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Influence of Sustainability Reward Program on Meeting Planners' Site Selection Decision and Perceived Value-for-Money

Shinyong (shawn) Jung

University of Nevada, Las Vegas, shinyongjung@yahoo.com

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INFLUENCE OF SUSTAINABILITY REWARD PROGRAM ON MEETING PLANNERS'
SITE SELECTION DECISION AND PERCEIVED VALUE-FOR-MONEY

By

Shinyong Jung

Bachelor of Science - Tourism
Kyonggi University, South Korea

Bachelor of Science - Hospitality Management
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
2009

Master of Business Administration
Master of Science - Hotel Administration
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
2012

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the

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William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration
The Graduate College

University of Nevada, Las Vegas
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The Graduate College
The University of Nevada, Las Vegas

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Shinyong Jung

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Doctor of Philosophy – Hospitality Administration
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Yen-Soon Kim, Ph.D.
Examination Committee Chair

Kathryn Hausbeck Korgan, Ph.D.
Graduate College Interim Dean

Sarah Tanford, Ph.D.
Examination Committee Member

Carola Raab, Ph.D.
Examination Committee Member

Gillian Naylor, Ph.D.
Graduate College Faculty Representative

ABSTRACT

INFLUENCE OF SUSTAINABILITY REWARD PROGRAM ON MEETING PLANNERS' SITE SELECTION DECISION AND PERCEIVED VALUE-FOR-MONEY

by

Shinyong Jung
Dr. Yen-Soon Kim, Committee Chair
Associate Professor of Hotel Administration
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Many types of voluntary sustainable programs have been integrated into the hospitality industry standards and been examined to measure their effectiveness by research firms and institutions (Giebelhausen & Chun, 2016). However, there is a lack of research examining how the benefits received by participating in green meetings influence perceptions and behavioral intentions on environmentally sustainable meetings. Consequently, this research investigates how incentivizing tools such as incorporating sustainability reward points for choosing sustainable venues and participating in environmental programs can affect planners' perceived value for money and site-selection intention. The results of the three-way repeated measure analysis of variance (ANOVA) did not find that sustainability reward programs are effective in planner's site-selection intention and perceived value for money. However, venue location and overall costs were identified as influencing factors for planner's behavioral intentions as well as their perceived value for money toward meeting venues. The study also provides significant insights on differences between three different types of planner (corporate, association, and government) in terms of their perception and behavioral intention.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

At the Paris climate conference in December 2015, 195 countries reached an important climate deal. The participating countries committed to lower greenhouse gas emissions in an effort to limit the rise in global average temperature to two degrees Celsius. This climate agreement aims to strengthen the ability of countries to deal with the impacts of climate change (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 2016). The United States is one of the world's top two greenhouse gas emitters along with China. As a result, both public and private sectors in the U.S. have been affected significantly in their business operations. This worldwide interest in environmental sustainability has seized substantial attention in the hospitality industry. As the sustainability movement has gained enormous attention in the hospitality industry, the environmental concerns and potential solutions have been discussed in a significant number of hospitality management literature (Myung, McClaren, & Li, 2012; von Bergner & Lohmann, 2014).

The meetings and events industry has responded by developing sustainability standards and incorporating environmental considerations to reduce the negative impact on the environment (Spatrisano & Wilson, 2012). For instance, meeting professionals are now expected to utilize the meeting performance objectives outlined in the APEX (Accepted Practices Exchange)/ASTM (A Certified International Standard Development Organization) Standards developed by the Green Meeting Industry Council (GMIC) (n.d.). Thus, meeting suppliers, contractors, associations, planners, exhibitors, and attendees are communicated with regarding performance requirements outlined in the APEX/ASTM Standards. With the considerable attention on the significance of climate change, forward-thinking sustainable business leaders in

various segments of the meeting industry are consistently on the lookout for innovative tools and solutions that can help them design, build, and deliver more reliable sustainability programs to market.

Event venues such as hotels and convention centers are at the core of this issue. Green hotels and event facilities that are equipped with advance green technologies and environmental features can provide a significant opportunity to reduce negative environmental impacts associated with meetings and events through saving water and energy, and reducing waste and carbon dioxide (Green Venue Selection Guide | U.S. Green Building Council, 2009). However, accomplishing true sustainability should be accompanied by planners' efforts to identify and select the most environmentally sustainable venues for their meeting and event needs.

Organizations that are committed to environmental sustainability need to promote their sustainability programs and render the innovative potential and market power of the firms for more sustainable demand from their new and existing customers (Lehner & Halliday, 2014). Empirically, less than one percent of travelers consider a hotel's green practices as a primary consideration when choosing hotel rooms, whereas price, convenience, and previous experience are important factors for them (Bruns-Smith, Choy, Chong, & Verma, 2015). This phenomenon also exists in the context of meetings and events, where many business travelers prefer to book a hotel room within the official room block due to its convenience and cheaper price. In most cases, the official hotels for group business is determined by meeting planners based on the results of need analysis, which is a planning tool used to determine the client's needs and expectations for a meeting (Fenich, 2014). Therefore, it is critical for event venues to impress planners with their environmentally sustainable features and performance in an innovative way

during the request for proposal (RFP) process in order to encourage the planners to consider sustainability in their site-selection process.

Many types of voluntary sustainable programs have been integrated into the industry standards and been examined to measure their effectiveness by research firms and institutions (Giebelhausen & Chun, 2016). However, there is a lack of research examining how the benefits received by participating in green meetings affect perceptions and behavioral intentions on environmentally sustainable meetings. Consequently, this research investigates how incentivizing tools such as sustainability reward points for choosing sustainable venues and participating in environmental programs can affect planners' perception of value and site-selection intention.

Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework used for this study of sustainability reward program is Skinner's (1948) theory of operant conditioning, where human behaviors are understood by looking at the causes of an action and its consequences. According to Skinner (1948, p. 169), "behavior which is reinforced tends to be repeated (i.e., strengthened); behavior which is not reinforced tends to die-out or be extinguished (i.e., weakened)". In other words, positive reinforcement results in a consequence an individual find rewarding, which makes the individual more likely to repeat his/her behavior.

The theory of impure altruism (Andreoni, 1990) further supports the concept of the study by hypothesizing that people are sometimes motivated to do good deeds by a variety of emotional factors such as a desire to win prestige, respect, friendship, and other social and psychological objectives (Olson, 1965). Andreoni (1990) termed this simply as a desire for a "warm glow" encompassing social pressure, guilt, sympathy, and other emotional factors

described above. Kotchen (2005) expanded the theory into environmentally friendly consumption, where the author argues that demand for green products depend on market prices, green productions technologies, and ambient environmental quality.

Although previous literature has investigated participants' attitudes and intentions toward the environment, the environmental attitudes do not always translate into environmentally sustainable behavior (Kotler, 2011). Laing and Frost (2010) discussed the importance of engaging a range of key stakeholders in a variety of sustainable practices to actually realize a sustainable meeting or event. Jung, Kim, Malek, and Lee (2016) also emphasized the importance of show organizers' role in engaging attendees in different practices during tradeshow. The current research attempts to fill this gap by developing a sustainability marketing tool such as sustainability reward program. The effectiveness of the reward programs accounts for the ways that people are motivated to have environmentally friendly attitudes and/or behavioral intentions. This in turn may positively reinforce the environmentally sustainable behavior. Therefore, exploring the feasibility of a sustainability reward program for meeting venues is worthwhile to understand meeting planners' behavioral intentions and subsequently to predict their actual behaviors.

Reward Program

Loyalty programs that reward customers' repeat business are utilized by many hospitality businesses including airlines, hotels, and casinos (Dekay, Toh, & Raven, 2009; Huang & Chen, 2010). Customer reward programs can play an important role in increasing repeat customers, which, in turn leads to building customer loyalty and increasing revenues (Hu, Huang, & Chen, 2010; Mattila, 2006; Shoemaker & Lewis, 1999). While the customer reward program is not commonly used in the meetings and events industry yet, there are a few major hotel chains (e.g.,

MGM Resorts International, and Starwood) that started incentivizing meeting customers for their expenditures paid for goods and services provided by the hotels under a same brand (MGM Resorts, 2016; Starwood, 2016). Academics have begun to investigate the effectiveness of the reward program for the convention industry (Tanford & Montgomery, 2015). Given the rising importance of environmental issues and loyalty programs in increasing attendance, a sustainability reward program could become an important factor for meeting planners in their site-selection process.

Site Selection Criteria

Studies on meeting planners' site selection criteria have been well documented in event management research. Understanding planners' perceptions can benefit marketing professionals in many suppliers such as hotels, convention centers, and destination management companies (DMCs) (DiPietro, Breiter, Rompf, & Godlewska, 2008). Given the importance of understanding meeting planners' site selection criteria, empirical research in destination marketing has been conducted (Elston & Draper, 2012). Katz (2007) indicated destination, property size, type, level of service, reputation, and price as the most important site-selection criteria. In terms of the venue selection, planners favored hotels and conference centers for hosting meetings, while cruise ships or resorts may be considered more contentious (Boehmer, 2010). The study showed that planners turned to midscale properties from upscale or luxury, and reduced the duration of meetings with being more conscious about overall cost since the 2008 recession (Boehmer, 2010).

Despite the plethora of research on site selection criteria, new approaches to site selection research should be considered. There are limited studies assessing sustainability in the site selection criteria. Until recently, there was only one study that assessed the importance of

sustainable practices in planners' site selection process (Elson & Draper, 2012). Although Gao & Matilla (2016) investigated social influence on consumers' green hotel booking decisions, the sample used in their analysis was randomly chosen consumer panel members, who have traveled with various purposes. Difficulty in sampling in the research process due to the limited number of sustainability-conscious meeting planners (Park & Boo, 2010) is no longer the case. Millennials who will represent the future workforce, are the most sustainability-conscious generation (Rayapura, 2014). Thus, it is critical that event management research embraces sustainability to explore how such practice would make a shift in the site-selection process.

Perceived Value for Money

Zeithaml (1988, p. 10) defined price from the consumer's perspective as "what is given up or sacrificed to obtain a product". According to Jacoby, Chestnut, and Hoyer (1978), some consumers perceive nonmonetary price as they encode an objective price as "expensive" or "cheap". This distinction between objective and perceived price is supported by a number of research and the concept of perceived value was evolved from it. An exploratory study by Zeithaml (1998) classified the consumer definitions of value into four categories: (1) value is low price, (2) value is whatever I want in a product, (3) value is the quality I get for the price I pay, and (4) value is what I get for what I give. Some consumers equate value with low price, while others focus on the benefits they receive from the product. In addition, there are consumers who conceptualize value as a quality of the product, whilst others consider all aspects of both "give up" and "obtain" components when determining value.

The present study attempts to investigate meeting planners' perception of value for money towards a variety of meeting venues with different conditions controlled by the three stimuli: sustainability reward program, location, and overall costs.

Problem Statement

“Green meetings happen in green venue” Amanda Simons, program manager at Greenview stated (Sorrells, 2016). Having a meeting or an event in an environmentally sustainable meeting facility allows organizations to commit to sustainable policies and operations. Nowadays, many venues such as hotels and convention centers launch their own sustainability programs. It is not only because of government regulations and growing pressure from shareholders but also to take advantage of environmental protection, cost savings, and social distinctiveness by initiating corporate social responsibility (CSR) (Gao & Matilla, 2016; Kang, Stein, Heo, & Lee, 2012).

To encourage clients (i.e., meeting planners) to participate in their sustainability programs, suppliers realize the important role of “Green marketing” (Baker & Sinkula, 2005). Advertising and branding sustainability programs can be a practical and effective way to develop the market for sustainable products and services. However, making a success of the sustainability program is subject to how receptive both public top-down (e.g., policy makers) and bottom-up pressure (e.g., social movements) are (Lehner & Halliday, 2014). More specifically, inspiring customers to have a positive attitude of the environmentally sustainable practices alone is not sufficient to guarantee success of the sustainability program. It is essential for organizations to develop an effective and practical way to provide positive reinforcement (Skinner, 1948) from top-down approaches so that customers are encouraged to participate in the sustainability program. Given the complexity of this matter, meeting suppliers / venues are grappling to find an effective marketing strategy that encourages and engages customers in their sustainability programs.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to assess the effectiveness of a sustainability reward program on meeting planners' site selection decision in comparison with other important factors such as venue location and overall cost. Furthermore, this study evaluates if a sustainability reward program has impact on planners' perceived value for money, which may be an important predictor of planners' future behavioral intentions (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1998; Zeithaml, 1988).

The research findings make theoretical contributions to the body of knowledge of meeting planners' site selection processes associated with their sustainability intention. The findings of the study also provide practical implications on how significant a role a sustainability reward program can play in increasing value for money of meeting venues from planners' view

Research Questions

1. How influential is a sustainability reward program in planners' site selection decision?
 - a. Will a sustainability reward program make planners more likely to select a meeting venue in a second-tier convention city over a first-tier convention city?
 - b. Will a sustainability reward program make planners more likely to select a meeting venue, for which overall costs are higher than other similar venues?
2. How influential is a sustainability reward program in meeting planners' perception of value-for-money of meeting venues?
 - a. Will planners' perception of value-for-money of meeting venues differ by sustainability reward program?
 - b. Will planners' perception of value-for-money of meeting venues differ by overall costs regardless of presence of a sustainability reward program?

Hypotheses

An experimental design was employed to achieve the research objectives. To answer the research questions derived from the study purpose, research hypotheses were developed to clearly identify relevant variables to be tested in the experiment. Detailed explanations of each hypothesized relationship are elaborated in Chapter 2.

Hypothesis 1: Meeting planners will be more likely to select a venue with a sustainability reward program compared to a similar venue without the reward program.

Hypothesis 2: Meeting planners will be more likely to select a venue located in a first-tier convention city compared to a similar venue located in a second-tier city.

- Hypothesis 2a: Meeting planners will be more likely to select a venue located in a second-tier convention city when there is a sustainability reward program compared to a similar venue without the reward program.
- Hypothesis 2b: Meeting planners will be more likely to choose a venue located in a first-tier city versus a second-tier city when there is not a sustainability reward program.

Hypothesis 3: Meeting planners will be more likely to select a lower cost venue compared to a similar venue with a higher cost.

- Hypothesis 3a: Meeting planners will be more likely to select a higher cost venue when there is a sustainability reward program compared to a similar venue without the reward program.
- Hypothesis 3b: Meeting planners will be more likely to select a lower cost venue versus a higher cost venue when there is not a sustainability reward program.

Hypothesis 4: Meeting planners will perceive good value for money when meeting venues offer a sustainability reward program.

- Hypothesis 4a: Meeting planners will perceive greater value for money for a higher cost venue than a lower cost venue when there is a sustainability reward program.
- Hypothesis 4b: Meeting planners will perceive greater value for money for a lower cost venue than a higher cost venue when there is no sustainability reward program.

Significance of the Study

As previous researchers pointed out, assessment of sustainability is in its early stages in academia, especially in the meetings and events segment (Mair & Jago, 2010; Park & Boo, 2010). While there are an increasing number of publications on economic impact and socio-cultural impact of the industry, the environmental impact of meetings and events has remained a neglected area of academic research (Getz & Page, 2016). Therefore, literature in this area needs to be more diverse by combining multiple components of the triple bottom line of sustainability (i.e., environmental, economic, and social).

