



## Clothing Rental at Tourist Designations: Investigating Individuals' Attitude towards a Novel Business Model

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As part of ongoing sustainable mission business organizations are formulating business concept that addresses not only economic factors, but also environmental and social factors when making investment decisions (Cubas-Díaz & Martínez Sedano, 2018). Similarly, clothing and textile entrepreneurs and researchers have been working to develop new business models to reduce the environmental burden and facilitate the apparel sustainability over consumption (Armstrong et al., 2015). However, consumers are concerned about the financial, psychological, and societal impact of sustainable products and services (Armstrong et al., 2015). To mitigate these issues academics and policy makers have been advocating the creation of new business strategies that can create shared value for both the consumer and the business (Porter & Kramer, (2019).

International tourism has grown to become one of the largest global economic sectors and a significant contributor to many national and local economies. The total contribution of tourism to global GDP has grown from an estimated US\$ 5.5 trillion in 2003 to US\$ 7.6 trillion in 2017 (10.2% GDP). It is estimated to further increase to \$10.9 trillion by 2023 (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2017; Scott & Gössling, 2015). However, in 2005 alone tourism contributed approximately 5% to global anthropogenic emissions of carbon-di-oxide.

Research aimed at minimizing the environmental footprint of tourism has resulted in a new paradigm of how to house tourist. Rather than building new hotels and/or resorts researchers are advocating the rental of existing apartments or houses (Heo, 2016). Simultaneously clothing rental has emerged as one of the approaches aimed at mitigating the environmental effect of apparel and textile sector (Lang & Kafi, 2016). Clothing rental has been found to provide benefits to consumer. It permits them to dress in the newest trends at reduced costs while providing the feeling of contributing to the environment by reducing over production and waste (Botsman & Rogers, 2010; Lang & Kafi, 2016). Kang and Kim (2013) identified four potential risks for apparel consumers concerned about sustainability and reducing their environmental footprint: financial risk, performance risk, psychological risk, and social risk. When preparing for business trip or vacation consumers often purchase new items of clothing suitable to the climate and activities planned at their destination. This purchase of items for a one time use involves all the risks identified by Kim and Kang. Additionally purchasing clothing items for one time use purpose eventually will increase clothing consumption and landfill waste.

This study investigated consumer's acceptance of a novel approach to minimizing the environmental footprint of tourism and business travel, the rental of clothing the destination location. In this proposed business model tourist would be offered the service of renting all or some of their clothing onsite rather than bringing the items with them. This proposed business model was framed around the triple bottom line approach to sustainable development (Cubas-Díaz & Martínez Sedano, 2018), and the Rational Choice Theory (Kahneman & Tversky, 1984). Rational Choice theory is a prominent economic theory that posits, individuals' decisions are basically benefit and satisfaction driven. This means, if there is available options, individual will make decision that will provide them most convenience, benefit as well as satisfaction.

Data was collected via an online survey that included Likert scale and open ended questions with essay length response capability. Seventy-two men and women over the age of 18 who travel domestically and internationally for business and/or pleasure participated in this research. Open ended responses were analyzed and coded using constant comparison method (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Results indicated, 74% of participants would be willing to rent clothing rather than buying new item for a single trip, if the service were offered. The most frequently mentioned reason participants gave for their willingness to rent clothing was to reduce luggage weight. Additional reasons included: convenience during travel due to reduced luggage; not needing to buy new items; the enjoyment of wearing new items; and being able to try expensive designer clothing they would normally not purchase. Concerns participants related regarding the rental of clothing included concerns over cleanliness and maintenance of the items. Results of the present study support central premises of rational choice theory (Kahneman & Tversky, 1984).

The study provides information useful to both apparel researchers and the hospitality industry. Hotels and resorts catering to business and vacation travelers may consider offering this value added service of clothing rental as a way to increase profits. Further research needs to be conducted to determine how this novel idea can be successfully implemented.

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