

# PERCEPTION IN TOURISM & HOSPITALITY: A META ANALYSIS

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**Abstract:** Perception in the title of 45 studies in the hospitality and tourism literature over the past 36 years lead readers to believe that perception was to be measured. In fact, 33 studies measured attitude, belief, impact, opinion or preference. Another 12 developed perceptions from composite measures, none of which employed common components for perception. This research contributes to the tourism literature by identifying that perception was always used in the vernacular, not academic sense. Tourism and hospitality researchers are invited to be careful in their use of perception to maintain academic integrity.

**Key words:** attitude, belief, impact, opinion, perception, preference.

## Introduction

This sample of 45 studies of the tourism and hospitality literature included the word *perception* or perceived in their title.

I have italicized the word *perception* throughout this work and I hope that will be helpful, rather than a hindrance.

This research shows that the word *perception* has three broad categories of meaning, firstly the vernacular, secondly an academic, thirdly the tourism and hospitality industry meaning.

From the vernacular The Concise Oxford English Dictionary 11<sup>th</sup> edition, edited by Stevenson and Waite, (2012), says of *perception*:

“The ability to see, hear, or become aware of something through the senses. The state of being or process of becoming aware of something in such

a way; A way of regarding or understanding or interpreting something; Intuitive understanding and insight.” (Stevenson and Waite, (2012)

The academic or second category of meaning perception is: the academic & scientific meaning of the word. “The neurophysiological processes including memory, by which an organism becomes aware of and interprets external stimuli.” (Stevenson and Waite, (2012)

The literal difference between the vernacular and the academic meaning of *perception* according to Stevenson and Waite (2012) is that the vernacular involves the steps of sensation, understanding and then interpreting “something” through the senses.

The academic use of *perception* is that all senses are implied, not just the visual.

One could argue, that “interpreting” may also involve memory, in that “something new or different, “is compared either with “something

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known from the past,” or compared with a “standard,” of which we are aware and perhaps knowledgeable. The “standard” could be a previous exposure to something currently experiencing, or it could be a national or an international standard, set by some authority on the subject, and with which we possibly agree as representative of our “reality.”

The academic meaning of *perception* involves neurophysiological processes that involves sensation, interpretation and possibly memory, but omits understanding; though interpreting may be construed as understanding by some readers. Yet other academic readers might disagree and claim that the academic meaning of the term *perception* does not require understanding as part of the physiological process i.e. what is given is taken *carte blanche*. Some others might say, that understanding involves additional processes beyond merely perceiving something. So this remains part of an open debate.

Before deciding the meaning of *perception* intended by tourism and travel researchers in these studies, it is appropriate that a third meaning of *perception*, be considered i.e. one specific to tourism and hospitality literature.

To illustrate this point, two pairs of popular and respected, tourism and hospitality academic researchers of *perception* have been selected.

The first pair define *perception* as follows:

“Perceptions [are] - the subjective interpretation by individuals of the data which

Is available to them, and which results in them having particular opinions of, and

attitudes towards products, places and organizations.”

Swarbrooke and Horner, (1999), p. 436

Researchers of the tourism and hospitality literature may be familiar with Swarbrooke and Horner (1999) as respected tourism and hospitality academics who have contributed significantly to tourism and hospitality literature.

Perhaps Swarbrooke and Horner’s particular definition of *perception* might have influenced other tourism and hospitality researchers, to adopt their particular definition of the word *perception*, in their own research. This meta analysis has included the possibility by checking the reference lists of the 45 studies, to see whether Swarbrooke and Horner (1999) were cited or whether the researchers provided a definition of *perception* close that of Swarbrooke and Horner (1999).

In the 45 studies of *perception* shown in Table 1 Swarbrooke and Horner (1999) were not cited suggesting that a tourism and hospitality specific meaning of *perception* was not implied and use of the word *perception* was closely aligned with the vernacular definition of Stevenson and Waite (2012) cited earlier.

To add some depth to this tourism and hospitality specific use of the word *perception* a second pair of tourism and hospitality academics was chosen.