This research is important as it not only extends the current body of knowledge about reward programs and sustainable meetings but also examines effectiveness of an emerging concept of the green marketing strategy, which is a sustainability reward program for meeting planners. The theory of operant conditioning (Skinner, 1948) and theory of impure altruism (Andreoni, 1990) are used to support the intentions of this study. An experimental design of this research was established by incorporating existing theoretical frameworks and current industry meeting reward programs. Accordingly, the current research not only helps extend the

understanding of meeting planners' behavioral intentions of site-selection decision in terms of sustainability but also validate if a sustainability reward program would affect planners' perceived value for money towards meeting venues; thus the research adds to the theoretical frameworks used in this study.

From a practical standpoint, the results of this study can provide suppliers (e.g., meeting venues) with a better understanding of influential factors for meeting planners' sustainable venue selection. Suppliers have as much responsibility to provide sustainability as meeting planners (Boo & Park, 2013). A positive reinforcement by the suppliers through a reward program can keep planners motivated to continue their sustainability-priority minded planning. Specifically, this research examines how such positive sustainability reinforcement could affect planners' site selection intentions and perceived value for money. While there are many other important factors the planners have in mind in their consideration set, a sustainability reward program could be one of the critical factors. The findings of this study can be used for meeting venues/facilities to develop their own sustainability reward programs and/or can be integrated into their existing sustainable meeting programs. Moreover, the results can help venue sales managers/staff communicate their environmental efforts and customer benefits when showing proposals to potential clients (i.e., meeting planners).

Definition of Key Terms

Meeting industry related-concepts and terms used in this research are defined by the Convention Industry Council (2011) APEX Industry Glossary. Other key concepts and terms are defined in accordance with published research.

1. *Consideration* - The inducement to a contract. The cause, motive, price, or impelling influence which induces a contracting party to enter a contract.

2. *CVB* - Convention and Visitors Bureau. CVBs are not-for-profit organizations representing a specific destination and promoting the economic development of communities through travel and tourism. CVBs assist planners by providing information and services, and encourage business travelers and visitors alike to visit local historic, cultural and recreational sites.
3. *DMO* - Destination Marketing Organization. A not-for-profit organization, defined and recognized by its incorporated local government entity as the representative organization responsible for promoting the economic development of their community through travel and tourism. DMOs assist planners by providing information on local resources and services, including site selection, pre-conference and post-convention services.
4. *DMC* - Destination Management Company. A professional services company possessing extensive local knowledge, expertise and resources, specializing in the design and implementation of events, activities, tours, transportation and program logistics.
5. *Event* - An organized occasion such as a meeting, convention, exhibition, special event, gala dinner, etc. An event is often composed of several different yet related functions.
6. *Familiarization trip* – Also known as fam trip is a program designed to acquaint potential buyers with specific destinations or services and to stimulate the booking of an event. Often offered in groups, but sometimes on an individual basis.
7. *Facility* - A structure that is built, installed or established to serve a particular purpose.

8. *Fixed costs* - The day-to-day cost of doing business that is pre-committed, such as salaries, insurance, lease expenses, utilities, etc.
9. *Green meeting* - A “green” or sustainable meeting “is one designed, organized and implemented in a way that minimizes negative environmental impacts and leaves a positive impact for the host community” (Green Meeting Guide, 2009, p. 9)
10. *Greenwash* - False or misleading claims about environmental performance (Cooper, 2015).
11. *Indirect costs* - Also called overhead or administrative costs, these are expenses not directly related to the event. They can include salaries, rent, and building and equipment maintenance.
12. *Meeting* - An event where the primary activity of the participants is to attend educational sessions, participate in discussions, social functions, or attend other organized events. There is no exhibit component. This term is often used interchangeably with convention, exhibition, tradeshow, and conference.
13. *Per diem rate* - Daily allowance for food, lodging, and incidental expenses.
14. *Reward program* - Also known as loyalty program, is a marketing tool used for driving customer retention in various industries, including airlines, credit card companies, retail and hotel chains (Kivetz, Urminsky, & Zheng, 2006; Noordhoff, Pauwels, & Odekerken-Schröder, 2004).
15. *Site inspection* - In-person on-site review and evaluation of a venue or location for an event
16. *Site selection* - Choosing a venue for an event.

17. *Sustainability or Sustainable development* - Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Brundtland, 1987).
18. *Variable costs* - Expenses that vary based upon various factors, such as the number of attendees.
19. *Venue* - 1) Site or destination of meeting, event or show
2) Location of performance such as hall, ballroom, auditorium, etc.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sustainability and Hospitality industry

Sustainability has been generally defined as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Brundtland, 1987, p. 41). While “sustainability is a controversial topic because it means different things for different people”, it is not only limited to environmental sustainability, but also includes issues of social sustainability and economic sustainability (Aras & Crowther, 2008, p. 436). There are two commonly held assumptions when it comes to corporate sustainability: First, “sustainability is synonymous with sustainable development”. Second, “a sustainable company will exist merely by recognizing environmental and social issues and incorporating them into its strategic planning” (Aras & Crowther, 2008, p.436). The hotel industry started to incorporate sustainable development initiatives into its operations as early as 1994 (Houdre, 2008). Other segments of hospitality industries such as restaurants, airlines, and meetings and events have embraced sustainability in accordance with guidelines and certification standards developed by the industry associations (Draper, Dawson, & Casey, 2011).

Sustainability in the Meetings and Events Industry

The definition of sustainable meeting or green meeting is well documented. The Convention Industry Council (2010) defined green meetings as an effort to incorporate environmental considerations throughout all stages to minimize negative impacts on the environment. Lyck (2012) offered a more complete definition by adding “while simultaneously meeting the needs of the stakeholders without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own need (page 3)”

Despite its positive impacts overall, organizing an event involves energy, waste management and waste reduction (Jones, 2010). With the increasing attention on the environmental concerns, a number of sustainability and green certifications for the hospitality and meeting industry have been introduced over the past decade. However, a problem arose along with this phenomenon, where it has become harder for meeting planners to distinguish which certifications are credible from ones that are not (Strick & Fenich, 2013).

Convention Industry Council (CIC)'s Accepted Practices Exchange (APEX) initiative, developed the industry's first comprehensive standards for environmentally sustainable meetings in partnership with American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) International, which is one of the largest voluntary standards development organizations in the world. The APEX/ASTM standards are specific, measurable, performance-based criteria designed for suppliers and planners (Alderton, 2012). The model of APEX/ASTM Standards recognizes the scope of meeting and event planning process, and has set specific performance-based criteria/requirements. The standards are comprised of nine individual specifications, which cover the most important components of meetings: (1) accommodation, (2) audiovisual and production, (3) communication and marketing, (4) destinations, (5) exhibits, (6) food and beverage, (7) meeting venue, (8) on-site offices, and (9) transportation (Alderton, 2012). Within each of the specifications, there are eight specific areas that address processes and environmental impacts related to meetings and events which include: staff management policy, communications (e.g. appropriately communicating sustainability efforts with staffs and attendees), waste management, energy, air quality, water conservation, procurement, and community partners.

Green Venue and Environmental Certifications

“Green venues are fundamental to reducing the environmental impact of organizations’ meetings, events and travel” (U.S. Green Building Council, 2009, p. 1). Venues that claim to be environmentally sustainable hold one or two certification standards such as the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), Green Seal, Energy Star, and many other (Strick & Fenich, 2013).

Certification is “the process of providing documented assurance that a product, service, or organization complies with a given standard” (Font, 2002, p. 197). With regards to sustainability certification, it should be considered effective for sustainable hospitality products because of the potential for ‘greenwash’ issue, where a company fails to follow through on its green initiatives that it promotes to its customers (Buckley, 2012; Font & Harris, 2004). Sustainability certifications can offer venues an opportunity to show their environmental commitments, and communicate their status as leaders of the sustainable hospitality industry (Black & Crabtree, 2007). While consumers are becoming more aware of greenwash issues, and are becoming more skeptical of environmental practices provided by companies, obtaining an effective sustainability certification can give credibility to claims of environmental commitments and initiatives made by meeting venues (Greets, 2014). Establishing a commitment to sustainable practices from top executives is crucial in achieving a credible certification (Smith, 2009).

Environmental certifications can have a positive impact on the profitability of certified venues (Greets, 2014). Hotels that initiate environmental practices gain financial benefits in the long-term (Brebba & Pineda, 2004). While there are setup costs associated with being green certified, the long-term benefits outweigh the short-term costs. According to Murphy (2010), launching sustainability has led to increase in sale volume and being green produces long-term

cost savings and increased profits. One key component of green certification program involves energy management. One way to handle this aspect is to change all incandescent light bulbs to compact fluorescent (CFL) or Light-emitting Diode (LED). The initial cost to purchase the new bulbs may be significant, but the long-term savings will quickly offset those costs. Despite the high setup costs and the possible lengthy return on investment associated with environmental initiatives, the economic benefits usually outweigh the cost of implementation (Murphy, 2010). Starting with schemes that are less capital demanding can lead to substantial cost savings (Chan, 2009). The following are some green certifications relevant to the meeting and event industry focusing on meeting venues. While this list cannot be considered all inclusive, an overview of the well-known ecolabels and certificates will help readers to be informed on what is out there (Strick & Fenich, 2013).

The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System is a globally accepted benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of high performance green buildings. LEED focuses on sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection, and indoor environmental quality.

Green Seal certifies hotel and lodging properties for environmental practices. Where the property also provides meeting space, this standard may help give an indication of how prepared a hotel is to host a more sustainable event. The standards focus on waste minimization, energy conservation and management, and management of fresh water. Green Seal certification requires an onsite verification by an independent auditor.

Audubon Green Leaf™ Eco-Rating program can provide planners with the information specifically for lodging industry on whether audited lodging facilities have met environmental best practices standards in all aspects of day-to-day operations.

Green Key Eco-Rating program is a similar international program that recognizes accommodation providers for sustainable practices. In addition to identifying lodging criteria, Green Key operates a Green Meetings program. The program addresses questions pertaining to conference and meeting services, food and beverage services, and engineering.

The ISO 14000 family, which has been developed and published by International Organization for Standardization (ISO) addresses various aspects of environmental management. Organizations looking to identify and control their environmental impact and constantly improve their environmental performance can benefit from these practical environmental tools.

EarthCheck certification is a certifier of sustainable travel and tourism operators. This certification provides the tools and training to help users develop their own environmental management and sustainability procurements.

Research on Sustainable Hospitality in General

Sustainability and environmental issues have interested increasing number of hospitality researchers as the sustainability issues gain growing attention from the hospitality industry (Myung, McClaren, & Li, 2012). A variety of subtopics of sustainability have been discussed in the hospitality literature. In the context of hotels and lodging industry, previous literature found varied results about relationship between environmental management and hotels' performance. On one hand, research provided evidence of positive link between effective environmental strategies and overall hotel performance (Carmon-Moreno, Cespedes-Lorente, & De Burgos-Jiménez, 2004). On the other hand, some research found that there was no significant relationship between hotel performance levels and environmental proactivity (Claver-Cortes, Molina-Azorin, Pereira-Moliner, Lopez-Gamero, 2007). In terms of consumer behavior, the findings of many research agree that environmental practices have positive impact on hotel

guests' visit intention, willingness to pay more, intention to recommend to others (Choi, Parsa, Sigala, & Putrevu, 2009; Han, Hsu, & Sheu, 2010). However, sustainable practices and green attributes were not found to be a determining factor that directly affects hotel customers' hotel selection, satisfaction, and intention to return (Robinot & Giannelloni, 2010). Manaktola & Jauhari (2007) indicated that hotel consumers' positive attitude and behavior toward green hotel does not translate into their willingness to pay more for green practices.

Previous studies that investigated impact of sustainability practices on restaurant consumer behaviors indicated positive correlation between sustainable practices initiated by restaurants and consumers' environmental attitude/behavior (Hu, Parsa, & Self, 2012; Namkung and Jang, 2014). Hu et al. (2012) consumers who are knowledgeable of sustainable practices and who have higher income are more likely to patronize a green restaurant. Additional research found that restaurant consumers consider environmental sustainability seriously and are willing to pay for green practices with varied levels depending on their ages, previous experiences, and self-perception (Namkung & Jang, 2014; Schubert, Kandampully, Solnet, & Kralj, 2010). However, research that studied sustainability from managers' perspective showed that there are several factors hampering restaurant managers' willingness to go environmentally sustainable, including high costs, regulatory restrictions, and limited demand for expensive organic menu options (Alonso & Ogle, 2010; Revell & Blackburn, 2007).

Research on Sustainable Meetings and Events

As sustainability gained attention from the meetings and events industry so did the field of research studying event management. According to Myung et al. (2012), research focus of the sustainability in the event management has been diverse: Discussed topics include challenges and opportunities in the context of festivals (Laing & Frost, 2010), corporate environmental

process (Mair & Jago, 2010), environmental practices for conference centers (Wolfe & Shanklin, 2001), and the current position of the convention industry on environmental impact and sustainable tourism (Park & Boo, 2010). Specifically, Laing and Frost (2010) discussed the importance of engaging a range of key stakeholders (e.g., policymakers, organizers, planners, community, and attendees) in a variety of sustainable practices. Mair and Jago (2010) indicated that the success of sustainability in the business event sector is driven by a small group of committed individuals in management. Wolfe and Shanklin (2001) found that the most implemented practices by conference centers were a recycling program (85.8%) followed by an energy conservation program (27%). Another research that studied potential environmental and economic impact of convention tourisms revealed that attendees were not well-informed of green conventions while planners perceived negative influence of conventions on environment (Park & Boo, 2010).

Research has investigated sustainability-related issues within various segments of the meeting and event industry. An empirical study examined what and how much different sustainable practices factored into planners' intentions and decisions at the inception of their convention site-selection process (Draper et al., 2011). The study found that on-site recycling programs for paper, newspaper, and cardboard, and plastic as the most important criteria. This study revealed recycling as the most important item among three categories identified by meeting planners: energy efficiency, recycling, and sustainable polices. Perceptions between show organizer and attendees on three different sustainable practices (recycling, food and beverage, and water conservation) in tradeshow were investigated (Jung, Kim, Malek, & Lee, 2016). The findings of the study suggested that attendees did not perceive that the overall tradeshow was environmentally sustainable, as opposed to perception, the show organizer had on

how sustainable the tradeshow was. Dickson & Arcodia (2010) pointed out that event management associations are only partially fulfilling their role in promoting sustainable event practices. Whitfield, Dioko, and Webber (2014) evaluated conference and meeting venues' environmental performance in the United Kingdom, using a so-called GREENER scale. The letters stand for the following: Greening the boardroom. Register of applicable environmental legislation; Environmental disclosure by business annual reports; Educating staff regarding environmental impact; Need to adopt environmental review, environmental statement, environmental management system (EMS) and environmental audit; Establish an environmental affairs department, and Recycling, recovering and reusing. Another scale framework named, VENUE (Venerated; Eager; Nonchalant; Unmotivated; and Eternal denial) was employed from Carroll's (1979) six issues of concern to society. The study's findings suggest that exercising organizational, managerial, and operational practices identified in the GREENNER VENUE framework can effectively mitigate the environmental impact of the conference venue.

Despite the increasing volume of literature on sustainability in meeting and event management, investigations on motivating/promoting factors for encouraging sustainability participation have either been overlooked or concluded that there is lack of promotions or motivators from both a theoretical and a practical standpoint.

