1% from Hong Kong, and the rest from Taiwan (2.7%), other Asian countries (1.7%), Europe (3.2%), USA and Canada (2.7%), Australia and New Zealand (1.2%), and other regions (3.0%).

Results

We followed Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, and Tatham (2006) and randomly split the dataset into two sub-samples. We performed EFA using the first sub-sample (sub-sample 1) and conducted confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using the second sub-sample (sub-sample 2). We first performed EFA. Only items with primary loading $\geq .50$ and secondary loading $\leq .30$ were retained. The results suggest that the 14-item scale can be reduced to a three-factor solution: *green food*, *green environment and activity* (items were combined for *green environment* and *green activity and energy use* from Study 1), and *green design and waste management* (see Table 2). To test and ensure that the right number of factors was retained, we performed parallel analysis as the literature suggests (Thompson, 2004). The results indicate that three factors with eigenvalue for the actual data ($\gamma = 5.52-1.37$) exceed the eigenvalue for the related factor for the randomly ordered scores ($\gamma = 1.41-1.24$). Hence, three factors should be retained; they were able to explain 62.13% of the variance of scale. *Green food* assesses the importance of having green food (e.g. organic and locally produced food) available at a festival; *green design and waste management* assesses the importance of using environmentally friendly décor of the venue and reusable dinnerware for the consumers; and *green environment and activity* assesses the importance of whether the venue offers a clear and smoke-free environment, the availability of public transportation accessing the venue, and whether the festival offers entertainment activities that promote a green culture.

We examined the three-factor solution through CFA using the sub-sample 2 in LISREL 8.80. The measurement model has adequate model fit with comparative fit index (CFI) = .97, goodness of fit index (GFI) = .93, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .07, and standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) = .06. Convergent validity was assessed based on three criteria: (1) the average variance extracted is greater than .50, (2) the primary factor loadings are greater than .50, and the standardized loadings are significant at the .001 level. Discriminant validity is warranted, as the square of the correlation of each pair of factors is less than the variance extracted for each factor. In addition, each of the three sub-scales is reliable, as Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability are greater than the .70 threshold (see Table 2). In summary, the scale is reasonably valid and reliable.

Next, to identify which measurement model fits the data best, we pooled the two sub-samples into a single dataset and explored three competing measurement models: a one-factor model, a three-factor model, and a model with one second-order factor and three first-order factors. The results show that both the three-factor and the second-order factor

Table 2. Scale validation for study 2.

	Pattern coefficient	Variance explained	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	AVE ^a
<i>Green food</i>	$\gamma^b = 1.42$	10.14%	.77	.80	.58
Locally produced food being the focus of the festival	.80 (11.60)				
The provision of organic food	.81 (9.85)				
The provision of vegetarian food	.78 (8.60)				
<i>Green design and waste management</i>	$\gamma = 5.22$	37.30%	.87	.90	.56
The use of compostable and reusable dishes and flatware	.55 (11.12)				
Being able to bring our utensils	.74 (11.70)				
Provide education program about green lives	.87 (9.44)				
Offer green related themes	.83 (8.73)				
Offer green materials used for the decoration of displays or stalls	.84 (13.60)				
Provide simple decor to reduce unnecessary decoration	.80 (9.71)				
<i>Green environment and activity</i>	$\gamma = 2.09$	14.95%	.80	.85	.54
The availability of shuttle buses	.73 (9.71)				
The availability of public transport	.76 (11.02)				
Offer entertainments that promote a green culture	.67 (11.51)				
Offer cooking smoke-free environment	.72 (11.05)				
Offer second-hand smoke-free environment	.77 (9.62)				

Note: Items with primary loadings greater than or equal .50 and secondary loadings less than or equal .30 are retained. All other loadings of .30 or below are not reported.

Total variance explained = 62.13%.

Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin measure of sampling adequacy = .85.

Bartlett's test of sphericity = 2,644.57₍₉₁₎, $p < .001$.

Comparative fit index (CFI) = .97, goodness of fit index (GFI) = .93, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .07, standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) = .06.