Reisinger and Turner, 2003, included a chapter on *perception*, in their book "*Cross Cultural Behaviour in Tourism*," and drew a distinction between the vernacular and tourism-specific definitions of *perception*.

According to whom "*perception* is a process by which an individual selects organizes and interprets stimuli into a meaningful and coherent picture of the world."

Reisinger  
and Turner (2003)

Reisinger and Turner attribute their use of the word *perception* to Schiffman and Kanuk, (1987), p.174, as a source of consumer behavior in the broader context rather than specifically to hospitality and tourism studies.

In addition to their initial definition of *perception*, Reisinger and Turner (2003) offered additional definitions of *perception* attributed to several additional sources i.e. Samovar and Porter (1991), who reviewed *perception* from a cultural perspective involving language, religion, food and more and who defined *perception* as:

"The process by which stimuli are selected from the external environment and interpreted into meaningful internal experiences."

Yet another definition provided by Reisinger and Turner, (2002), was cited from Mitchell (1978):

"*perceptions* as the processes that shape and produce what we actually experience."

Reisinger and Turner, (2003), further commented that similar definitions

were offered by Moutinho (1987) and Markin, (1974).

It is notable that Reisinger and Turner (2003) also take *perception* beyond the individual person by explaining that *perception* can be considered at three levels:

*Level 1 Perceptions* of other people (tourists' *perceptions* of hosts and hosts' *perceptions* of tourists);

*Level 2 Perceptions* of one's own (tourists' *perceptions* of themselves and their hosts' *perceptions* of themselves);

*Level 3 Perceptions of perceptions* called meta-perceptions indicate how others perceive they are perceived (tourist *perceptions* of how they are perceived by their hosts).

Reisinger and Turner, (2003), p.151

Whilst this distinction of three levels of *perception* is both interesting and informative, it leaves unanswered the issue of *perception* measurement as raised at the beginning of this study.

In the 45 tourism and hospitality *perception* studies reviewed here, researchers sought to understand to what degree our *perception* influences our feelings, opinion, attitude, preference and possibly behavior, as evidenced by the scales used to measure the same – however it is crucial to note that what was measured in all 45 studies was not *perception*.

As mentioned earlier what was measured in 32 of the 45 studies reviewed was either attitude, impact, opinion or preference, and defined in Table 1:

**Table 1** Definitions of related terms

Attitude	A way of thinking or feeling
Belief	A feeling that something exists or is true especially one without proof.
Impact	An act of one object hitting another; a marked effect or influence.
Opinion	A personal view not necessarily based on fact or knowledge; The views of people in general; An estimate of quality or worth.
Preference	A greater liking for one alternative over another;

Source: Catherine Soanes and Sarah Hawker, 2008, *The Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition

Measurement scales exist for each of the above terms and were employed in the studies reviewed.

Definitions state that *perception* is a composite process collectively involving all of our senses. As Reisinger and Turner (2003) also mention *meta-perception* occurs when our *perception* is influenced of others.

Thirty-three of the *perception* studies reviewed here used the term *perception* in the vernacular sense and inferred visual *perception*.

The meaning of *perception* from the physiological perspective is comprehensive compared with its use in the tourism and hospitality perspectives and outlined in the studies cited.

Table 2 shows that researchers studied and measured attitude, preference, opinion or impact, to determine how

that might influence tourists' or travelers' needs and behavior rather than *perception* as promised in the title of their studies.

Exceptions to the preceding statement are best exemplified in Reisinger and Turner (2003) who clearly define *perception* in a cross-cultural (and by implication a tourism and hospitality) sense and they take into account, the possible influence of "others" on an individual's *perception* process.

The following comprehensive review of 45 Tourism and Hospitality research papers and textbooks, demonstrates that the vernacular, rather than the academic definition of the word *perception*, has been used in the titles of 33 out of 45 studies reviewed. The other twelve studies, which claim to study *perception*, did so through a composite of other measures which the authors claim represent *perception* (see Table 3).