Reward Programs

The term "reward program", also better known as loyalty program refers to various marketing methods that positively influence customers' attitudes and behaviors toward the brand or firm (Henderson, Beck, & Palmatier, 2011). Customers who are the members of the reward program receive desirable benefits by using accumulated points. Points are earned based on frequency of service uses such as hotel stays, the amount of dollar spent on playing games. The

purpose of a reward program is to achieve a strong base of steady customers who repeatedly purchase goods or services of a brand and maintain loyalty to the particular business (Nunes & Drèze, 2006). While a substantial number of academic research articles in the field have been published, the effectiveness of such reward programs is still controversial (Dorotic, Bijmolt, & Verhoef, 2012).

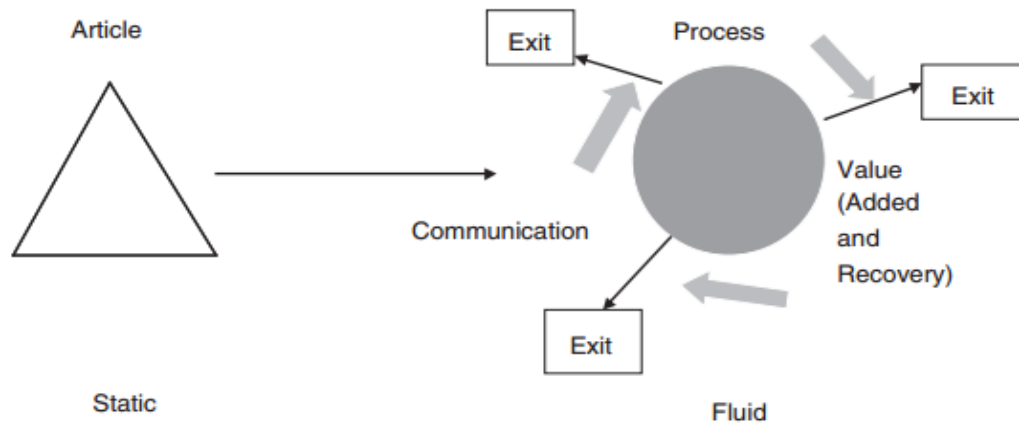
A considerable number of studies in the field of marketing have claimed the value of reward programs (Drèze & Nunez, 2008; Leenheer, Heerde, Bijmolt, & Smidts, 2007; Meyer-Waarden, 2006; Taylor & Neslin, 2005). As a measure of behavioral loyalty, share of wallet, purchase frequency/amounts, and customer retention rate have been used frequently in marketing research. Meyer-Waarden (2006) suggests that successful loyalty programs increase share of consumer wallet, which a household allocates to its focal business, and ultimately customer retention and lifetime duration. Leenheer et al., (2007) supports the findings by stating that creating loyalty program membership generally enhances share of wallet but the effectiveness should be closely monitored by the company that runs the program. Taylor and Neslin (2004), who investigated both “points pressure” impact and “rewarded behavior” impact, indicate that both effects are statistically significant and contribute to company’s profitability. The point-pressure impact produces “a switching cost in the form of a foregone opportunity to build up sales levels (points) toward earning the reward” (Taylor & Neslin, 2005. p, 294). The authors suggest that when consumers earn the reward (the rewarded-behavior), re-patronage is likely to persist. Drèze and Nunez, (2008) examined the effectiveness of loyalty programs more elaborately looking at the difference between the number and size of tiers on consumer’s perceptions of status. The authors find that adding a secondary tier enhances perception of status, while increased number of members in the top tier diminishes status. The findings also suggest

that customers prefer a three-tier program (e.g., gold, silver, and no status) to a two-tier program (e.g., gold and no status). Perception of status is discussed in depth in the structural elements of reward programs section later in this chapter.

Reward programs have been used by many hospitality firms (e.g., airlines, casinos, and hotels) to promote and generate repeat business as well (Tanford & Malek, 2015). With that, hospitality researchers have strived to theoretically prove the effectiveness of reward programs on retaining customers, creating loyal customers, and increasing profits (McCall & Voorhees, 2010; Shoemaker & Lewis, 1999; Tanford, Raab, & Kim, 2011; Tanford, Raab, & Kim, 2013; Voorhees, McCall, & Carroll, 2014). Shoemaker and Lewis (1999) introduced a framework for creating a brand relationship named the “Loyalty Triangle” which comprises of process (how the service works), value creation (value added and value recovery), and communication. This model was modified and revealed in an updated form named “Loyalty Circle” (Shoemaker, 2003). The circle still has the three dimensions, but customers can exit the circle at any point as can be seen in Figure 1. While the authors suggest that the three dimensions must be continuously executed to create and maintain customer loyalty, a recent review study by Tanford, Shoemaker, and Dinca (2016) suggests that more research attention is need on communication or value recovery than process and value-added dimensions.

A few years after the “Loyalty Circle” was introduced, McCall and Voorhees (2010) focused on other three driving factors of a successful loyalty program: program structure (i.e., program tiers), reward structure (i.e., reward type, reward magnitude, reward frequency, and reward framing), and customer factors (i.e., customer-program fit, and role of the customer). This conceptual framework shows that the three main factors play an important role in increasing purchase frequency, decreasing customer price sensitivity, establishing customer advocacy,

extending relationship lengths, increasing share of wallet, developing consumer community and connectedness, and increasing firm performance.



*Figure 1. From loyalty triangle to loyalty circle, Adopted from “The Future of Pricing in Services,” by S. Shoemaker, 2003, *Journal of Revenue and Pricing Management*, 2, p. 273. Copyright 2003 by the Henry Steward Publications.*

In the meantime, researchers show evidence to the contrary. Xie and Chen (2013), who reviewed loyalty program literature, listed four main drawbacks of loyalty programs: low levels of consumer commitment, cost concerns, customer frustration, and the erosion of market saturation. First, reward program members do not necessarily show high level of commitment. A statistic summary reports that “roughly 50 percent, on average, of hotel loyalty members are “at risk” of switching their preferred brand and nearly 50 percent, on average, of hotel loyalty members’ annual hotel spend is not within their preferred brand.” (Deloitte, 2013, p.1). Customers may sign up for a reward program in order to benefit from the program, not because they are loyal to a company or product (Leenheer et al., 2007; Uncles et al., 2003). Also, loyal customers can show more substantial negative behavioral intentions than those of non-members in case of service failure (Xie & Chen, 2013). Second, Dowling and Uncles (1997) raise a concern that all the benefits and operation of reward programs cost money to the firm and its projected profitability on the relative proportion of loyal customers is not likely. Costs associated

with administration such as maintaining and updating customer database, issuing regular activity statements, restructuring program tiers, and increasing marketing distribution coverage are also heavy items of expenditures (McCall & Voorhees, 2010; Voorhees et al, 2014). Third, there are several occasions where customers become frustrated due to loyalty programs. Typical examples include difficulty of access and point redemption, low perceived reward value (Stauss, Schmidt, & Schoeler, 2005), feelings of unfair treatment compared to other customers (Hartmann & Viard, 2005), and potential data breach concerns (Berman, 2006; Lacey & Sneath, 2006). Lastly, it is very difficult for a company to differentiate its loyalty program from others as the market has been saturated with similar membership structures, benefits, and terms and conditions (Berman, 2006; Dowling & Uncles, 1997). Under this circumstance, customers would not be highly committed to one loyalty program, but enroll in multiple programs.

Reward Programs and the Theory of Operant Conditioning

A number of loyalty program research has adopted theories from the field of psychology. Henderson et al., (2011) employed the theories of three domains of psychological mechanisms: status, habit, and relationship. The current study pays attention to the notion of habit that is closely related with the theory of operant conditioning. Two other domains, “status”, and “relationship” are tied to program tier structure, which will be discussed in the next section.

“Habit” refers to “the phenomenon of an actor's memory-based tendency to perform a particular behavior given previous experience performing the behavior in similar contexts” (Henderson et al, 2011. p. 262). Consumers who repeat a particular behavior over time increasingly rely on automatic decision making (Ajzen, 2002). To understand the effectiveness of habit-based loyalty programs, recognizing three primary antecedents is essential: intention, repetition, and context stability (Henderson et al., 2011). According to the theory of planned

behavior (Ajzen, 2002), a consumer must have an *intention* to perform a behavior. To develop habit, the behavior must be *repeated* in the context of certain *stable environmental cues* that an individual can link with his/her behavior. There must be some incentives that are rewarding enough to sustain the behavioral intention in order for the behavior to be repeated (Ajzen, 2002; Henderson et al., 2011). Therefore, rewards and incentives of loyalty programs are often juxtaposed with positive reinforcements used in the theory of operant conditioning (Redish, Jensen, Johnson, & Kurth-Nelson 2007; Skinner, 1974).

Wood and Neal (2009) indicate that habitual consumers are less likely influenced by an increase in rewards for their behaviors. The reinforcement schedules studied in operant conditioning further explains that in what way an incentive-based reward program is used to encourage repetition without creating instrumental contingencies. In the study, subjects showed resistance to extinction of a reinforcement and the degree of the resistance differed by reinforcement schedule: continuous, fixed-ratio partial reinforcement schedule, variable-ratio partial reinforcement schedule, and extinction (Skinner, 1974). While subjects learned desired responses fastest when a reinforcement was provided in continuous schedule, the desired response still continued to some extent when reinforcements were provided randomly or in a fixed schedule after each desired response (Skinner, 1974). However, it is uncertain if this resistance were derived from subjects' strong habits that support the repeated behavior without any contingent conditions (Redish et al., 2007). Repetition of behavior is an essential but not sufficient element of habit development (Henderson et al., 2011).

The loyalty-related constructs used in marketing and hospitality studies may shed light on this issue. Constructs that are frequently used to measure customer loyalty include commitment, switching costs, and behavioral loyalty (Tanford et al., 2011). Company's marketing efforts such

as reward programs create consumers' deep commitment that may lead to a repeated purchasing behavior (Oliver, 1999). Loyal customers are unlikely to switch to competitor hotel brands only because of a financial cause (Tanford et al., 2011; Yoo & Bai, 2013). The preferential attitudinal and behavioral response toward brands, which is termed "true loyalty", can be achieved by going beyond offering special incentives (Engel & Blackwell, 1982). Attitudinal loyalty has been explained by the psychological aspects of brand loyalty, such as brand preference and commitment (Gremler & Brown, 1996). To measure behavioral loyalty, evaluation of attitudinal loyalty needs to precede (Hu et al., 2010; Mattila, 2006). "Truly loyal" customers show both attitudinal and behavioral loyalty such as word of mouth and repeat visitation (Baloglu, 2002; Tanford & Baloglu, 2013). Preferential attitudinal response is established by customers' previous experience, and consequently, customers are likely to sustain the attitudes and repeat the behavior in similar contexts (i.e., habitual purchasing). Therefore, it is critical to consider both attitudinal and behavioral aspects of loyalty when developing a reward program.

Structural Elements of Reward Programs

As described in the previous section, the notions of "status" and "relationship" are important underlying psychological mechanisms that can help develop structural elements of reward programs. Consumers who are conferred elevated "status" by a seller's marketing efforts can be motivated to develop loyalty. Social comparison theory (Festinger, 1954) explains the nature of relative status, whereby people become perceive themselves as better than other groups with perceptions of the conferred status ranking. In line with the social comparison theory, structure of a status hierarchy affects perceptions of status (Drèze & Nunes, 2009). For example, consumers are likely to feel they are well-treated and become loyal to a brand when they receive a greater tier and their benefits remain constant. Although reward programs continue to boom in

the hospitality industry, these incentive-based or frequency-based loyalty programs do not meet all customers' needs and desires (Voorhees, McCall, & Calantone, 2011). Different types of promotional incentives could satisfy different needs, as each one delivers a different benefit (Hu et al., 2010). Thus, offering a variety of options of rewards is a key to a program that can satisfy wider range of customers. In addition, reward program tier structures need to be based on a strategic analysis of a company's consumer base so that the rewards and benefits are flexible enough to reflect a variety of customers' desires (Voorhees et al., 2011). However, incentive itself would not directly lead to the behavior. According to Kivetz, Urminsky, and Zheng (2006), goal progression (e.g., goal toward a free drink using the Starbucks app) accelerates purchase frequency when the goal becomes near. Acceleration toward a reward can positively predict retention in the reward program and willingness to re-engagement in the program (Henderson et al., 2011). Therefore, it is worth reviewing how structural elements of loyalty programs will add value of an incentive-based loyalty program to consumers.

“Relationship” is established by a variety of benefits and human motivation or desire to secure “lasting, positive, and significant personal relationships (Baumister & Leary, 1995, p. 497). Studies in relationship marketing have been actively conducted to examine if consumer relationship is strongly related to corporate financial performances. Building a strong relationship with consumers is vital to company's long-term success as it is pertinent to “true” loyalty (Bansal, Irving, & Taylor, 2004). While the reward programs can play an important role in building customer relationships, loyalty incentives should not hinge directly on behavior (Wood & Neal, 2009). To maintain its relational dimension, loyalty programs should contain personalized and customized contents targeted at a specific customer segment (De Wulf, Oderkerken-Schroder, & Iacobucci, 2001). Perceived relationship efforts affect relationship

quality, which in turn lead to behavioral loyalty; and the effectiveness of the perceived relationship investment on relationship quality hinges upon sellers' proneness to accommodate different customers' preferences depending on a particular product category (De Wulf et al., 2001). Thus, continuous efforts on diversifying reward benefits, tiers, or the program may positively influence on perception of the customers who are already involved in a reward program. However, operators should be cautious when changing their reward programs considering increasing reward tier requirements or discontinuing some benefits is likely to negatively affect consumers' loyalty towards the brand or firm (McCall & McMahon, 2016).

Reward Programs for Meetings and Events

Nowadays, an increasing number of hotel chains offer a reward program for meeting customers. MGM Resorts International employed a meeting reward program that reward participants for bringing group business to MGM resort properties (Figure 1). Participants earn 1 reward point for every \$25 in room revenue and the points can be spent for various selections of reward options. Hyatt has the Hyatt Gold Passport Planner Rewards program, which allows planners to earn one bonus point for every dollar spent on eligible meeting revenue. Even though many reward programs for meeting planners have been introduced, researchers bring up the need to evaluate and diversify the reward program features (Hu et al., 2010; Tanford & Montgomery, 2015). Longer-term benefits or relationship building efforts should be accompanied to build and sustain the "true" customer loyalty (Shoemaker & Lewis, 1999). Since reward program for meeting industry is still at an early stage, cooperation between meeting planners and suppliers is essential in creating an effective one. Understanding which reward attributes attendees prefer (e.g., emotional or functional) helps event venues develop more desirable reward program for both planners and their attendees (Tanford & Montgomery, 2015).

MGM Meeting Rewards

The **MGM Meeting Rewards** program was created to reward participants for bringing group business to MGM Resorts International properties!

MGM Meeting Rewards is an on-line reward points program. To earn in the program, participants simply have to book group business in any MGM Resorts International property located in Nevada, Mississippi and Michigan. Once a group is booked, participants earn 1 **MGM Meeting Rewards** point for every \$25.00 in room revenue. The more rooms you book, the more points you earn. And best of all, we do all the tracking for you!



MGM Meetings Reward Website

As a participant in the program, your **MGM Meeting Rewards** points will add up quickly. And we give you complete control. You can spend them right away, or save them for an even more valuable reward as you continue to book at MGM Resorts International properties. It's up to you! We have created a wonderful selection of more than 10,000 reward options for you to choose from!