^a AVE: average variance extracted; ^b γ = eigenvalues.

t-values are in parentheses.

models have the best fit, with the lowest Akaike's information criterion = 310.08, along with other fit indexes (see Table 3).

In summary, this study followed the steps of scale development process recommended by Churchill (1979). First, we specified the domain of the construct of green involvement by undertaking an extensive literature search. Second, based on the literature and inputs from three experts, we generated a sample of 23 initial items. Third, we purified the scale

Table 3. Confirmatory factor analysis model fit comparisons.

Model	Description	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	p	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR	AIC
1	One factor	861.12	73	11.80	<.001	.87	.16	.10	925.12
2	Three factor	242.08	71	3.41	<.001	.97	.08	.06	310.08
3	One second-order factor with three first-order factor	242.08	71	3.41	<.001	.97	.08	.06	310.08

Note: AIC = Akaike's information criterion.

The data analysis uses a pooled sample: $N = 406$.

using EFA based on data collected from Study 1. The results suggest a four-factor solution with 14 items. To cross-validate the scale to assess scale reliability and validity, we collected an additional data set in Study 2. The findings reveal that the 14-item scale could further be organized parsimoniously in three factors, and the dimensionality was further confirmed through parallel analysis. Findings from CFA also indicate that the measurement model fits the data fairly well, and that a three-factor model possesses better fit than other competitive models.

Scale cross-validation

We used an internal cross-validation procedure suggested by Hair et al. (2006) to cross-validate the proposed scale in two steps (cf. Wong & Wan, 2013). First, we tested full metric invariance (i.e. factor-loading equivalence) based on the two randomly split sub-samples. This was achieved by comparing the $\Delta\chi^2$ of Model 1, when the factor loadings were freely estimated for both sub-samples, and Model 2, when the factor loadings for both sub-samples were constrained to be invariant. Results from Table 4 show that the two sub-samples are invariant ($\Delta\chi^2_{(10)} = 3.61$, n.s.). In the next step, we split the dataset into two groups by gender. We then repeated the aforementioned procedure in group invariance. The results also indicate that the two groups are not different ($\Delta\chi^2_{(10)} = 10.94$, n.s.). The combined results support full metric invariance, providing evidence of internal cross-validation.

Table 4. Test of measurement model invariance.

Model	Description	Compare with	χ^2	df	$\Delta\chi^2_{(\Delta df)}$	p	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR
1	Baseline model for sub-samples 1 and 2	–	370.03	162	–	–	.96	.08	.08
2	Factor pattern invariance for sub-samples 1 and 2	Model 1	373.64	172	3.61 _($\Delta 10$)	.96	.96	.08	.08
3	Baseline model for male and female	–	383.40	162	–	–	.95	.08	.07
4	Factor pattern invariance for male and female	Model 3	394.34	172	10.94 _($\Delta 10$)	.36	.95	.08	.07

Table 5. Correlation coefficients, means, standard deviations.

	Means	SD	No. of items	1	2	3	4
1. Green food	5.16	1.12	3				
2. Green design and waste management	5.51	1.03	6	.44***			
3. Green environment and activity	5.09	1.23	5	.44***	.45***		
4. Green value	4.81	1.25	3	.47***	.29***	.53***	
5. Δ Spending on green event	29.06	31.96	2	.13**	.14**	.10†	.22***

Note: † $p < .10$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

To assess nomological validity, we examined the inter-factor correlations among the three green festival involvement factors and their relationships with *perceived green value*. That is, we postulate that as attendees are more involved in a green festival, they should perceive better value from such an event, as Hypothesis 1 proposes. Perceived green value was defined as the value people perceived while attending a festival that is environmentally friendly. The scale was assessed by a 3-item scale (i.e. “green products provide good value for you,” “you attend a festival because it is environmentally friendly”, and “you attend a festival because it has more environmental benefits than other festivals”) adopted from Chen and Chang (2012). Each item was measured by a 7-point scale anchored by 1 (strongly disagree) and 7 (strongly agree). The scale is adequately reliable with $\alpha = .79$.

