



# Appreciative and consumptive lodging attributes: Conceptualization and measurement



T.S. Stumpf\*, Jeongdo Park<sup>1</sup>, Hyun Jeong Kim<sup>2</sup>

School of Hospitality Business Management, Washington State University, Pullman, WA, USA

## ARTICLE INFO

### Keywords:

A-CLAS  
Appreciative  
Consumptive  
Environmental attitudes  
Lodging attributes  
Scale development

## ABSTRACT

This study uses an appreciative–consumptive (A–C) approach in the conceptualization and measurement of lodging attributes. While the A–C framework has been effectively utilized in related fields like recreation and tourism, it remains undeveloped in the context of lodging. The purpose of this study is to elucidate a conceptual application of the A–C framework to the lodging sector, develop a scale that can be used to measure A–C constructs in the context of lodging for leisure travelers, and demonstrate the research and practical utility of this scale via use in a structural model and cluster analysis. The instrument developed in this study is dubbed the Appreciative–Consumptive Lodging Attribute Scale (A–CLAS). The A–CLAS is envisaged to represent a means for novel research into the study of lodging attributes, and a compelling new platform from which to envision the design, management, and maintenance of the lodging experience.

© 2014 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

## 1. Introduction

In the highly competitive lodging industry, organizations must understand current and potential customers' preferences and expectations in meticulous detail. Such detailed focus not only allows firms to better serve customers, but also helps prevent the squandering of valuable resources on aspects of the lodging experience that certain guest markets may not perceive as significant to their stay (Crick and Spencer, 2011). One particularly relevant area of consumer preference in this context is the evaluation of lodging attributes, or which service/facility-related elements guests perceive to be important (Wuest et al., 1996). As Millar and Baloglu (2011) note, consumer decision-making around a product/service offering is based upon a holistic evaluation of the attributes which comprise that product/service. Thus, the ability of a lodging facility to pinpoint the attribute bundles preferred by its guest market is an important aspect of hospitality management.

Not surprisingly, there is a substantial body of research dedicated to the evaluation of lodging attributes in the hospitality literature. Some topics of interest have included the attribute

preferences of various guest markets (Ananth et al., 1992; Callan, 1998; Hanai et al., 2008; Jones and Chen, 2011), the assessment of “green” hotel attributes (Lee et al., 2010; Manaktola and Jauhari, 2007; Millar and Baloglu, 2011; Robinot and Giannelloni, 2010), and relationships between attributes, perceived quality, and satisfaction (Abrate et al., 2011; Cadotte and Turgeon, 1988; Choi and Chu, 2001; Dubé and Renaghan, 1999; Hartline et al., 2003; Wilkins et al., 2007). The present study adds to this body of knowledge via a novel conceptual and measurement framework for evaluating lodging attributes: the appreciative–consumptive (A–C) approach. Emanating from the recreation literature, this approach is concerned with classifying lodging attributes according to intrinsic A–C characteristics, and understanding how consumer preferences are shaped around groups of A–C attributes. As will be elaborated upon, approaching lodging attributes from an A–C perspective can provide various benefits, such as enabling useful insights regarding efficient and effective resource distribution. For example, a hotel whose guest market considers appreciative attributes as more important to the lodging experience can funnel its resources toward this preference dimension. Accurately targeting such preferences may not only lead to more efficient and effective use of resources, but could also generate an upsurge in receipts through increased guest satisfaction and loyalty.

The purpose of this study is to explicate a conceptual application of the A–C framework to the lodging industry, develop a scale that can be used to measure A–C constructs in the context of lodging for leisure travelers, and demonstrate the scale's practical and research applications. The results of the scale development

\* Corresponding author at: School of Hospitality Business Management, Washington State University, Todd Hall 342, PO Box 644736, Pullman, WA 99164-4750, USA. Tel.: +1 509 335 5766; fax: +1 509 335 7736.

E-mail addresses: [tyler.stumpf@wsu.edu](mailto:tyler.stumpf@wsu.edu) (T.S. Stumpf), [jd.park@wsu.edu](mailto:jd.park@wsu.edu) (J. Park), [jennykim@wsu.edu](mailto:jennykim@wsu.edu) (H.J. Kim).

<sup>1</sup> Tel.: +1 509 335 5766.

<sup>2</sup> Tel.: +1 509 335 4706.

and purification process produced such an instrument: the Appreciative-Consumptive Lodging Attribute Scale (A-CLAS). The A-CLAS is envisaged to represent a means for novel research into the study of lodging attributes, and a fruitful new platform from which to envision the design, management, and maintenance of the lodging experience. Finally, in addition to the scale development, both a structural model and cluster analysis using the A-CLAS are tested to illustrate its potential utility for hospitality research and practice.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. The appreciative-consumptive approach

The A-C approach stems from research on diverging public perceptions relating to the value of wildlife during the late 1960s and 1970s in the U.S. (Hendee, 1969; Mead and Bookhout, 1977; Talbot, 1974; Wagar, 1969; Witter, 1977). This era was characterized by the onset of the “New Environmental Paradigm” (Catton and Dunlap, 1978), in which relationships between people/society and the environment were being reexamined. In broad terms, this period of socio-psychological evolution was epitomized by an increased awareness of negative environmental changes associated with industrial development and human activity (Dunlap and Catton, 1979), thereby bringing human-centric and eco-centric worldviews into greater balance. At the individual level, there was a movement toward lifestyles characterized by greater sensitivity to resource consumption. Similarly, but at the public level, legislation was passed and government agencies were created to regulate resource use with an eye to both aesthetic and practical concerns (Albrecht, 1976).