Figure 2. MGM meeting rewards. Retrieved from <http://mgmmeetings.corerewards.com/images/branding/mgmmeetings/ProgramOverview.pdf>

Rewarding Sustainability Participation

While there are many internal reward programs that recognize employees, who bring sustainability efforts, a loyalty program that rewards green consumers is not prevalent in the meetings and events industry. Academic researchers have proposed a necessity of expanding previous studies that explore the antecedents of customer loyalty on green loyalty by incorporating the perspective of green marketing (Dick & Basu, 1994; Martínez, 2015). Tanford and Malek (2015) indicate that considering customers who have high attitude toward green practices could be an important factor contributing to reward program effectiveness and customer retention. As the hospitality industry has widely integrated voluntary environmental sustainability programs such as recycling and towel reuse-program, several innovative hotel corporations began to incentivize the customers who participate in the green program. An example of the benefits is initiated by Starwood hotels, where guests have an option to opt-out of housekeeping altogether in exchange for a daily \$5 voucher or loyalty program points (Starwood, 2016). Green loyalty is defined as “a consumer commitment to repurchase or otherwise continue using a green brand” (Dick & Basu, 1994, p.99). Based on the definition of the green loyalty, such initiatives by Starwood hotels, can have a positive impact on consumer behavioral intention or attitudinal loyalty towards hotels that actively carry out green marketing.

In the meantime, incentives have been theorized to be a factor that damages the reputational value of good deeds (e.g., environmental behavior) in economy research such as the theory of impure altruism (Andreoni, 1990). Impure altruism postulates that individuals may be motivated to participate in good deeds by in part because of “warm glow” - which refers to emotional benefit, as well as by the value of the public goods. Impure altruism has often been used by researchers in environmental economics and management when explaining consumers’

motivation of responsible economic behaviors. According to Bénabou and Tirole (2006), extrinsic incentives can erode the intrinsic motivation to do a good deed inducing a partial or net crowding out of prosocial behavior. Kotchen (2005) indicates that green demand for green products and environmental quality is determined by market situation such as market prices, production technologies, and other given external environmental quality.

On the other hand, incentives can increase the amount of participation. As described by positive reinforcements that are used in the theory of operant conditioning (Skinner, 1974), such incentives can ultimately encourage repeat visitations and purchases using reward points, discounts, or various other benefits. Mair and Jago (2010) suggest that meeting venues should look at the sustainability subject to give them an additional competitive advantage in securing business. Giebelhausen et al. (2016) indicate that different types of rewards may generate different responses between people who have already participated in a green program and people who have not. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that rewarding a green venue selection will positively affect likelihood of meeting planners' site selection intention and perceived value for money toward the venue.

Meeting Site Selection

Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) and Convention and Visitors Bureaus (CVBs) work with local convention hotels and other meeting venues to host large associations that are looking for an attractive meeting or convention site which can fulfill their objectives (Crouch & Louviere, 2004). From meeting planners' standpoint, various antecedent conditions and objectives of their meetings determine the importance of site-selection factors, which significantly influence the site selection analysis and decision as illustrated in Figure 3 (Crouch & Ritchie, 1998).

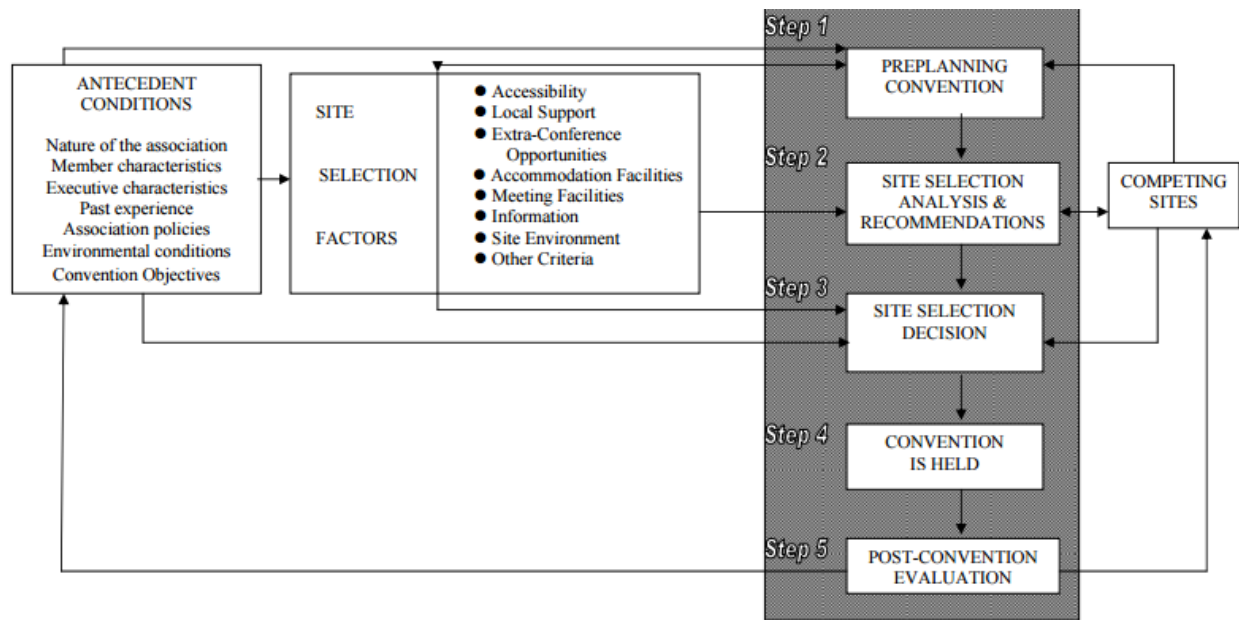


Figure 3. A conceptual framework of the site selection process. Adapted from “Convention Site Selection Research: A review, Conceptual Model, and Propositional Framework,” by G. I. Crouch, and J. R. Brent Ritchie, 1998, *Journal of Convention & Exhibition Management*, 1, p. 61. Copyright 1998 by the Haworth Press, Inc.

Site selection criteria for various types of meetings and events have been explored by many empirical studies. Huo (2014) indicates that destination attributes can play a critical role in evaluating image and developing strategies of a meeting destination image. Specifically, previous literature revealed that meeting planners placed proximity of sites, whether a hotel integrated meeting facilities, accommodation room rates, cost of meeting venue, location of accommodation, and perceived food quality as significant factors that influence meeting planners’ site selection (Crouch & Louviere, 2004; Huo, 2014; Kaiz, 2007; Oppermann, 1996). Safety/security, attractions/entertainment, and accessibility were also found to be common factors that are considered by meeting planners when choosing a meeting destination/venue (DiPietro, Breiter, Rompf, & Godlewska, 2008). A list of convention site selection criteria, which Crouch and Ritchie (1998) developed by reviewing 64 pertinent studies is provided in Figure 4.

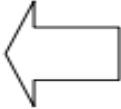
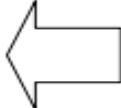
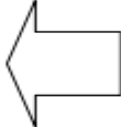
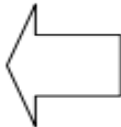
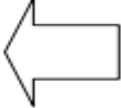
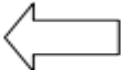

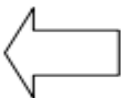
Category		Dimensions
Accessibility		<p>Cost – the monetary expense of transportation and access</p> <p>Time – the duration/distance of travel involved and the opportunity cost of that time</p> <p>Frequency – the frequency of connections to the site</p> <p>Convenience – the scheduling convenience of the connections</p> <p>Barriers – the extent of any travel formalities that inhibit travel such as visas, customs, etc.</p>
Local Support		<p>Local chapter – the extent of assistance and backing offered by the local chapter of the association</p> <p>CVB/convention centre – the extent of planning, logistical, and promotional support offered</p> <p>Subsidies – the extent to which the destination offers to defray costs through rebates and subsidies</p>
Extra-conference Opportunities		<p>Entertainment – restaurants, bars, theatres, nightclubs, etc.</p> <p>Shopping – malls, major department stores, low prices, etc.</p> <p>Sightseeing – architecture, museums, monuments, attractions, parks, historical sites, local tours, etc.</p> <p>Recreation – sports and activities either as spectator or participant</p> <p>Professional opportunities – visiting local clients, negotiations, business deals, selling, making contacts, etc.</p>
Accommodation Facilities		<p>Capacity – the number of rooms available and whether more than a single hotel is required</p> <p>Cost – the cost of suitable accommodation at the site</p> <p>Service – the perception of the standards of service</p> <p>Security – the extent to which the hotels provide a safe and secure environment</p> <p>Availability – are the facilities available?</p>
Meeting Facilities		<p>Capacity – ability of site to provide suitable sized facilities</p> <p>Layout – suitability of the facility layout and floor plan</p> <p>Cost – the cost of the meeting space required</p> <p>Ambience – the ability of the facility to create an appropriate atmosphere and environment</p> <p>Service – the perception of the standards of service</p> <p>Security – the extent to which the facility provides a safe and secure meeting space</p> <p>Availability – are the facilities available when required?</p>
Information		<p>Experience – has the site performed satisfactorily in the past?</p> <p>Reputation – what is the reputation of the destination among other meeting planners</p> <p>Marketing – the effectiveness of the destination's marketing activities</p>
Site Environment		<p>Climate – the desirability of the destination's climate</p> <p>Setting – the attractiveness of the destination's surroundings</p> <p>Infrastructure – the suitability and standard of local infrastructure</p> <p>Hospitality – the extent to which the host organisations and community excel in welcoming visitors</p>
Other Criteria		<p>Risks – the possibility of strikes, natural disasters, boycotts, and other possible adverse events</p> <p>Profitability – the extent to which the site would produce a profit (loss) for the convention</p> <p>Association promotion – would the site add credibility to the association and build membership?</p> <p>Novelty – the extent to which the destination represents a novel location for the Association's next convention</p>

Figure 4. Convention site selection factors. Adapted from “Convention Site Selection Research: A review, Conceptual Model, and Propositional Framework,” by G. I. Crouch, and J. R. Brent Ritchie, 1998, *Journal of Convention & Exhibition Management*, 1, p. 59-60. Copyright 1998 by the Haworth Press, Inc.

Types of Meeting Planner

Corporate planner

Corporate meeting planners are hired by a corporation or organization to plan a variety of corporate meetings that range from small VIP board of directors meeting to large sales meetings and staff meetings. Corporate meeting planners should embrace the organization's culture in all aspects of the planning process, from site selection to menu choices, to program implementations (Fenich, 2014). Unlike association meetings, typical corporate meeting attendees are required to attend their meetings and are paid for their travels by their organizations. Thus, the site selection criteria for corporate meeting planners are typically perceived differently than those of association meeting planners (Bonn, Brand, & Ohlin, 2008). According to Baum (1990), perceived value for money, service quality, and safety and convenience are important site-selection factors for corporate meeting planners.

Association planner

Association meeting planners are typically involved in planning a large-scale annual exhibition in conjunction with the association's annual convention, where products or services of the industry are displayed by various vendors (Fenich, 2014). Associations derive 32% of their income from meetings, conventions, and exhibitions (PCMA Convene, 2017). The greater the number of paid attendees, the more lucrative the meeting is to the association. Therefore, association meeting planners develop a marketing strategy to promote benefits of membership and attending their annual meeting using a variety of marketing plans such as keynote speakers, social media, and socializing events. To maximize participation and satisfy attendees, association planners are seeking for negotiable room blocks and food and beverage, quality of food and

meeting rooms, and quality of hotel rooms when selecting a venue (Baloglu & Love, 2005; Bonn et al., 2008).

Government planner

Government meeting planners are different from other two planners in many ways (Fenich, 2014). Government meetings are restricted by regulations and codes by the government agencies (e.g., per diem rate, limited programs, and restricted budget for food and beverage items). When planners submit RFPs, those restrictions such as spending caps can make the business less attractive to meeting facilities such as hotels than corporate or association groups (“The meeting magazines”, 2016). Government planners are restricted from accepting gifts over a certain dollar amount, and familiarization trips for site inspections. Since these restrictions make the government planners’ job duties challenging, it is critical for government planners to understand their specific restrictions of the government agency and plan ahead in their site-selection process.

Site Selection Process with Sustainability in Mind

Meeting planners significantly influence decision-makers in determining the consideration set of destinations and venues throughout their site-selection process (Baloglu & Love, 2005). With increasing attention on the issue of the sustainability, planners’ role in planning a green/sustainable meeting is important regardless of size and type of meetings. Environmental-conscious planners would evaluate environmental performance of meeting venues and select them based on various environmental criteria they are looking for (Boo & Park, 2013). Selecting a green venue is a crucial step for planners to plan a truly green meeting (Draper et al., 2011).

Meeting properties strive to gain a competitive edge with various sustainability-oriented certifications or management system in place such as LEED, ISO, and Green Key. Consumers have become more aware of greenwash issues, and more skeptical on environmental practices provided by organizations. With this, obtaining a reliable and effective sustainability certification can offer corporations (e.g., hotels and convention centers) an opportunity to show their environmental commitments (Black & Crabtree, 2007). The sustainability certifications allow corporations to communicate their status of sustainable operation as leaders of the sustainable hospitality industry (Geerts, 2014). Sustainability-conscious customers such as millennials increasingly ask for information of sustainable practices/availabilities (Rayapura, 2014). Meeting suppliers such as meeting venues are responsible to respond to consumer demand. Therefore, the current study proposes that sustainability concepts and the consequent benefits should be included in a variety of antecedent conditions and site selection factors on the conceptual framework of a meeting site-selection process (Figure 3).

Intention to Select Sustainable Venues

Given increased consumer sensitivity to climate change, associations and meeting planners have begun to consider environmental sustainability practices in their site-selection criteria. Draper et al., (2011) suggests that convention and meeting venues, as well as meeting planners, should consider incorporating aspects of sustainable practices that are reasonable. The suggested sustainability practices in the convention site selection process consist of on-site recycling programs for paper, newspaper, and cardboard, and plastic. However, including all necessary elements of the programs may not be feasible. Although meeting planners feel they need to be environmentally responsible and there should be environmental policies, they are hesitant to pay related taxes (Park & Boo, 2010). Furthermore, a complete agreement of specific

certification standards did not exist for the meetings and event industry until the recent APEX/ASTM Environmentally Sustainable Event Standards was developed by GMIC (Draper et al., 2011). These voluntary standards are gradually used and implemented by meeting planners and suppliers to create a more sustainable meeting or event. When selecting a sustainable meeting venue, it is important for planners to ensure the venue provides sufficient information about its available sustainable programs and technologies that enable sustainable practices (Jung et al., 2016). LEED certified venues with advanced technologies can substantially conserve energy by electronic signage, LED light bulb, automatic energy savers (Green Meeting Guide, 2009).

From an academic standpoint, there is limited literature on the significance of sustainability, although decision making factors and site selection criteria have been widely researched in the context of meetings and events (Myung et al., 2012). In addition, previous research on customers' intention to choose a green venue has concluded with varied results (Gao & Matilla, 2016). Accordingly, scrutinizing more in depth on how much sustainability matters to meeting planners in their site-selection is essential. In line with the theory of operant conditioning, how effective the economic benefits (i.e., sustainability reward program) would influence planners' intentions to select a sustainable meeting venue is hypothesized as follows:

H1: Meeting planners will be more likely to select a venue with a sustainability reward program compared to a similar venue without the reward program.