Results of the zero-order correlation analysis (see Table 5) show support of nomological validity, as all tested relationships are significant at the .001 level ($r = .29$ – $.53$). The correlations among the unobserved variables ranged from $r = .03$ (*n.s.*) to $r = .62$ ($p < .001$). Next, we examined the research framework illustrated in Figure 1 using structural equation modeling (SEM). We controlled for respondents’ gender, age, and education level. Although our sample includes tourists and residents, our preliminary analysis did not show a significant difference in the proposed relationships; hence, group different test for moderating effect was not considered in the study. We tested multicollinearity, and the results suggest that it is not an issue in the present study (variance inflation factor < 1.4). We performed analysis for two competing structural models (see Table 6). Model 1 postulates effects of the three green festival involvement factors on perceived green value. The results indicate that green food ($\beta = .32, p < .001$) and green design and waste management ($\beta = .48, p < .001$) are significant predictors of green value. Model 2 postulates an effect of green festival involvement, as a second-order factor with three first-order factors, on perceived green value. The results show that the relationship is

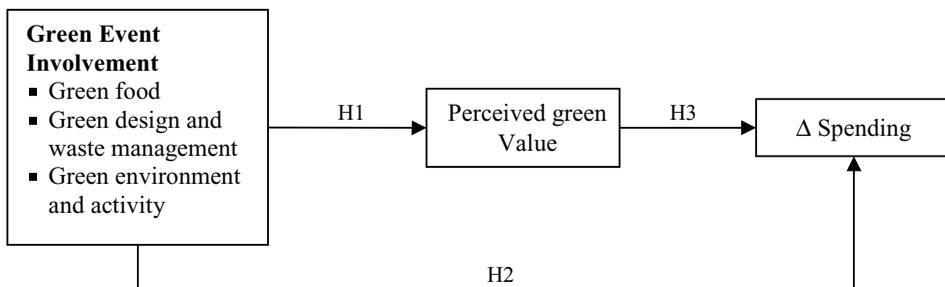


Figure 1. Research framework.

Table 6. Results of structural model path estimates.

	Model 1	Model 2
Green food	.32*** (4.34)	.72*** ^b (6.68)
Green design and waste management	.48*** (5.93)	.79*** ^b (7.76)
Green environment and activity	-.08 (-1.13)	.65*** ^b (7.78)
Green event involvement ^a	–	.70*** (7.76)
R^2	.42	.49
χ^2 (df)	386.38 ₍₁₄₉₎	393.84 ₍₁₅₇₎
CFI	.97	.96
GFI	.91	.91
RMSEA	.06	.06
SRMR	.06	.06

Note: *** $p < .001$.

Parameter estimates are standardized.

^aSecond-order factor.

^bFactor loading for green festival involvement.
 t -values are in parentheses.

significant ($\beta = .70$, $p < .001$). However, none of the control variables are significant. Furthermore, Model 2 is more desirable, as it better explains the criterion variable with $R^2 = .49$. In summary, both models show adequate model fit with $CFI \geq .96$, $GFI = .91$, $RMSEA = .06$, and $SRMR = .06$.

Next, we examine the financial outcomes of offering green initiatives in festivals. Our survey included three questions: (1) How much did attendees spend at a festival? (2) How much more or less would they be willing to spend at the same festival if the venue were environmentally friendly? and (3) How much more would they be willing to spend at the same festival if it offered green food? These questions were adopted based on the contingent valuation method (Rosenbaum, 2008), which asks respondents to indicate the maximum amount of money they are willing to pay for certain hypothetical experiences. The contents of these questions were developed based on the literature which commonly suggests that food and venue are the most important attributes for green events (Green Festival, 2012; Whitfield & Dioko, 2012). Table 7 presents the descriptive statistics of the three variables. On average, respondents spent about US\$30 at the festival. They were willing to spend about 28% and 29% more if the event were held at an environmentally friendly venue and offered green food, respectively (see Table 7). That is on average, people are willing to spend about US\$9 more if a festival includes some kind of green attributes (i.e. spending changes or Δ spending).