**Table 2** Tourism and hospitality literature and items actually measured in each study

Author	Date	Title	Analytic method	Actual Item measured
Allen L., R., P.T., Long, R., R., Perdue and S Kieselbach	1988	The Impact of Tourism Development on Residents Perceptions of Community Life	Bivariate regression analysis	Satisfaction
Andereck, Kathleen, L., and Guyane p Nyaupane	2011	Exploring the Nature and Quality of Life Perceptions among Residents	Importance/Satisfaction Analysis re QOL	Opinion
Ap, J,	1990	Residents' perceptions: research on the social impacts of tourism	Review of the Literature Univariate statistics	Tourism impacts opinions
Belisle, F and Don, R., Hoy	1980	The Perceived Impact of tourism by Residents; A Case Study in Santa Marta Columbia	Factor Analysis	Tourism Impact
Fredline, E.	1997	Resident Perceptions of The Gold Coast Indy .An Exploratory Study	-	Attitude
Haralambopoulos, N., and A. Pizam	1996	Perceived Impacts of Tourism: The Case of Samos	Descriptive statistic	Opinion and Attitude
Husbands W.,	1989	Social Status and Perception of Tourism in Zambia	Descriptive statistics	Opinion/Attitude
King, B.,A., Pizam, A and A Milman	1993	Social Impacts of Tourism: Host Perceptions	Descriptive statistics	Attitude
Lankford,S.,V.	1994	Attitudes and Perceptions Towards Tourism and Rural Regional Development.	Means, Chi Square Mann Whitney	Impact Attitude
Woloshin Steven, Stephanie	2000	A New Scale for Measuring Perceptions of	unstated	Perception of event

Byram 7 H Gilbert Welch		Chance: A Validation Study		probabil;ity i.e. opinion.
Tatoglu Ekrem Fuat Erdal, Huseyin Ozgur & Sedat Azakli	2000	Resident Perceptions of The Impact of Tourism in A Turkish Resort Town	Principal components factor analysis	Belief and affect components of Tourism Impact
Turker, Nuray and Sevgi Ozturk,	2013	Perceptions of Residents Towards The Impacts of Tourism in the Küre Mountains National Park, Turkey	Descriptive statistics and ANOVA	Attitude
Lawton Laura J	2005	Resident Perceptions of Tourist Attractions on the Gold Coast of Australia	Cluster analysis Using Kelly's 1955 PCT	Opinion
Madrigal., R.	1995	Resident's Perceptions and The Role of Government	Descriptive statistics and t-test, Multivariate analysis of covariance	Attitudes
Pavaneswaran, Kumasekaran, Sridar Ramachandran , Mohdi Yusli Yakob & Ahmad Shuth	2011	Development of Farmers' Perception on Agro Tourism in Cameron Highlands Malaysia	Principal Components Factor analysis	8 opinions
Pearce P., L.	1982	Perceived Changes in Holiday Destinations	Kelley's repertory grid	Pre and post travel attitudes /Opinions
Pizam A.,	1978	Tourism Impacts: The Social Costs to the Destination Community as Perceived by Its Residents.	Descriptive statistics	Attitude
Pizam A., and J Pokela	1985	The Perceived Impacts of Casino Gambling on a Community	Systematic sample-	Impact
Brunt Paul and Paul Courtney	1990	Host Perceptions of Sociocultural Impacts	Qualitative thematic analysis	Opinion/ impact