Other Important Site Selection Factors

As the demand for meetings and events increases, suppliers, specifically hotels are in a stronger position to negotiate (Fenich, 2014). In other words, planners face a weakened negotiating position. Thus, meeting planners need to be flexible in selecting dates, destinations,

and venues when planning an event. Submitting the request for proposals (RFP) should be done in an effective and an efficient way to create the best result. Since it is a seller's market, hotels often decide not to bid because they believe they may be able to maximize revenues by hosting a larger event (Lee & Fenich, 2016). Therefore, it is important for meeting planners to take advantage of all the services CVBs can offer, and obtain sufficient options so that the planners can find the best venues possible for their group (Fenich, 2014). Planners should take many different factors into consideration and set the relative significance of each factor to choose the right venue for their group (Crouch & Louviere, 2004). The prioritization of site-selection criteria is dependent upon the objectives of the meeting, budget, attendee demographics, and many others (Elston & Draper, 2012). According to Park and Boo (2010), convention stakeholders (e.g., meeting planners, attendees, and suppliers)' environmentally friendly decisions on how they manage their companies and meetings are strongly impacted by their positive attitudes and strong green management intentions. However, the reality is that a lot of priorities come into play even though planners strive to keep sustainability top-of-mind (Park & Boo, 2010). Therefore, understanding what other factors planners take priority over sustainability, while meeting venues and conventions are becoming more sustainable, should take precedence.

Venue Location

The research on destination and site selection has been widespread in tourism (Baloglu & Love, 2005). The importance of a destination image has been frequently recognized by previously research as an image of a destination influences a planner's subjective attitude and, consequently, decision behavior (i.e., site-selection decision) (Gallarza, Saura, & Garcia, 2002). According to Oppermann (1996), planners with previous visitation or experience with a

destination have more positive perception on the destination. Previous literatures indicate three conceptual components of destination image, which are cognitive, affective, and overall impressions. Meeting planners' perception of meeting sites is critical in that it is one of the key factors that determine the final consideration set (Baloglu & Love, 2005; Huo, 2014). Research by Baloglu and Love (2005) investigated the difference of meeting planners' perception between major cities (e.g., Chicago, Las Vegas, and Orlando) and non-major cities (e.g., Columbia, Cleveland, and Nashville). The findings suggest that the meeting planners not only perceive different images for different convention cities but also shows different behavioral intentions (word-of-mouth and future considerations). Accordingly, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H2: Meeting planners will be more likely to select a venue located in a first-tier convention city compared to a similar venue located in a second-tier city.

To test how much the sustainability reward program influences in the relationship described in H2, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H2a: Meeting planners will be more likely to select a venue located in a second-tier convention city when there is a sustainability reward program compared to a similar venue without the reward program.

H2b: Meeting planners will be more likely to choose a venue located in a first-tier city versus a second-tier city when there is not a sustainability reward program.

Overall Costs

Meeting or convention facilities are evaluated based on a total meeting cost by meeting planners (Boehmer, 2010). The total meeting price is determined by various associated costs including fixed costs, indirect costs, and variable costs (Fenich, 2014). Meeting planners compare the total meeting cost at venues with different characteristics, and then choose the

venues that offer the most value for their meeting (Boehmer, 2010). Previous literature consistently found that various costs associated with attending a meeting are one of the significant site selection criteria (Chacko & Fenich, 2000; DiPietro et al., 2008). Hotel room rates, meeting space rate, cost of food and beverage, cost of air service were revealed to be critical attributes for convention destination (Chacko & Fenich, 2000). Crouch and Louviere (2004) suggest that higher overall costs negatively affect venue competitiveness, but very inexpensive venues lose their attractiveness because the cheap venues are perceived as poor facilities, which in turn put the success of the meeting at risk.

Destinations and event facilities should take the total meeting cost into their account when determining price for a product or service (Eltson & Draper, 2012). However, meetings and events are broad in terms of geographical area and characteristics of attendees. For instance, perceived value for the money can vary by different meeting planners or their attendees. Hence, overall cost is one of the most important conditions the meeting venues should take into consideration to remain competitive in the market. Assuming that meeting planners may exhibit varying behavioral intentions because of the overall costs, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Meeting planners will be more likely to select a lower cost venue compared to a similar venue with a higher cost.

With the sustainability reward program in mind, the following hypotheses were proposed to test to what extent the reward program comes in to play in the relationship described in H3:

H3a: Meeting planners will be more likely to select a higher cost venue when there is a sustainability reward program compared to a similar venue without the reward program.

H3b: Meeting planners will be more likely to select a lower cost venue versus a higher cost venue when there is not a sustainability reward program.

Perceived Value for Money

Perceived value has been measured in the context of consumer expectations in previous research (Kim, Duncan, & Chung, 2015). Zeithaml (1988) describes value from the perspective of a tradeoff between ‘give’ and ‘get’. In general, perceived value is defined as “trade-off between what the customer receives and what he or she is required to give up to acquire and use a product” (Yuan, Morrison, Cai, & Linton, 2008, p. 211). While many past studies have discussed the importance of service quality to increase value of a product to the customer (Davidow, 1998; Parasuraman et al., 1998), the bottom line of the perceived value is “the customer’s assessment of the utility of a product based on perceptions of what is received and what is given” (Zeithaml, 1988, p. 14).

Perceived value occurs at various stages of the consumer decision-making process (e.g., purchase decision) and is an important indicator that predicts customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions such as word-of-mouth and repeat intention (Parasuraman et al., 1998; Zeithaml, 1988). Sheth, Newman, and Gross (1991) regarded consumer decision-making as a function of multiple consumption value dimensions, which consist of five contributing factors: social, emotional, functional, epistemic, and conditional value. Functional value, which refers to value for money has been considered the key influence on consumer decision-making, though the importance of different value dimensions varies depending on the type of product or service (Sweeney, Soutar, & Johnson, 1999).

Value-for-money has been measured by services and hospitality literature to predict overall customer satisfaction, loyalty, and profitability (Rajaguru, 2016). Sweeney et al. (1999) defined perceived value for money as the ratio or trade-off between quality and price. The value-for-money is often regarded as functional value, which is defined as the “utility derived from the

product due to the reduction of its perceived short term and longer term costs” (Sheth et al., 1991). Previous literature has designated value-for-money (functional value) as the most influential value in consumer choice (Rajaguru, 2016; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001).

Because a general principle of the customer value is explained by a tradeoff between benefits and costs and a lived experience (Nasution & Mavondo, 2008; Sweeney et al., 1999), the hotel values as a meeting venue is delivered through a variety of vehicles such as atmospherics of the hotel, facilities, food and beverage sections, and quality of guests/meeting rooms. As reward program is perceived as valuable by many customers in terms of building loyalty, it becomes another driver that hotels achieve their desired level of customer value perception. There are important elements that determine the value of a reward program (Hu et al., 2010). Johnson and Leger (1999) suggest attainability, redemption behavior, and relevance as the important determinants of a valuable reward program. Psychological benefits such as a sense of belonging and the expectation of future rewards, and a feeling of participation, are also elements that determine the value of a reward program (Dowling & Uncles, 1997).

Perceived Value for Money toward Venues with Sustainability Reward Program

Facing a competitive market for meeting customers, providing reward program members with preferential treatment by different level of tiers may not be sufficient to satisfy all meeting planners. To bridge the gap, this study examines how planners’ perceived value for money is affected by venue packages with a preferential treatment associated with environmental sustainability. Participants (meeting planners) were asked to assess the value-for-money based on their perceptions of features and services that 12 sets of venue highlight. With an assumption that sustainability reward program may influence on planners’ perception of the value-for-money, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 4: Meeting planners will perceive good value for money when meeting venues offer a sustainability reward program.

A process of going green for hotels requires great initial costs for purchasing environmentally sustainable supplies, equipment, and recycled products. (Kuminoff, Zhang, & Rudi, 2010). To achieve return on investment for the costs spent on sustainable operations, hotels may increase room rates and overall price of the meeting package unless they obtain subsidy help from the government. However, previous research revealed varied views of willingness to pay a price premium for environmental-friendly products/services. A study by Park and Boo (2010) discovered that convention stakeholders are reluctant to pay an environmental tax on convention travel even though they felt environmental responsibility of the convention industry. Different segments of hotel guests show a diverse willingness to pay for sustainable practices (Kang, Stein, Heo, & Lee, 2012). Hotel guests who have a higher environmental concern presented greater willingness to pay. The study also indicated that luxury and mid-priced hotel guests are more willing to pay the premium than economy hotel guests (Kang et al., 2012).

The construct of perceived value for money is derived from price based value and quality of product or service (Zeithaml, 1998). According to price sensitivity theory (Gabor & Granger, 1964), price sensitivity is defined as the price level that is important in the consumers' decision-making process. The theory of price sensitivity indicates that the more price sensitive consumers, the more likely to switch to a cheaper brand. Price sensitive consumers tend to compromise service quality with better price (Erdem, Swalt, & Louviere, 2002). Accordingly, different price level is likely to affect planners' perception of value-for-money on different meeting venues as well as their decision to choose a meeting venue. While price sensitivity could be preeminent in low cost products or services (e.g., hotels) (Erdem et al., 2002; Rajaguru, 2016), other factors

such as service quality and reward programs may be valued in convention hotels with high quality meeting space and ancillary programs/services. Therefore, the results may show a discrepancy when combined with whether the hotel offers a sustainability reward program or not.

The following hypotheses are suggested accordingly:

Hypothesis 4a: Meeting planners will perceive greater value for money for a higher cost venue than a lower cost venue when there is a sustainability reward program.

Hypothesis 4b: Meeting planners will perceive greater value for money for a lower cost venue than a higher cost venue when there is no sustainability reward program.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides an overview of the research methods relevant to answering the research questions proposed for this study. An experiment was performed to test the hypotheses. A carefully-controlled experiment enables researchers to determine cause-and-effect relationships among variables of interest, although internal validity is prioritized over external validity (Campbell & Stanley, 1966). Manipulation checks, randomization, and valid measures of the dependent variable are explained to ensure proper execution of the experiment. This section consists of design of the experiment, sampling and data collection, instrument, measures, and overview of data analysis.

Design

This study investigates whether a sustainability reward program increases the likelihood of meeting planners' venue selection intention and the influence of a sustainability reward program on planner's perception of value-for-money. An experimental design was employed to perform this analysis. The experimental design includes three independent variables (sustainability reward program, venue location, and overall costs) and one dependent variable (intention to select the venue). The research uses a 2 (sustainability reward program) x 2 (venue location) x 3 (overall costs) within-subject factorial design as displayed in Figure 4.

Participants were asked to make hypothetical decisions on 12 sets of meeting venues about their intention to select each venue and perceived value for the money, with the three stimuli being manipulated. Different fictitious hotel brands (half hotel venues with a sustainability reward program and another half without) were introduced to subjects along with detailed information/benefits about the sustainability reward program. Venue location was

manipulated by a first-tier convention city (e.g., Chicago) and a second-tier convention city (e.g., Cleveland) in accordance with information provided by meetingsource.com (2014). The overall cost was manipulated by three levels from low, moderate, to high with actual numbers.

		Sustainability reward program		No reward program	
Overall cost	Location	Top-tier city (Chicago)	Second-tier city (Cleveland)	Top-tier city (Chicago)	Second-tier city (Cleveland)
	Low				
	Moderate				
	High				

Figure 5. Experimental design of study

Sampling and Data Collection

From the entire group of planners who are reported as meeting, convention, and event planners to the United States Department of Labor (sampling frame), non-probability sampling method is used to achieve the purpose of this study. With this purposive sampling method within the sampling frame, who takes their professional role of planning meetings and/or events, the randomly selected samples are better representative of the population. This in turn allows for internal validity in that it would be the best way to elicit the purpose of this study (i.e., planners' site-selection intentions and perceptions).

Selected samples were asked to participate in the experiment. The instrument was created using Qualtrics and administered online to the participants. Since the research used a within-subject (repeated measure) design with three treatments with multiple levels, all the participants were tested under several different conditions, which were incorporated into the 12 cells as illustrated in Figure 3. For example, one venue is located in Chicago with a low overall cost and

offers a sustainability reward program, whereas the other venue is located in Cleveland with a moderate overall cost and does not offer a sustainability reward program.

G*Power was employed to compute statistical power analysis that determines sample size of the repeated measures experimental design (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007). According to Faul et al., (2007), there are three key elements (power, significance level, and magnitude of effect sizes) that need to be taken into account to conduct a power analysis. By using a 5% level two-sided, with 90% power at a significance level (.05), where expected effect size is small to medium (.20), a minimum of 68 sample size was needed.

For the data collection, a set of online experiment using Qualtrics was randomized and administered to gather information on meeting planners' site selection intention and perceived value-for-money. The 12 sets of venue package were presented in random order to the participants. The qualified samples were screened by asking a question whether participants' job responsibilities include the site-selection process for one of the following types of meetings: corporate, association, and/or government meeting.

Participants were incentivized through Qualtrics for completion of the survey. A total of 292 responses were collected and 70 of them (23.9%) were qualified to be analyzed. To ensure that the manipulations were effective, respondents who did not answer from 3 to 9 on the following two manipulation check questions were eliminated.

1. How many venues offer a sustainability reward program among the 12 venues?

2. How many venues are located in the first-tier convention city among the 12 venues?

Responses with extreme values such as 1,2, or 10 indicate that the participants did not respond thoughtfully. After catching these discrepancies, 222 responses were eliminated. Manipulation check for overall costs was not conducted because actual dollar amount of the estimated cost per

attendee was shown to participants with a question on the value-for-money being asked on each venue set.

Stimuli

In this study, the stimuli, treatments, or independent variables are sustainability reward program, venue location, and overall costs. The 2 (sustainability reward program) x 2 (location) x 3 (overall costs) experimental design provided the participants with 12 different sets of venue option. The scenarios and key highlights of each convention hotel were adapted from Cvent website (2017), which provides a global meeting venue directory that is very frequently used as a planners' site-selection tool.

To construct the first stimulus, a sustainability reward program, information of actual hotel reward programs was compiled from hotel websites and modified to fit the purpose of the sustainable meetings as shown in Figure 5. The information includes how to earn reward points and benefits for planners who sign up for a sustainability reward program.

Venue location was manipulated by providing 6 sets of venue in a first-tier convention city (Chicago) and another 6 sets of venue in a second-tier convention city (Cleveland). These stimuli were operationalized in accordance with information by meetingsource.com (2014). Chicago was ranked as top destination in terms of convention visits while Cleveland was mentioned as one of the leading second-tier convention cities.

Lastly, the overall costs were manipulated by providing three different levels of total estimated cost (low, moderate, and high) per-attendee based on both pre-test results and meeting venue information provided by Cvent (2017). The results of the pre-test and the range of the overall costs in actual numbers are elaborated in the instrument section later in this chapter.

Sample sets of venue description including the three stimuli are illustrated in Figure 6 (venue description with sustainability reward program) and Figure 7 (venue description without sustainability reward program).

<p style="text-align: center;">Sustainable Meeting Rewards Program</p> <p>The Sustainable Meeting Rewards Program was created to reward groups that participate in our sustainable meeting program. To join the program, participants simply have to book group business in any Grand property located in the United States and agree with our sustainability policy. Planners who join our customized sustainable meeting program, will earn ten bonus points as their group achieve our various sustainability goals during meetings and stays.</p> <p>Reward benefits include free A/V equipment rental, free room nights, dining vouchers, beverage services, and more.</p>

Figure 6. Example of sustainable meeting reward program.