Table 7. Descriptive statistics for spending.

	Mean	SD
Spending on most recent food festival	USD 29.56	USD 27.72
Change in spending if the venue is environmentally friendly	28.29%	33.60%
Change in spending if the festival provides green food	29.83%	33.30%

Table 8. Results of structural model path estimates.

	Model 3		Model 4
	Δ Spending on green venue	Δ Spending on green food	Δ Spending on green event
Green festival involvement ^a	[.16]***	[.19]***	[.18]***
Green perceived value	.23*** (5.01)	.27*** (5.13)	.21*** (8.54)
R^2	.08	.09	.07
χ^2 (df)	716.30 ₍₁₉₅₎		411.54 ₍₁₉₁₎
CFI	.89		.97
GFI	.86		.92
RMSEA	.08		.05
SRMR	.08		.05

Note: *** $p < .001$.

Parameter estimates are standardized. Indirect path estimates are in brackets.

^a Second-order factor.

^b Factor loading for green festival involvement.

t -values are in parentheses.

We then explored the financial outcomes of green involvement through the mediating role of perceived green value in SEM. We also controlled for respondents' gender, age, and education. Model 3 examines Δ Spending on both green venue and on green food (see Table 8). That is, we examined the effect of green festival involvement and perceived green value on the two criterion variables: Δ Spending on green venue (i.e. if the festival were held in a green environment) and Δ Spending on green food (i.e. if the festival were to offer green food). We followed Baron and Kenny (1986) and tested the mediating effect of perceived green value. The results suggest that perceived green value fully mediates the effect of green festival involvement on Δ Spending on green venue ($\beta = .23, p < .001$) and Δ Spending on green food ($\beta = .27, p < .001$).

The fit indexes, however, indicate a lack of fit between the proposed model and the data. We addressed this issue by reducing the two criterion variables into a latent factor: *Δ Spending on green festival*. EFA shows that the factor loadings for the two items are .96 and Cronbach's alpha is .90. We performed another SEM; the results in Model 4 show that perceived green value significantly related to Δ Spending on green festival ($\beta = .21, p < .001$). The fit indexes indicate adequate fit between Model 4 and the data: CFI = .97, GFI = .92, RMSEA = .05, SRMR = .05 (see Table 8). The results also suggest that attendee's education level is related to Δ Spending on green festival ($\beta = .15, p < .01$), indicating that patrons with higher education are likely to spend more on green festivals. The final estimated research model is presented in Figure 2.

Conclusion

This research fills the gap in the literature by understanding attendees' green involvement in festivals and its underlying dimensionality, exploring its effect on attendees' green value perceptions in such events, and examining its direct and indirect effects on financial

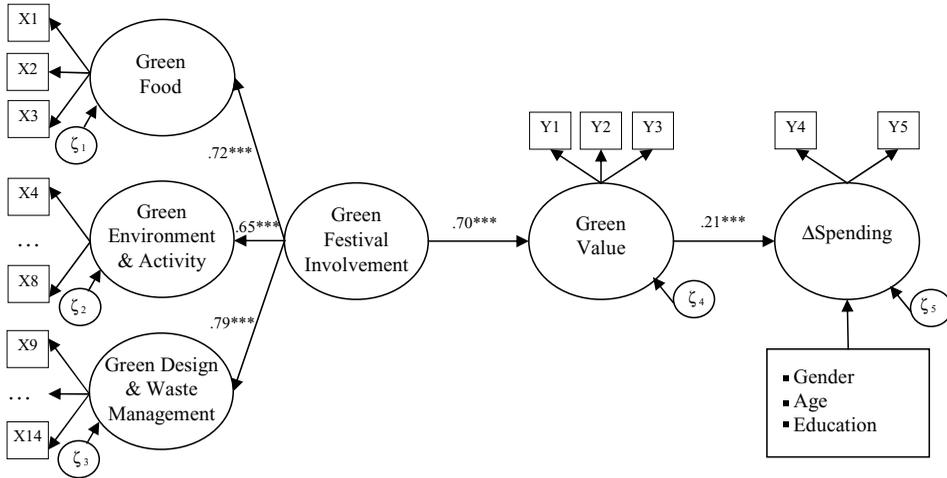


Figure 2. Final estimated research model.

outcomes. We collected data from two surveys and tested the validity and reliability of the green festival involvement scale in multiple analyses. We then explored the research framework with a path leading from green involvement to green value and change in spending in multiple structural models. The results generally support the proposed hypotheses. Theoretical and managerial implications follow.