Weaver, D., B., and L, J., Lawton	2001	Residents Perception of Tourism in The Urban Rural Fringe	Cluster analysis and factor analysis	Attitudes and opinions
Arafia, Jorge, E., and George., E.,., Leon	2013	Correcting For Scale Perception Bias in Tourist Satisfaction Surveys	Anchoring vignettes and simultaneous equations HOPIT model	Opinion Satisfaction
Brayley R., Var, T. and Sheldon P	1990	Perceived Influence of Tourism on Social Issues.	Descriptive statistics	Opinions/attitudes
Johnson, J.D., Snepenger, D., J. and Akis, S.,	1994	Residents Perception of Tourism Development	Stepwise multiple regression	Continued/... Opinions /attitudes based on employment and job opportunity
King, B., Pizam., and Milman., a.	1993	Social Impacts of Tourism: Host Perceptions,	Descriptive statistics and multiple regression	Impact and attitude
Kukreja, Shveta & Adarsh Batra,		Business and Leisure Tourists' Perception on Selected Attributes off Luxury Hotels in Bangkok: A Comparative Study	Independent t test	Attitudes and opinions based on experience of 8 items on a scale
Kunasekaran, Puvaneswaran, Sridar, Ramachandran Mohd, Rusli, Yacob and Ahmad Shuib	2011	Development of Farmers Perception Scale on Agro Tourism in Cameron Highlands, Malaysia	Principal Component Factor analysis	Attitude Most questions were answers to <i>I think</i> question
Liu J., C, Sheldon P. & Var, T.,	1987	Resident Perceptions of The Environmental Impact of Tourism	Principle Component Factor Analysis	Impact continued/....
Milfelner Barut, Boris Snøj,	2001	Measurement of Perceived Quality, perceived Value, Image and	Descriptive statistics Invariance measurement	Opinion

Aleksandra Pisnik Korda.		Satisfaction interrelationships of Hotel services: Comparison of Tourists From Slovenia and Italy.	s between the Italian and Slovenian groups of tourists SEM Hotel image and quality Guest satisfaction	
Murphy, P. E.	1983	Perceptions of Attitudes of Decision Making Groups in Tourism Centres	Discriminant analysis	Attitude opinion
Ross G.F.,	1992	Residents Perception of the Impact of Tourism on An Australian City	Cross tabulations	Positive, negative and neutral impacts
Sthapit, Eroze Thesis	2013	Tourists Perceptions of Memorable Experiences. Testing the Memorable Tourism Experience Scale (MTE's) Among Tourists at Rovaniemi Lapland	Descriptive statics and Exploratory and Confirmatory factor analysis, Multiple regression	Experiences opinion /attitude
Soutar, G., N.,and McLeod, P., B.	1993	Residents' perception on impact of the America's Cup	Discriminant analysis	Opinion of Impact attitude
Milfelner Barut, Boris, Snoj, Aleksandra Pisnik Korda	2001	Measurement of Perceived Value, Image and Satisfaction interrelations of Hotel Services: Comparison of Tourists from Slovenia and Italy	One and multi-factor analysis. Invariance analysis	Image and understanding opinion /attitude rather than perception
O'Neil Martin &Adrian Palmer	2003	The Effects of Survey Timing upon Visitor Perceptions of	Paired samples t-test	Expectation confirmation of Perth as a destination Opinion

		Destination Service Quality		
Chen Ching-Fu & Meng Huan Tsai	2008	Perceived value, satisfaction, and loyalty of TV Travel product shopping; involvement as a moderator	Confirmatory factor analysis	Expected performance and perceived actual performance Opinion
Mostafa Mohammadi, Zainab Khalifa, Hassan Hosseini	2010	Local People Perceptions towards Social, Economic and Environmental Impacts of Tourism in Kermanshah (Iran)	Descriptive statistics	Attitude/i.e. opinion
Chen, Nan and Daniel C., Funk	2010	Exploring Destination Image , Experience and Revisit Intention : A Comparison of Sport and Non - Sport Tourist Intentions	Descriptive statistics	Opinion  Continued/....
Cervirgen, Aydin Furken Baltaci & Onur Oku,	2012	Residents' Perceptions towards Sustainable Tourism Development: The Case of Alanya	Factor analysis (Varimax rotation Minimum item loading 0.5 was acceptable)) Anova and t-test	Attitude
Variero Laurentine Cruz, Jose Cardima Riberiro, Paula Cristina Remoaldo and Vitor Marques	2010	Residents' perception of the Benefits of cultural tourism: the case of Guimaraes	Logit regression analysis	Opinion
Kukreja Sheveta & Batra, Adarsh	2005	Business and Leisure Tourists' Perceptions on Selected Attributes of 5 star Luxury	Mann-Whitney test	Opinion and/ Attitude