Venue E in Chicago																			
 	<table> <tr> <td>Venue Type:</td> <td>Hotel</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Brand:</td> <td>Grand</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rating:</td> <td>4 Stars</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Distance from airport:</td> <td>16 miles</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Year built/Year renovated:</td> <td>1974/2013</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of sleeping rooms:</td> <td>780</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of meeting rooms:</td> <td>34</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Meeting room space:</td> <td>38,592sq.Ft.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Parking: Valet parking only:</td> <td>\$55</td> </tr> </table> <p>Total Estimated Cost (Per attendee): \$220</p>	Venue Type:	Hotel	Brand:	Grand	Rating:	4 Stars	Distance from airport:	16 miles	Year built/Year renovated:	1974/2013	Number of sleeping rooms:	780	Number of meeting rooms:	34	Meeting room space:	38,592sq.Ft.	Parking: Valet parking only:	\$55
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Meeting room space:	38,592sq.Ft.																		
Parking: Valet parking only:	\$55																		
<p>Description Situated near the confluence of Lake Michigan and the Chicago River in the Lakeshore East Development Award Winning Grand Hotel, Chicago is surrounded by Chicago's biggest tourist attractions, including Millennium Park, Navy Pier and the fabulous shopping of Michigan Avenue's Magnificent Mile. The hotel features a choice of distinct room styles & 38,592 sq.ft of total meeting space with an additional 7,000 sq. ft. of outdoor event space.</p> <p>Equipment Available: Portable Walls, Staging, Loading Dock</p> <p>Business Services: Business Center, Audio/Video Capabilities,</p> <p>Recreational Activities: Health Club, Outdoor Pool, Whirlpool, Spa/Salon</p> <p>Sustainable Meeting Rewards Program The Grand Sustainability Rewards Program rewards forward-thinking clients in making their events more sustainable. As a participant in the Grand Sustainability Reward Program, you will earn 100 bonus points when you opt in to work with our green meeting team to plan and execute a customized sustainable meeting. Your reward points will be added to your existing meeting reward points and redeemed for a variety of benefits including discounted A/V equipment rental, free room nights, dining vouchers, free beverage services, and more.</p>																			
<p>How likely are you to select this venue for your conference?</p> <table> <tr> <td>Extremely unlikely</td> <td>Somewhat unlikely</td> <td>Slightly unlikely</td> <td>Neither likely nor unlikely</td> <td>Slightly likely</td> <td>Somewhat likely</td> <td>Extremely likely</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> </tr> </table>		Extremely unlikely	Somewhat unlikely	Slightly unlikely	Neither likely nor unlikely	Slightly likely	Somewhat likely	Extremely likely	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
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<p>How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement? This venue is good value for the money.</p> <table> <tr> <td>Strongly disagree</td> <td>Somewhat disagree</td> <td>Slightly disagree</td> <td>Neither agree nor disagree</td> <td>Slightly agree</td> <td>Somewhat agree</td> <td>Strongly agree</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> </tr> </table>		Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly agree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly agree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree													
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Figure 7. Sample venue description with a sustainability reward program.



Venue I in Chicago																			
 	<table> <tr> <td>Venue Type:</td> <td>Hotel</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Brand:</td> <td>Regent</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rating:</td> <td>4 Stars</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Distance from airport:</td> <td>9.9 miles</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Year built/Year renovated:</td> <td>2001/2016</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of sleeping rooms:</td> <td>369</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of meeting rooms:</td> <td>15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Meeting room space:</td> <td>50,000sq.Ft.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Parking: Paid / Valet parking:</td> <td>\$27 / \$56</td> </tr> </table> <p>Total Estimated Cost (Per attendee): \$350</p>	Venue Type:	Hotel	Brand:	Regent	Rating:	4 Stars	Distance from airport:	9.9 miles	Year built/Year renovated:	2001/2016	Number of sleeping rooms:	369	Number of meeting rooms:	15	Meeting room space:	50,000sq.Ft.	Parking: Paid / Valet parking:	\$27 / \$56
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Parking: Paid / Valet parking:	\$27 / \$56																		
<p>Description The Regent Hotel Chicago is the premier convention and business hotel in the Midwest. The Regent hotel is ideal for groups or events of 10-4,600. Located on the Chicago Riverwalk, within walking distance of the Magnificent Mile (Michigan Avenue), Navy Pier, Millennium Park, the Loop business district, the Art Institute and more, the hotel is designed to create a successful meeting environment.</p> <p>This beautiful hotel features everything from a highly trained staff to facilities carefully planned for efficient traffic flow and privacy. Function space includes a 40,000 square foot ballroom overlooking the Chicago River, the largest hotel ballroom in Chicago, as well as meeting rooms with the latest in sound equipment and audiovisual technology.</p> <p>Whether corporate or casual, we pride ourselves on providing an outstanding experience. We offer a culinary staff of world-renowned chefs that can create anything from elegant themed banquets for 4,000 to a gourmet lunch for the members of the board.</p> <p>Equipment Available: Portable Walls, Staging, Dance Floors, Loading Dock</p> <p>Business Services: Business Center, Audio/Video Capabilities</p> <p>Recreational Activities: Health Club, Indoor Pool</p>																			
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Extremely unlikely	Somewhat unlikely	Slightly unlikely	Neither likely nor unlikely	Slightly likely	Somewhat likely	Extremely likely													
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>													
<p>How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement? This venue is good value for the money.</p> <table> <tr> <td>Strongly disagree</td> <td>Somewhat disagree</td> <td>Slightly disagree</td> <td>Neither agree nor disagree</td> <td>Slightly agree</td> <td>Somewhat agree</td> <td>Strongly agree</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> </tr> </table>		Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly agree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly agree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree													
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>													

Figure 8. Sample venue description without a sustainability reward program.

Pretest

To ensure proper execution of an experiment, adequate controls and manipulations of stimuli, randomization, and valid measures of the dependent variable are essential (Cooper & Schindler, 2011). To find out validity of the other two variables (overall costs and venue location) and ensure all the venue descriptions (i.e., key features and pictures) are equally appealing to participants, a pre-test was conducted in advance without revealing the sustainability reward program information. There were thirty meeting planners who participated in the pre-test during the IMEX 2016 in Las Vegas, Nevada. Subjects were exposed to 6 different prices for a full conference package (per attendee rate) and 12 sets of venue descriptions. The subjects rated their perception of each price option on three levels (low, moderate, or high), and the extent to which they are willing to select the venue on a 7-point scale from 1 (extremely unlikely) to 7 (extremely likely) and how appealing the venue is from 1 (extremely unappealing) to 7 (extremely appealing).

Overall, results of the pretest indicated that subjects have somewhat different perceptions of how appealing the venues are on a few venue descriptions. Those subjects who showed different perceptions indicated that the pictures shown on certain venues were not as appealing as the pictures of other venues due to different types of meeting space. Thus, those pictures were replaced by similar images (i.e., city look) that show the same type of meeting space. In the modified instrument, all venue descriptions include a picture of building exterior and a small meeting room as can be seen in Figure 6 and 7. In terms of the overall costs, the pre-test results suggest that subjects recognize a high price at \$550 and a low cost at \$159. A perceived moderate cost varied by respondents ranged from \$209 to \$350 depending on the location of the venue. A list of the exact price points is shown in overall cost section in Table 1.

Instrument

With the validated variables, participants were tested on the effectiveness of the sustainability reward program on their intention to select a meeting venue and their perception of value-for-money with the two other selection criteria (venue location and overall costs) being manipulated. The survey was created and administered online using Qualtrics with following procedure. The title of the study on informed consent form was different from actual title ('meeting planners' perception of different meeting venue packages' instead of 'influence of sustainability reward program on meeting planners' site selection decision and perceived value for money') to avoid response bias where the title may influence the responses of participants.

Procedure

In the beginning of the survey, an online informed consent form with a brief description about the study was presented to participants, followed by a screener question regarding participants' job responsibilities. Those who answered "Yes" whose job responsibilities include site-selection process for corporate, association, or government meetings, were presented with the following scenario of venue selection practice:

You are planning a conference for approximately 200 attendees for 2 days and are looking for a hotel type meeting venue. Based on your Request for Proposal (RFP), the Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) of Chicago and Cleveland has provided you with 6 options, each in different venues. Please carefully review the key highlights of each venue and rate them by answering the questions following the venue descriptions.

Once participants selected the answer "Understood", they were exposed to 12 sets of venue package from Venue A to L, with the order of the venues randomized. Each venue package included the three stimuli (independent variables) described as follows.

Independent Variables Definitions

Sustainability reward program is operationalized by incorporating benefits of the sustainability reward program into half of the venue sets (the other half without the reward program), which is expected to influence planners' venue selection decision. Two samples of meeting reward programs that are currently used in the industry were customized for sustainability purpose.

Venue location refers to two different destinations of the venue. For the purpose of this study, one location from a top-tier convention city (Chicago), and the other location from a second-tier convention city (Cleveland) have been chosen (meetingsource.com, 2014).

Overall cost is total meeting cost for an attendee to participate in a meeting or event including registration, lodging, and food and beverage. The level of overall cost has been broken down into low, moderate, and high with actual numbers, which has been determined based on the pre-test results. The pre-test suggests that respondents perceive the price differently on different locations. Considering the pre-test results and the information from Cvent (2017), the following range of the overall costs has been determined for each venue (Table 1). An equivalent percentage (approximately 160%) increase was applied between low, moderate, and high.

Table 1

Range of Overall Costs

<div>Costs \ Location</div>	Chicago	Cleveland
Low	\$210-\$220	\$150-\$160
Moderate	\$335-\$350	\$240-\$255
High	\$535-\$550	\$385-\$400

After reviewing each venue package, participants were asked to answer two questions pertaining to the dependent variables described below.

Dependent Variable Measures

The first dependent variable this study measures is intention to select a venue. Participants answered the question on how likely they are to select each meeting venue on a 7-point Likert scale (extremely unlikely, somewhat unlikely, slightly unlikely, neither likely nor unlikely, slightly likely, somewhat likely, extremely likely) as they review the twelve different sets of venue description in random order.

The second dependent variable is perceived value-for-money. Participants were asked to rate how strongly agree or disagree with the following statement on a 7-point scale (strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, slightly disagree, neither agree nor disagree, slightly agree, somewhat agree, strongly agree): This venue is good value for the money.

The survey concluded with 8 demographic questions and 3 manipulation checks.

Overview of Data Analysis

A three way 2 (sustainability reward program) x 2 (location) x 3 (overall costs), repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) was employed to measure overall differences between related means of the dependent variables (planner' intention to select a venue and perceived value-for-money) under different conditions. First, main effects hypothesized in H1, H2, and H3, were tested to determine mean differences across repeated factors (sustainability reward program, first vs. second tier convention city, and lower, moderate, or higher cost) with meeting planners' venue selection intention as the dependent variable. The data for main effect described in H4 was tested with sustainability reward program as the repeated factor and perceived value-for-money as the dependent variable.

Interactions between treatments (between sustainability reward program and location, between sustainability reward program and overall cost), hypothesized in H2a, H2b, and H3a, H3b, were tested using a three-way, repeated measure ANOVA with the intention to select the venue as the dependent variable. Likewise, interaction effects hypothesized in H4a and H4b were tested with sustainability reward program and overall cost as the repeated interacting factors and value-for-money as the dependent variable. A four-way, mixed ANOVA was also used to find significant differences of main or interaction effects of the independent variables between different demographic characteristics such as types of planners (i.e., corporate, association, and government).

The assumption of Sphericity was checked using the Mauchly's test to ensure the variance of the difference between all the treatments is similar. Standardized residuals of dependent variables were checked by generating histograms to see whether they are normally distributed. Post Hoc test using the Bonferroni correction was conducted as a follow-up test to determine where the significant differences of the main effects and interaction contrasts between independent variables that have three levels (i.e., overall costs) and the dependent variables lie

A descriptive analysis was utilized to see if there are any statistically significant mean differences among the different demographical characteristics. SPSS Statistics version 23.0 was used to perform the analysis.

Validity and Reliability

This experimental study provides a high level of internal validity except for the confounded manipulation (location and overall costs), because the study can accurately measure what it intends to measure by controlling the independent variables. In other words, any effects in the dependent variable are solely caused by the independent variables. There are some

considerations that could threaten the internal validity. However, pre-testing was conducted and manipulation check was assessed if the tested-variables were adequately and effectively manipulated. Since this study employs posttest-only design, history, maturation, test can be controlled. Statistical regression or regression towards the mean is also not an issue here because of the post-test only design of this study. Thus, there is no threat to internal validity because the scores of participants are recorded only one time per dependent variable. Since there is no observation process in this study, instrumentation threats can be reduced. Using the within-subject design, all the conditions are equivalent for every participant. Therefore, selection effect (whether the participants are equivalent from the beginning of the study) can be overcome and resolve a threat to internal validity.

In terms of the external validity (generalizability of results of the experiment), the reactivity of testing on x can be controlled because there is no pre-test effect on the subject in this study. As to the interaction of selection and x, results of the experimental design are difficult to be generalized beyond a narrow pool of subjects (i.e., experiment subjects, who agreed to participate in the survey). Therefore, the findings of this study may not be generalized to all the meeting planners working in the U.S. beside the participants of the experiment.

As far as the reliability concerns, since the experiment is administered in a survey form that consists of standardized questions, there is limited variability in the measure throughout different subjects. This increases the reliability, which will generate in consistency of the results (Cooper & Schindler, 2011).

Limitations and Potential Errors

There are some limitations that need to be addressed in terms of the participant error of the experimental design. First, response bias could occur when the participants provide incorrect

information or answer questions without carefully reviewing all the information about each venue. To avoid this, Qualtrics conducted a speeding check that measured as 1/3 the median soft launch time that automatically terminated those who were not responding thoughtfully. The median length of interview was 7.8 minutes. As part of the response bias, order bias was removed by randomizing order of the twelve sets of the venues via Qualtrics. Lastly, participants made a hypothetical decision on the venue selection without monetary tradeoffs including actual reward points. Therefore, the results of the study may not reflect planners' true site-selection intentions and perceived value for money based on all the relevant information shown in the venue description.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The purpose of this study is to explore the influence of three site-selection variables (sustainability reward program, venue location, and overall costs) on meeting planners' site-selection intention and perceived value-for-money. This chapter presents the results of the experimental study with an explanation of whether the hypotheses are supported utilizing three-way, repeated-measures Analysis of variance. A mixed ANOVA, with types of planners as between-subject variables and the three stimuli as within-subject variables, was utilized to discover significant effects of the three site-selection factors between different planner types.

Demographics

Table 2 shows experiment participants' demographic information. The study recruited a total number of 292 responses and 70 of them (23.9%) were qualified to be analyzed. The sample was 71.4% male while 28.6% were female. The majority of participating planners in this survey were Caucasian (75.7%), and between 30 and 49 years of age (74.3%). Nearly 80% of respondents had earned Bachelor's, Master's degree or higher degree. The regions that participants live in were distributed almost evenly across the country. For the question about type of planners, participants were able to choose multiple answers because some participants work for both corporate meetings and association meetings for example. Thus, the total number of responses is larger than 70 (49 corporate planners, 26 association planners, and 14 government planners). Over 40% of the participating planners spend more than 35 hours a week or more for meeting planning-related work, while 20% of the sample spends less than 20 hours a week. Majority of the participating planners have either final decision-making authority (64.4%) or significant decision-making or influence (31.4%) individually or as part of a group.