Contribution to theory

This research contributes to the literature in three primary ways. First, while prior studies focus on personal involvement of a place or a leisure activity, this research investigates personal involvement in respect to green initiatives of events. Although environmentally friendly initiatives and green events have been studied in prior research, the literature pertaining to these two research streams is still in its infancy. More importantly, this article bridges the gap between the two research streams and updates the literature by exploring personal involvement in green festivals. Based on two empirical studies and a rigorous scale development process, our findings show a three-factor solution of green festival involvement which is germane to the domain of green food, waste management, and environment and activity. This study offers new insights by demonstrating how people's green involvement can be assessed in an event setting. Because green involvement represents a person's state of arousal, motivation, and interest toward green activities or events, it follows that the construct developed in this study could help scholars to better explain people's perceptions and behaviors toward eco-friendly initiatives.

Second, we tested the effect of green festival involvement on perceived green value assessment and change in spending. Based on results of four different structural models, we show that green festival involvement, as a second-order construct, significantly influences attendees' perceived value of green events. In particular, most respondents agree that if a festival features green initiatives, the value of the event increases. Furthermore, our findings also show a positive linkage between green festival involvement and perceived value, suggesting that as consumers become more involved in an environmentally friendly event, they are more inclined to realize its value. The findings offer new insights

into how consumers' value perceptions of green initiatives could be influenced based upon their involvement in these initiatives.

Third, the path leading from green festival involvement to change in spending deserves more attention. Prior research on green spending produced mixed results, as some studies show that people are willing to spend more and pay a premium on green products/services, while others are less willing (Rosenbaum & Wong, 2012). We provide empirical evidence to warrant the conclusion that tourists and residents alike are willing to spend an average of 29% more on green food in festivals. This finding is not surprising, as statistics from the popular press commonly acknowledge that people are willing to pay more for green products. What is perhaps surprising is that our sample shows that people are also willing to spend an average of 28% more at festivals in environmentally friendly venues. The sharp contrast between the findings of this study and that of Rosenbaum and Wong could be attributed to the research context; in that consumers might be more involved with events as opposed to other hospitality services such as accommodation, as in Rosenbaum and Wong's study. In fact, our findings show that green festival involvement does exercise an indirect effect on change in consumer spending through the full mediating role of perceived green value. That is, consumers are willing to spend more on a green event if they perceive that the event offers them better value than events that do not include some sort of green components. Hence, this research sheds new light by presenting a framework with empirical evidence delineating how personal involvement in green events may affect their value perceptions and ultimately trigger change in their spending at such events.

Contribution to practice

This research offers several implications for practitioners. First, our findings support a full mediating effect of value on the relationship between green involvement and change in event spending. Thus, this study helps practitioners to clarify the understanding of the antecedents of change in spending, in that attendees' green involvement is an indirect rather than a direct driver of their spending behaviors. That is, when attendees become more involved in an environmentally friendly event, they are better able to realize the value of it, and therefore, to spend more money on it. It is therefore prudent for event and venue managers to embrace green initiatives and to educate attendees and spectators on the importance of the environmental issues: there is a clear and strong linkage between green involvement and perceived value. Marketing efforts should also be devoted to enhance attendees' green involvement in the context of events and perhaps in other hospitality settings as well. Only if consumers take more interest in and feel connected to the environmental issues in their life will they be more inclined to engage in environmentally friendly events such as a food festival that is green. As a result, they would better be able to appreciate the value of a green event and hence, willing to spend significantly more.