		Hotels in Bangkok: A Comparative Study		
Leung, Raymond W & Tom K Tong	2008	The Use of a 10 Point Effort Perception Scale in Adults: A Preliminary Study	Two Way ANOVA	Exercise Medical tests results Attitude
Dolnicar Sara & T Huybers	2007	Different tourists – different perceptions of different places: accounting for tourists' perceptual heterogeneity in destination image measurement	PBMS methodology	Perception is implied from measuring Destination image Opinion
Dorcheh, Sharareh Abbas and Badaruddin Mohamed	2013	Local Perception of Tourism Development: A Conceptual Framework for Sustainable Cultural Tourism	Thematic analysis	Review of the literature covered attitudes and behavior and said the this was perception
Viviers, Pierre- Andre Viviers, and Elmarie Slabbert	2012	Towards and Instrument Measuring Community Perceptions of the impacts of Festivals.	Confirmatory factor analysis	Impacts
Abdollahhzee h , Gholamhossei n, and Abolqasem Sharifzadeh	2012	Rural Residents' Perceptions Towards Tourism Development; A Study from Iran	CFA four factors were obtained which accounted for 77.5%of total variance economic, social, environmenta l and physical.	Opinions preferences and Attitudes in lieu of <i>perception</i>
Total number of studies reviewed				45
Attitude				22
Impact				12
Opinion				28

Preference	01
Total number of items measured	63

Note: Some studies measured more than one item in lieu of *perception*

Source: This table has been developed by this author after reading each study listed within it.

**Table 3** Studies from table 2 combining factors to simulate perception

<b>Author</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Components representing perception</b>	<b>Combining Technique</b>
Belisle and Hoy	1980	Eight orthogonal factors economic factors comprising food prices, public utilities, recreational facilities, transportation, employment and economic evolution. Three other factors are of a social nature namely: cultural exchange, prostitution and drug trafficking	Factor analysis
Tatoglu Ekrem Fuat Erdal, Huseyin Ozgur & Sedat Azakli	2000	Five factors were developed from the findings namely: Social and Cultural opportunities to learn from other people and cultures, Economic development, Quality of environment, State and local services, Cost of living	Factor analysis
Lawton Laura J	2005	Four clusters were developed from the findings namely: nature based, unenthusiastic, hinterland hesitant, enthusiastic.	Cluster analysis Kelley's (1955) PCT
Weaver, D., B., and L. J., Lawton	2001	Cluster analysis resulted in three clusters namely; Supporters, opponents, neutrals.	Cluster analysis and Factor analysis
Pearce P., L.	1982	13 areas of interest for tourists were used to compare/contrast for 14 countries were listed and respondents were asked to divide their responses into three piles. A cluster analysis was performed.	Kelley's (1955) PCT
Kunasekaran, Puvaneswaran, Sridar, Ramachandran Mohd, Rusli, Yacob and Ahmad Shuib	2011	36 items were combined to produce nine factors as follows: environmental impact, accessibility, Economic benefit, Entrepreneurial knowledge, Sociocultural benefits, Crowding, Awareness, Constraints, Land issues	Factor analysis