Table 2

Demographic Profile of Participants (n = 70)

Demographic Characteristics	f	%
Gender		
Male	50	71.4
Female	20	28.6
Ethnicity		
African American	7	10
Asian	5	7.1
Hispanic	5	7.1
Caucasian	53	75.7
Age		
18-29	10	14.3
30-49	52	74.3
50-64	5	7.1
65 or older	3	4.3
Education		
High school graduate	6	8.6
Trade/technical/vocational training	8	11.4
Bachelor's degree	29	41.4
Masters' degree	22	31.4
Ph.D., law or medical degree	4	5.7
Other	1	1.4
Region		
Midwest	14	20.0
Northeast	12	17.1
Southeast	19	27.1
Southwest	7	10.0
West	18	25.7
Types of Planner (Multiple Answers)		
Corporate	49	70
Association	26	37.1
Government	14	20
Work (Planning) Hours		
Less than 20	14	20.0
20 or more	20	28.6
less than 35	6	8.6
35 or more	30	42.9
Decision-making Authority		
Final decision making	45	64.3
Significant decision making influence	22	31.4
Minimal decision making	1	1.4
No input	1	1.4

Intention to Select a Venue

A three-way (2 x 2 x 3), repeated measures ANOVA was run on a sample of 70 participants to examine the effects (i.e., significant mean differences) of sustainability reward program (2 levels), location (2 levels), and overall costs (3 levels) on planners' intention to select a venue. Post-hoc tests using the Bonferroni correction were conducted on the overall costs variables to locate where the significant differences lie between the three levels of overall meeting costs (low, moderate, and high).

First, assumptions for three way, repeated measures ANOVA were checked by SPSS statistics to ensure the results of the analysis are valid. Normality checks were carried out on the standardized residuals of the dependent variable and histograms of the residuals showed an approximately normal distribution. The Mauchly's Test of Sphericity was significant for overall costs ($p = 0.000$), which means that the assumption of Sphericity was not met for the variable (Table 3). Thus, Greenhouse-Geisser correction was applied to the degrees of freedom for the overall costs effect ($F_{1.34, 92.17} = 20.599, p = 0.000$). The in-depth presentation of the results of the ANOVA is provided in Table 4.

Table 3

Mauchly's Test of Sphericity for Intention to Select a Venue

Within Subjects Effect	Mauchly's W	Chi-Square	df	Sig.	Epsilon Greenhouse-Geisser
Sustainability	1.000	0.000	0		1.000
Location	1.000	0.000	0		1.000
Costs	0.502	46.878	2	0.000	0.668
Sustainability*location	1.000	0.000	0		1.000
Sustainability*costs	0.989	0.776	2	0.678	0.989
Location*costs	0.942	4.065	2	0.131	0.945
Sustainability*location*costs	0.999	0.035	2	0.983	0.999

Table 4

Repeated Measure ANOVA Results for Intention to Select a Venue

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	η^2
Sustainability						
Sphericity Assumed	0.744	1	0.744	1.132	0.291	0.016
Greenhouse-Geisser	0.744	1.000	0.744	1.132	0.291	0.016
Error (Sustainability)						
Sphericity Assumed	45.339	69	0.657			
Greenhouse-Geisser	45.339	69.000	0.657			
Location						
Sphericity Assumed	25.030	1	25.030	12.101	0.001	0.149
Greenhouse-Geisser	25.030	1.000	25.030	12.101	0.001	0.149
Error (Location)						
Sphericity Assumed	142.720	69	2.068			
Greenhouse-Geisser	142.720	69.000	2.068			
Costs						
Sphericity Assumed	99.431	2	49.715	20.599	0.000	0.230
Greenhouse-Geisser	99.431	1.335	74.479	20.599	0.000	0.230
Error (Costs)						
Sphericity Assumed	333.069	138	2.414			
Greenhouse-Geisser	333.069	92.116	3.616			
Sustainability*Location						
Sphericity Assumed	0.011	1	0.011	.009	0.926	0.000
Greenhouse-Geisser	0.011	1.000	0.011	.009	0.926	0.000
Error (Sustainability*Location)						
Sphericity Assumed	85.073	69	1.233			
Greenhouse-Geisser	85.073	69.000	1.233			
Sustainability*Costs						
Sphericity Assumed	0.674	2	0.337	.303	0.739	0.004
Greenhouse-Geisser	0.674	1.978	0.341	.303	0.737	0.004

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	η^2
Error (Sustainability*Costs)						
Sphericity Assumed	153.493	138	1.112			
Greenhouse-Geisser	153.493	136.452	1.125			
Location*Costs						
Sphericity Assumed	2.917	2	1.458	1.642	0.197	0.023
Greenhouse-Geisser	2.917	1.890	1.543	1.642	0.199	0.023
Error (Location*Costs)						
Sphericity Assumed	122.583	138	0.888			
Greenhouse-Geisser	122.583	130.431	0.940			
Sustainability*Location*Costs						
Sphericity Assumed	0.693	2	0.346	0.524	0.594	0.008
Greenhouse-Geisser	0.693	1.906	0.364	0.524	0.585	0.008
Error(Sustainability*Location*Costs)						
Sphericity Assumed	91.307	138	0.662			
Greenhouse-Geisser	91.307	131.501	0.694			

Main Effects

Table 5 presents the means and significance test results of the treatments on intention to select a venue. A repeated measures ANOVA showed that there were no significant mean differences of sustainability reward program on planners' intention to select a venue ($F_{1, 69} = 1.132$, $p = 0.291$). Thus, hypothesis 1 is not supported. However, the effects of location ($F_{1, 69} = 12.101$, $p = 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.149$) and overall costs ($F_{1.34, 92.17} = 20.599$, $p = 0.000$, $\eta^2 = 0.230$) were significant. The result indicated that planners' intention to select a venue was lower for first-tier city ($M = 5.033$) versus for second-tier city ($M = 5.379$). Therefore, hypothesis 2 was not supported. Using Cohen's (1988) guidelines, the effect size of location ($\eta^2 = 0.149$) and the effect of overall costs ($\eta^2 = 0.230$) were both considered large.

Table 5

Main Effects for Intention to Select a Venue

Treatments			F	Effect Size
Sustainability Reward Program			F (1, 69)	η^2
Yes	No			
5.176	5.236		1.132	n/a
Location			F (1, 69)	η^2
1st-tier (Chicago)	2nd-tier (Cleveland)			
5.033	5.379		12.101*	0.149
Overall Costs			F (1.34, 92.17)	η^2
Low	Moderate	High		
5.604 _a	5.250 _b	4.764 _c	20.599*	0.230

Note. Greenhouse-Geisser correction was applied to degree of freedom of the overall costs variable; Means without a common subscript letter are significantly different ($p < .05$) by Bonferroni test: * $p < .05$

Post hoc test using the Bonferroni correction for the effect of overall costs revealed that planner's intention to select a venue decreased by 0.354 between low cost venue and moderate cost venue, by 0.486 between moderate and high, and by 0.839 between low cost and high cost. Hence, the result supports hypothesis 3 indicating that the higher the cost of a venue, the less likely the planners to choose the venue. Table 6 shows the in-depth Bonferroni test results on planners' intention to select a venue with three different levels of overall costs.

Table 6

Post Hoc Test Using Bonferroni Adjustment for Overall Costs (Intention to Select a Venue)

Overall Costs		Mean difference	Std. Error	Sig.
Low	Moderate	.354	.097	.002
	High	.839	.171	.000
Moderate	Low	-.354	.097	.002
	High	.486	.114	.000
High	Low	-.839	.171	.000
	Moderate	-.486	.114	.000

Interaction Effects

Interaction effect between sustainability reward program and location was tested to analyze the statistically significant interaction between those two treatments on planners' site selection intention. The results showed no significant effect of the interaction ($F_{1, 68} = 0.091$, $p = 0.763$). Thus, hypothesis 2a and 2b are not supported.

A test for interaction effect between sustainability reward program and overall costs was also conducted to examine the effect of the two independent variables on planners' intention to select a venue. The results indicated that there was no significant interaction effect between the two variables ($F_{1, 68} = 0.303$, $p = 0.737$). Hence, neither hypothesis 3a nor 3b is supported.

Finally, the three-way repeated measures ANOVA confirmed that the interaction effect of all three independent variables (sustainability reward program, location, and overall costs) on intention to select a venue was not significant ($F_{1.99, 135.86} = 0.230$, $p = 0.794$).

Perceived Value-for Money

A three-way 2 (sustainability reward program) x 2 (venue location) x 3 (overall costs), repeated measures ANOVA was performed on ratings of perceived value for the money for 12 different sets of venue. Post-hoc tests using the Bonferroni correction were conducted on overall costs variables to find where the significant differences were observed.

Normality checks were carried out and the standardized residuals of the dependent variable were approximately normally distributed, thus, the assumption of normality of residuals was met. According to the Mauchly's Test of Sphericity (Table 7), the assumption of Sphericity was not met on the effects of the overall costs ($p = 0.000$) and the interaction effect between sustainability reward program and overall costs ($p = 0.001$). Therefore, Greenhouse-Geisser correction was applied to the degrees of freedom ($F_{1.43, 98.36} = 24.812$, $p = 0.000$). Table 7 displays the results of the Sphericity assumption check for all variables.

Table 7

Mauchly's Test of Sphericity for Intention to Select a Venue

Within Subjects Effect	Mauchly's W	Chi-Square	df	Sig.	Epsilon Greenhouse-Geisser
Sustainability	1.000	0.000	0		1.000
Location	1.000	0.000	0		1.000
Costs	0.597	35.082	2	0.000	0.713
Sustainability*location	1.000	0.000	0		1.000
Sustainability*costs	0.818	13.639	2	0.001	0.846
Location*costs	0.966	2.375	2	0.305	0.967
Sustainability*location*costs	0.951	3.446	2	0.178	0.953

Table 8 shows the detailed results of the three-way, repeated measure ANOVA on perceived value for money. Although only the variables of overall costs and sustainability reward program were included in the hypotheses related to perceived value for money, results of all the variables are reported in the table to indicate any unpredicted main or interaction effects.

Table 8

Repeated Measure ANOVA Results for Perceived Value for Money

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	η^2
Sustainability						
Sphericity Assumed	0.019	1	0.019	0.029	0.866	0.000
Greenhouse-Geisser	0.019	1.000	0.019	0.029	0.866	0.000
Error (Sustainability)						
Sphericity Assumed	45.814	69	0.664			
Greenhouse-Geisser	45.814	69.000	0.664			
Location						
Sphericity Assumed	35.219	1	35.219	15.321	0.000	0.182
Greenhouse-Geisser	35.219	1.000	35.219	15.321	0.000	0.182
Error (Location)						
Sphericity Assumed	158.614	69	2.299			
Greenhouse-Geisser	158.614	69.000	2.299			

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	η^2
Costs						
Sphericity Assumed	134.888	2	67.444	24.812	0.000	0.264
Greenhouse-Geisser	134.888	1.425	94.627	24.812	0.000	0.264
Error (Costs)						
Sphericity Assumed	375.112	138	2.718			
Greenhouse-Geisser	375.112	98.358	3.814			
Sustainability*Location						
Sphericity Assumed	0.000	1	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.000
Greenhouse-Geisser	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.000
Error (Sustainability*Location)						
Sphericity Assumed	53.500	69	0.775			
Greenhouse-Geisser	53.500	69.000	0.775			
Sustainability*Costs						
Sphericity Assumed	1.674	2	0.837	0.979	0.378	0.014
Greenhouse-Geisser	1.674	1.692	0.989	0.979	0.367	0.014
Error (Sustainability*Costs)						
Sphericity Assumed	117.993	138	0.855			
Greenhouse-Geisser	117.993	116.777	1.010			
Location*Costs						
Sphericity Assumed	0.945	2	0.473	0.579	0.562	0.008
Greenhouse-Geisser	0.945	1.934	0.475	0.579	0.556	0.008
Error (Location*Costs)						
Sphericity Assumed	112.721	138	0.817			
Greenhouse-Geisser	112.721	133.420	0.845			
Sustainability*Location*Costs						
Sphericity Assumed	0.693	2	0.346	0.524	0.594	0.008
Greenhouse-Geisser	0.693	1.906	0.364	0.524	0.585	0.008
Error(Sustainability*Location*Costs)						
Sphericity Assumed	91.307	138	0.662			
Greenhouse-Geisser	91.307	131.501	0.694			

Main Effects

There was no significant effect of sustainability reward program on planners' perceived value for money ($F_{1, 69} = 0.029$, $p = 0.866$). Therefore, hypothesis 4 is not supported. However, there were significant main effects of location ($F_{1, 69} = 15.321$, $p = 0.000$) and overall costs ($F_{1.43, 98.36} = 24.812$, $p = 0.000$). Although these main effects were not hypothesized in this study, the results suggested that location as well as overall costs contributes to the perceived value for money. The effect size of location ($\eta^2 = 0.182$) was large in accordance with Cohen's (1988) guideline. Table 9 shows the significance test results and main effects of the three stimuli.

Table 9

Main Effects for Perceived Value for Money

Treatments			F	Effect Size
Sustainability Reward Program			F (1, 69)	η^2
Yes	No			
5.329	5.319		0.029	n/a
Location			F (1, 69)	η^2
1st-tier (Chicago)	2nd-tier (Cleveland)			
5.119	5.529		15.321*	0.182
Overall Costs			F (1.43, 98.36)	η^2
Low	Moderate	High		
5.779 _a	5.389 _b	4.804 _c	24.812*	0.264

Note. Greenhouse-Geisser correction was applied to degree of freedom of the overall costs variable; Means without a common subscript letter are significantly different ($p < .05$) by Bonferroni test; * $p < .05$

Post hoc test using the Bonferroni correction for the effect of overall costs indicated that there were significant differences between low cost venue and moderate cost venue (0.389), between moderate cost and high cost venue (0.586), as well as between low cost and high cost venue (0.975). Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that planners perceive higher value for

money on low cost meeting venues. Table 10 displays Bonferroni test results on planners' perceived value for money towards meeting venues with three levels of overall costs.

Table 10

Post Hoc Test Using Bonferroni Adjustment for Overall Costs (Perceived Value for Money)

Overall Costs		Mean difference	Std. Error	Sig.
Low	Moderate	.389	.112	.003
	High	.975	.178	.000
Moderate	Low	-.389	.112	.003
	High	.586	.119	.000
High	Low	-.975	.178	.000
	Moderate	-.586	.119	.000

Interaction Effects

Interaction effects between overall costs and sustainability reward program on perceived value for money were hypothesized because perception of overall costs of meeting venue packages and benefits of the reward program directly accounts for the perceived value for money. However, a two-way repeated measures ANOVA showed that there was no significant effect of interaction between overall costs and sustainability reward program on perceived value for money ($F_{1.69, 116.78} = 0.979$ $p = 0.367$). This indicates that perceived benefits of sustainability reward program are not substantial enough for planners to perceive a higher cost venue more valuable for the money than a lower cost venue. Therefore, the result does not support hypotheses 4a and 4b.

Types of Planner

The results of the three-way repeated measure ANOVA suggest that sustainability reward program has no main effect on both intention to select a venue and perceived value for money. Also, any interaction effects between sustainability reward program and other variables for both dependent variables were not significant. However, there were many participants who identified

themselves as multiple types of planners. This indicates that responses can provide new insights into different behavioral intention and perception of three different types of planners (i.e., corporate, association, and government). It is also critical to find out whether there are statistically significant differences between the different types of planners because decision-making process and authority differ by types of planners. For example, selecting a meeting site for association is an organizational decision making process that tends to be more complex and involving more decision- makers (Baloglu & Love, 2005). Accordingly, the researcher decided to conduct follow up tests to examine if there are any main and interaction effects of each controlled variable by different types of planner.