During this time, the ways in which outdoor recreationists interacted with their surroundings also came under renewed scrutiny. The A-C typology was first put forth to distinguish between people's perceptions of the aesthetic versus utilitarian value of wildlife and nature (Hendee, 1969). In its original distinction, *consumptive* activities are characterized as utilitarian behaviors which involve taking from or altering the environment. In contrast, *appreciative* activities are those which involve maintaining the natural state and enjoying the environment without altering it (Dunlap and Heffernan, 1975). For example, hunting and fishing are considered consumptive outdoor recreation activities, whereas hiking and photography are more appreciative (Dunlap and Heffernan, 1975). Subsequent to its development, several studies used the A-C framework to investigate how psychological variables interface with outdoor recreation usage types. For example, Dunlap and Heffernan (1975) utilized the A-C paradigm to investigate whether individuals' participation in outdoor recreation activities is associated with their environmental concern, finding that those preferring appreciative activities have more pro-environment attitudes than those who prefer consumptive activities. A series of related studies produced similar findings (Ewert et al., 2005; Jackson, 1986, 1987; Tarrant and Green, 1999).

Concepts related to the A-C paradigm have been gradually applied to different research agendas. Vaske et al. (1982) found significant differences between consumptive and nonconsumptive (appreciative) recreationists in terms of goal specificity and satisfaction ratings of their recreation experience. Specifically, the authors found that recreationists with more consumptive preferences reported significantly lower satisfaction ratings and were driven by a goal of consuming some aspect of the environment like a commodity, while those with appreciative preferences had higher satisfaction ratings and had more general goals of accumulating experiences that did not entail the acquisition of some product. These findings are important because they highlight linkages between individuals' A-C preferences and internal thought processes (i.e., goals) and feelings (i.e., satisfaction). Huang et al. (2008) measured the perceived appropriateness of A-C activities

in China's national forest parks, finding that appreciative activities were judged to be the more appropriate in that setting. As the authors point out, understanding users' perceptions of A-C appropriateness in a specific leisure context can help decision-makers set priorities and allocate resources. In a study of forest management, Tarrant and Cordell (2002) investigated public perceptions of forest amenity value, partly using importance rankings of aesthetic (appreciative) and utilitarian (consumptive) dimensions. The results of their study provide insights into how some attitudinal (e.g., environmental attitude) and demographic (e.g., age) variables may be linked to A-C orientations, and also reinforce the importance of understanding users' context-based A-C preferences.

Moving from a general recreation to a more tourism-specific context, Uysal et al. (1994) applied A-C related concepts to investigate tourists' perceptions toward site-specific attributes at U.S. Virgin Islands National Park, finding those with more pro-environmental attitudes preferred nature-based (appreciative) rather than amenity-based (consumptive) attributes. Related studies in the tourism literature by Jurowski et al. (1995) and Kibicho (2006) found differences in attitudes toward more human-centric (consumptive) versus minimalist/experiential (appreciative) factors among tourists visiting national parks in the U.S. and Kenya, respectively. These studies, conducted in different locations and leisure contexts, have been important in helping to establish the predictive power of the A-C distinction in relation to consumer attitudes and preferences. To date, applications of this framework have seemingly been relegated exclusively to outdoor recreation and tourism contexts. Given the inherent relationship between recreation, tourism, and the hotel industry, it is posited here that expanding to applications in lodging is a natural and relevant extension of A-C research.

### 2.2. Evaluation of lodging attributes

The evaluation of the importance of an attribute is a consumer's “general assessment of the significance of an attribute for a product” (Chu and Choi, 2000, p. 365). Studies of lodging attributes typically address the following kinds of questions: Which attributes influence hotel booking decisions and can positively impact demand? Which attributes impact guest satisfaction during their stay? Which attributes positively impact future intentions (Dolnicar and Otter, 2003)? The answers to these questions may be influenced by a variety of factors (Wuest et al., 1996). For example, previous research has explored relationships between lodging attribute evaluation and gender (McCleary et al., 1994; Meng and Uysal, 2008), age (Ananth et al., 1992; Wei et al., 1999), guest market (Baloglu et al., 1998; Callan and Bowman, 2000; Gustin and Weaver, 1993; Inbakaran and Jackson, 2005; Knutson, 1988; Lockyer, 2002; Poria, 2006; Vieregge et al., 2007) and nationality (Choi and Chu, 2000; Shanahan and Hyman, 2007; Weaver and Oh, 1993). Such studies typically focus on the tangible and intangible attributes that various guest groups perceive as important to their hotel selection, actual experience, and/or future purchase intentions.

While these findings can undoubtedly be useful for developing insights into the preferences of different kinds of guests, applying nuance across context can perhaps best occur by first considering attribute evaluation from a broader conceptual perspective. As Chu and Choi (2000) suggest, recognizing *how* guests evaluate attributes is at least as important as knowing which attributes guests perceive as important. *How* attributes are evaluated can ultimately lead to answers regarding which attributes are important to different types of guests. In this regard, a seemingly underexplored area is how attributes can be meaningfully classified into overarching factors that tap into guests' intrinsic orientations. Consumer behavior theory postulates that consumers' perceptions and

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/1009360>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/1009360>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)