Liu, J., C, Sheldon, P., & Var, T.,	1987	Eight factors were selected as follows: Negative Socio-Environmental Effects, Stereo-typing Tourist, Cultural Exchange, Stereotyping Tourist Spending, Importance to Economy, Crime, Environment Government Planning.	Principal components Factor analysis without iteration
Sthapit, Erose	2013	Tourist's Perceptions of memorable experiences: Testing the memorable tourism Experience Scale (MTE·S) Among Tourist in Rovaniemi Lapland (Thesis)	Descriptive statistics, Principal components factor analysis & multiple, regression
Chen Ching-Fu & Meng Huan Tsai	2008	The factors were proposed and tested namely: Perceived value, satisfaction, loyalty	Confirmatory Factor analysis
Cervirgen, Aydin Furken Baltaci & Onur Oku,	2012	Four factors comprising: Perceived economic benefits, Environmental sustainability, Biological diversity, Maximizing community participation, Perceived social costs.	Factor analysis component only
Viviers, Pierre-Andre Viviers, and Elmarie Slabbert	2012	Seven valid factors were identified namely: Community facility and activities, Positive economic impacts, Negative environmental impacts, Community pride and opportunities, Negative Social impacts, Positive social impacts, Negative behavior.	Principal Components Factor analysis with Varimax rotation
Abdollahhzeeh , Gholamhossein, and Abolqasem Sharifzadeh	2012	Four factors were determined namely: economic, social, environmental, physical. (Opinions were measured)	factor analysis

Source: extracted from Table #2 and additional details taken from each listed study.

### COMPOSITE APPROACHES TO PERCEPTION:

Some tourism and hospitality researchers have sought to construct *perception* from a composite of other measures. One notable example of a composite approach was developed by Myers and Briggs (1962) in their construction of the MBTI type indicators of people suitable for

employment in specific positions in the work place. Experience has shown that this approach works in that application and so it has been widely accepted by employment practitioners.

Table 3 shows a significant minority of 12 researchers who also sought to construct *perception* from a composite of measures.

The study by Pearce (1982) used a composite approach. Pearce, a psychologist by training, constructed perception from a composite of measures (not based on all of the five senses identified earlier).

Pearce's mechanisms were based on Kelley's (1953 & 1963) Personal Construct Theory (PCT) and Repertory Grid Technique, (RGT), Table 3 shows Pearce's findings.

Other composite studies in Table 3 include Abdollahzadeh, and Sharifzadeh 2014; Belisle and Hoy, 1980; Fu, Huan and Tsai, 2008; Kunasekaran et. al, 2011; Lawton 2005; Tatoglu et. al., 2000; PAVANESWARAN, et.al, 2011; Weaver and Lawton, 2001; Kunasekaran Liu, Sheldon and Var, 1987, Sthapit, 2013; Chen, et al, 2013; Cervirge, et. al, 2012;, 2011; Viviers et.al, 2012; and Weaver and Lawton, 2000.

Table 3 studies employed factor analysis or cluster analysis to assemble a number of factors, which those researchers would have us, believe, to be perception. However, in all cases the researchers, called that composite something else, such as impact; attitude; opinion; understanding; or performance.

### **PERCEPTION: THE LITERATURE REVIEW**

Table 2 lists a selection of 45 tourism and hospitality studies published in reputable and double-blind, peer-reviewed, academic tourism and hospitality journals and by reputable tourism academic publishers All contain the word *perception* or

*perceived* in the title and body of the article.

The 45 literatures summarized in Table 2 were also reviewed to see whether or not Swarbrooke and Horner (1999) or Reisinger and Turner (2003) were cited. The implication being that had they been cited or listed, then the tourism specific definition of *perception* was possibly being employed rather than either the vernacular or academic definition of *perception* was employed.

The right-most column in Table 2, indicates what was actually measured rather than *perception*, which comprised part of the title of the research article. Shaded studies shown in Table #2 were studies seeking to attain *perception* from composite measures. These twelve studies have been extracted and are shown in Table 3.

### **Conclusions:**

This meta-analysis and review of the tourism and hospitality literature reveals the following:

1. That tourism and hospitality faculty, students and researchers have largely accepted the vernacular meaning of the word *perception* in the title of research papers, theses and dissertations.
2. Swarbrooke and Horner (1999) and the Reisinger and Turner, (2003) definitions of *perception* appears to have influenced tourism and hospitality researchers use of the word *perception*.