Furthermore, our results show that attendees express a higher level of willingness to pay more at green food festivals than other service and hospitality sectors, as reported in prior studies (Kim & Han, 2010). It suggests that by engaging in green initiatives, an event could provide sound financial contribution and competitive advantages to event organizers, performers, and venues. Such financial contribution becomes a crucial means to enhance the sustainability of an event. Although managers generally assume that adopting green practices is costly (Wan, 2007), our findings show that, on the contrary, it could be a cash cow. Stakeholders in the industry should be aware of this, and make greater efforts to promote green practices in their events. In addition, government and industry should make efforts to educate the event organizers on how profitable their

events could be by adopting green practices in their events, through workshops, seminars, and public relations campaigns. For academics, more research should be carried out to examine the benefits (including the social, environmental, and financial) of adopting green practices at a food festival and explore how a green food festival could contribute to the sustainability of events and attractiveness of a destination.

Festival organizers and marketers could also collaborate with the government of the host community to provide eco-friendly event information to convince consumers about the influence of their consumption on the environment, as the literature suggests (Amendah & Park, 2008). Environmental information should be made available with easy access in the event venues as well as at travel attractions and other tourism hotspots, such as parks, heritage sites, and gas stations or convenience stores. Through these efforts, we believe that green seekers would be made more aware of and become more interested in different types of green events. On the other hand, regular event-goers will be exposed to various green attributes in such events; we believe that such experience would motivate people to be more involved in green practices.

Besides printed materials such as booklets, posters, and newspapers, visual presentations often create profound effects on consumers' consuming patterns and choices. For instance, videos about how sharks are killed for their fins are widely broadcast in order to influence consumers to protect sharks and avoid buying shark fins. Event practitioners could utilize videos as a marketing communication channel to disseminate information and educate attendees to consume more green food, to engage in waste management, to take public transportation, to use recyclable tools, and more. Videos could be placed near an event entrance and in green education booths in order to catch the attendees' attention as well as to increase their environmental awareness. These initiatives could bring forward environmental issues as more relevant and important to festival attendees, since they are the very attributes that underlie attendees' green festival involvement. That said, this study provides event practitioners a means to access attendees' green involvement and an avenue to access which aspect and to what extent their clienteles may engage in a specific category of green initiatives. This study is also important as it shows that management's effort on green initiatives would pay dividends.

Our findings show that attendees are generally willing to pay an average of 28% (or US\$9) more on green food in festivals if they perceive the event offers them green value unlike other events. Event marketers should make efforts to convey to attendees the different kinds of green attributes they offer. As Table 6 presents, our data show that *green design and waste management* is the most important driver of perceived green value, followed by *green food* and *green environment and activity*. Therefore, instead of merely promoting a specific service product of interest in a focal event (e.g. food at a food festival), event marketers and organizers could also promote the event in respect to its green activities and educational programs, smoke-free environment, and most important of all, green decor and waste prevention. Being able to enjoy delicious and unique food in a festival is certainly essential to most attendees. Yet, being able to contribute to protecting the environment by participating in a green festival with other attributes such as enjoying a smoke-free environment, indulging in a eco-friendly environment, and using recyclable utensils that could save the environment, definitely enhances the appeal.

Limitations and future research directions

Several research limitations are noted in this research. First, our operational definition of green involvement does not include risk. Our decision is based on prior studies that show

that the importance aspect alone represents most of the involvement construct (Mittal, 1989). Second, our sample limits the generalizability of the findings to other events, as we focus on festivals, particularly food festivals. Although we can study other types of festivals, food festivals offer specific opportunities to include green initiatives such as green food and waste management. Third, this study utilized self-reported behaviors and perceptions as proxies for actual behaviors. We acknowledge that this is a limitation of the study; there could be differences between what people report and what they actually do. Finally, although we controlled for the demographic variables, our findings may be still contingent on personal factors (e.g. personality and past experience) and situation factors (e.g. the type of event and the type of hospitality services) as we formerly mentioned. Future research could investigate the potential moderating effect at both the individual level and the contextual level in order to shed more insights into the proposed relationships.

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