3. In the 45 studies reviewed here, visual *perception* is implied in all cases but not measured. Instead attitude, belief, impact, opinion or preference were employed and the measurement scales available for those terms were used.
4. Researchers who used *perception* in the title of their research articles, in fact, measured opinion, attitude, preference, or impact ought to have been used in the title of their research rather than the term *perception*. Table #2 shows that opinion (count of 28), by attitude (count of 22) impact (count of 12) and preference being least (count of 1) are most commonly used amongst the studies to refer to *perception*.
5. Whilst this multiplicity of terms inferring *perception* may not be confusing to the reader of any single *perception* paper, it is never-the-less misleading and becomes confusing to readers of more than one paper purporting to measure *perception*. Confusion arises because those papers may in fact be measuring one or more of several other things such as impact, preference or opinion.
6. Table #3 shows that 12 of the 45 studies assembled a form of *perception* from a composite of other measures and employed aggregating methods such as Confirmatory Factor Analysis

(CFA) or Kelley's (1953, 1963) Personal Construct Theory (PCT) and Repertory Grid Technique (RGT) or cluster analysis.

For the reader it is confusing when different researchers employ different components to obtain what they call *perception* without identifying which form of *perception* they are referring to, or without justifying their composite component of (visual) *perception*.

7. This researcher has, thus far been unable to find a scale of measurement for *perception* in its entirety or in the visual context in the tourist or hospitality literature.

Although Reisinger and Turner (2003) offered an explanation on page 157, where they explained the use of Likert scales for "agreement" related to *perception*; Thurstone scales are mentioned as "agreeableness" to a person or object; Semantic Differential scales applied to "agreement" loosely referred to as *perception*; Multi-Dimensional scales applied to "visual comparisons", implying *perception*.

#### **Recommendations:**

Tourism and hospitality researchers who measure opinion, attitude, preference or impact should use the appropriate word in the title of their research rather than *perception* or:

Tourism and Hospitality researchers should add the adjective “visual” before *perception*, in the title of their research and actually measure visual *perception* so as to accurately reflect the visual nature of *perception* under discussion, if that is indeed their intention.

The medical and physiological literature shows that there are measurement scales for each sensual response such as sight, sound, taste, touch, smell and balance for an individual. However, tourism and hospitality researchers appear not to make use of them.

Tourism and hospitality researchers who seek to produce one or more forms of *perception* from a composite of other measures by employing CFA, PCT, Multi-Dimensional Analysis (MDA) or cluster analysis, should inform their readers at the beginning i.e. in the title and in the abstract of their research just what it is they intend to measure. And how they will accomplish it.

The justification for these recommendations are:

A science (including the academic context) requires in the deductive sense a theory, a statement or hypotheses which require a uniform scale/s of measurement (quantitative or qualitative or both) and an evaluation of those measurable results along with a discussion of those results including an analysis with the original theory or hypothesis. The theory and measurement sequence is reversed when the research is inductive rather than deductive, as is sometimes the case of qualitative research. (Stevenson and Waite, (2012), Saunders, Lewis

and Thornhill, 2009, Veal, (1997), Zikmund, (2003).

Masters level thesis advisors and Doctoral level dissertation supervisors should exercise care, when students propose use of the word *perception* in the title of their tourism and hospitality theses or dissertations.

Researchers, we should say what they mean and mean what they say. Students, too, should heed the teachings they received in their research methods classes, to call an entity by its accepted academic name and measure it accordingly. Otherwise we are placing ourselves in the rather difficult position of Lewis Carol's, (1871) character, Humpty Dumpty.

"When I use a word,' Humpty Dumpty said in rather a scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean – neither more nor less."

"The question is," said Alice, "whether you *can* make words mean so many different things."

"The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master— that's all."

Lewis Carroll, (1872), *Through The Looking Glass and What Alice Saw There*, Chapter 6, Humpty Dumpty, p.124.

When an inappropriate use of the word *perception* is found, then thesis and dissertation students should be guided by their research advisors or supervisors to read the literature on *perception*. Then to help them decide whether or not they wish to research *perception* or another research area

such as belief, attitude, preference, motivation, behavior. All of the preceding terms, have widely accepted scales of measurement regarded as both valid and reliable.

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