A four-way mixed analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted with the three different types of planners as between subject factor. The data were organized in three different columns in SPSS for each type of planner and were coded into a different variable (0 and 1). For example, corporate planner was coded with 1, while non-corporate planners (i.e., a combination of association and government planner) were coded with 0. Follow up simple effects analyses were conducted by using the “select cases” function on SPSS to determine difference between planner types (each type of planner versus not the type of planner) at each level of the three treatments (sustainability reward program, location, and overall costs).

Intention to Select a Venue

Corporate Planners

The four-way mixed ANOVA performed on intention to select a venue revealed that there was no significant interaction between sustainability reward program and planner types (corporate vs. non-corporate). The mean ratings and results of the follow up simple effects tests are shown in Table 11.

Table 11

Simple Effects for Intention to Select a Venue by Types of Planner (Corporate Planners)

Types of Planner	Sustainability Reward Program		F	η^2	
	Yes	No			
Corporate	5.255	5.327	$F_{(1, 48)}$ 1.109	n/a	
Non-Corporate	4.992	5.024	$F_{(1,20)}$ 0.128	n/a	
Location			F	η^2	
	1st-tier (Chicago)	2nd-tier (Cleveland)			
Corporate	5.058	5.524	$F_{(1, 48)}$ 13.579**	.221	
Non-Corporate	4.976	5.040	$F_{(1, 20)}$ 0.223	n/a	
Overall Costs			F	η^2	
	Low	Moderate			High
Corporate	5.684 _a	5.362 _b	4.827 _c	$F_{(1.23, 58.89)}$ 14.960**	.238
Non-corporate	5.417 _a	4.988 _{ab}	4.619 _b	$F_{(1.41, 28.19)}$ 5.554*	.011

Note. Greenhouse-Geisser correction was applied to degree of freedom of the overall costs variable; Means without a common subscript letter are significantly different ($p < .05$) by Bonferroni test; * $p < .05$, ** $p \leq .001$

There was a marginally significant interaction between planners type and location ($F_{1, 68} = 3.583$, $p = 0.063$, $\eta^2 = 0.05$) on intention to select a venue. Follow up simple effects tests were conducted to assess the effects of corporate type planners on location. The effect of location was significant for corporate planner ($F_{1, 48} = 13.579$, $p = 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.221$), while it was not significant for non-corporate planners ($F_{1, 20} = 0.223$, $p = 0.642$). Corporate planners showed higher intention to select venues in Cleveland ($M = 5.524$) versus Chicago ($M = 5.058$). This finding is consistent with the test results of the hypothesis 2, which was rejected. This postulates that corporate planners are more likely to choose a venue in a second-tier convention city such as Cleveland than non-corporate planners are. Figure 9 illustrates the interaction.

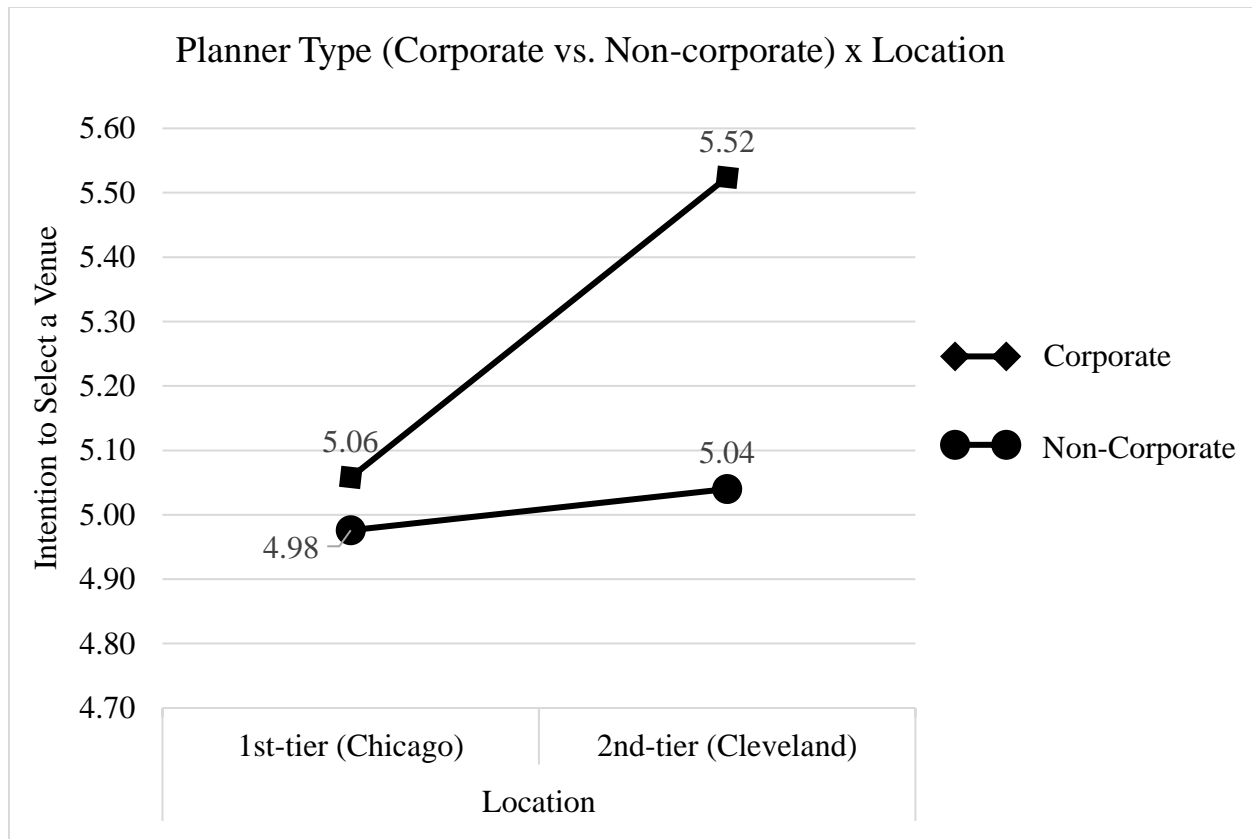


Figure 9. Interaction effect of planner type (corporate) x location on intention to select a venue.

No statistically significant interaction was found between corporate planner type and overall costs. However, the main effects of overall costs were significant for both corporate ($F_{1.23, 58.89} = 14.960, p = 0.000$) and non- corporate planners ($F_{1.41, 28.19} = 5.554, p = 0.016$). Post hoc comparisons test using the Bonferroni correction indicated that there were significant differences between all three levels of overall costs for corporate planners' site selection intention. However, there was a significant difference only between low cost venues ($M = 5.417$) and high cost venue ($M = 4.619$) for non-corporate planners' site selection intention.

Association Planners

While no significant interaction of sustainability reward program was found on planner type (association vs. non-association) ($F_{1, 68} = 2.365, p = 0.129$), follow up simple effects test

was conducted to determine any simple effects because the p-value was closer to the marginal significance level. The results indicated that there was no simple effect of sustainability reward program on association planners' site-selection intention ($F_{1, 25} = 0.343$, $p = 0.563$). However, the effect of sustainability reward program was marginally significant for non-association planners ($F_{1, 43} = 3.074$, $p = 0.087$, $\eta^2 = 0.067$). This finding indicates that non-association type planners including corporate and government planners are slightly more likely to be influenced by a sustainability reward program than association planners are.

There was a marginally significant interaction between location and association planner type ($F_{1, 68} = 2.904$, $p = 0.093$, $\eta^2 = 0.041$). The simple effect of location on association planners' intention to select a venue was not significant ($F_{1, 25} = 0.719$, $p = 0.404$). However, there was a significant simple effect between non-association planners and location ($F_{1, 43} = 13.783$, $p = 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.243$) whereby non-association planners were more likely to choose a venue in Cleveland ($M = 5.280$) over Chicago ($M = 4.807$) for their conference.

There was a significant interaction between overall costs and planner type at a marginal level ($F_{1.34, 91.21} = 3.208$, $p = 0.064$, $\eta^2 = 0.045$). Follow up simple effects test indicated that there were significant effects of overall costs on site-selection intention of both association ($F_{1.64, 40.89} = 3.603$, $p = 0.045$, $\eta^2 = 0.126$) and non-association planners ($F_{1.24, 53.11} = 18.311$, $p = 0.000$, $\eta^2 = 0.299$). The interaction effect of overall costs on planner type is displayed in Figure 10.

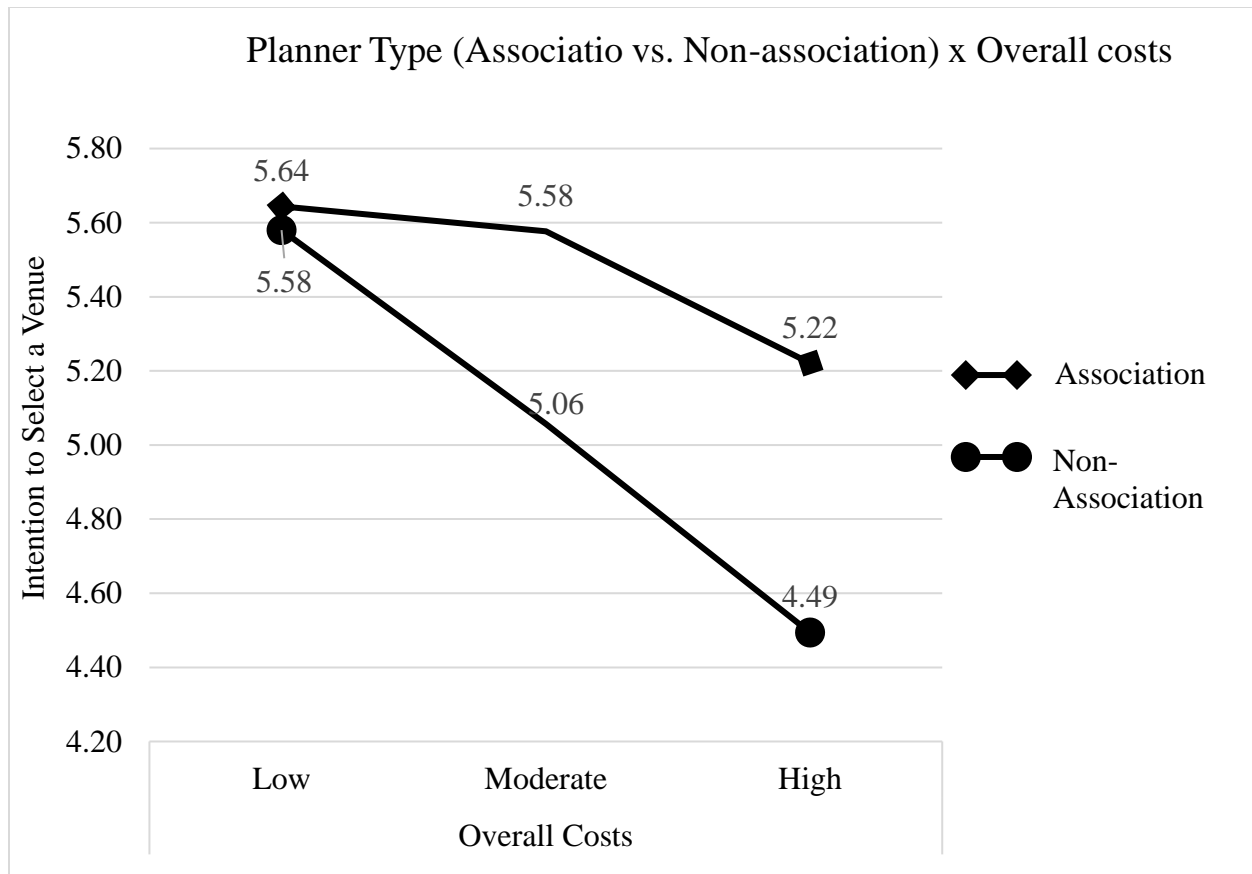


Figure 10. Interaction effect of planner type (association) x costs on intention to select a venue.

Mean comparisons using Bonferroni adjustments revealed that non-association planners presented significant differences of the mean scores on all levels of overall costs (difference between low and moderate costs venue was 0.523, and there was additional 0.563 difference between moderate and high costs venues). On the other hand, association planners' intention to select a venue was not as significantly different as that of non-association planners by overall costs. Association planners' site-selection intention decreased by an average of 0.067 between low and moderate costs venues, and then decreased by an additional 0.356 between moderate and high costs venues. Table 12 displays detailed information of the results.

Table 12

Simple Effect for Intention to Select a Venue by Types of Planner (Association Planners)

Types of Planner	Sustainability Reward Program			F	η^2
	Yes	No			
Association	5.506	5.455		$F_{(1, 25)}$ 0.343	n/a
Non-Association	4.981	5.106		$F_{(1, 43)}$ 3.074	0.067
Location					η^2
	1st-tier (Chicago)	2nd-tier (Cleveland)		F	
Association	5.417	5.545		$F_{(1, 25)}$ 0.719	n/a
Non-Association	4.807	5.280		$F_{(1, 43)}$ 13.783**	0.243
Overall Costs					η^2
	Low	Moderate	High	F	
Association	5.644 _a	5.577 _a	5.221 _a	$F_{(1.64, 40.89)}$ 3.603*	0.126
Non-Association	5.580 _a	5.057 _b	4.494 _c	$F_{(1.24, 53.11)}$ 18.311**	0.299

Note. Greenhouse-Geisser correction was applied to degree of freedom of the overall costs variable; Means without a common subscript letter are significantly different ($p < .05$) by Bonferroni test; * $p < .05$, ** $p \leq .001$

Government Planners

A mixed ANOVA indicated that there was no interaction between sustainability reward program and third planner types (government vs. non-government) ($F_{1, 68} = 0.179$, $p = 0.674$).

The mixed ANOVA also indicated no significant interaction effect between location and planner type ($F_{1, 68} = 2.105$, $p = 0.151$). However, follow up simple effect test was conducted to determine any difference between the two groups because of its relatively low p-value compared to government planner type's interaction with other independent variables. Non-government planners' site-selection decision appears to be more influenced by location ($F_{1, 55} = 12.077$, $p =$

0.001), whereas government planners' intention does not significantly interact with location ($F_{1, 13} = 0.345$, $p = 0.567$).

There was no significant interaction between overall costs and government planner type ($F_{1.33, 90} = 0.341$, $p = 0.561$). Post hoc tests using the Bonferroni correction indicated that there were no significant differences between the three levels of overall costs for government planner's site-selection intention. However, there were significant mean differences between all three levels of overall costs on non-government planners' site selection. The mean scores decreased by an average of 0.326 between low and moderate costs venues, and decreased by an additional 0.54 between moderate and high costs venues. Table 13 shows the detailed results.

Table 13

Simple Effects for Intention to Select a Venue by Types of Planner (Government Planners)

Types of Planner	Sustainability Reward Program		F	η^2	
	Yes	No			
Government	5.333	5.440	$F_{(1, 13)}$ 0.950	n/a	
Non-Government	5.137	5.185	$F_{(1, 55)}$ 0.543	n/a	
Location			F	η^2	
	1st-tier (Chicago)	2nd-tier (Cleveland)			
Government	5.357	5.417	$F_{(1, 13)}$ 0.345	n/a	
Non-Government	4.952	5.369	$F_{(1, 55)}$ 12.077*	0.180	
Overall Costs			F	η^2	
	Low	Moderate			High
Government	5.786 _a	5.321 _a	5.054 _a	$F_{(1.30, 16.88)}$ 3.796	0.226
Non-Government	5.558 _a	5.232 _b	4.692 _c	$F_{(1.30, 71.59)}$ 16.912*	0.235

Note. Greenhouse-Geisser correction was applied to degree of freedom of the overall costs variable; Means without a common subscript letter are significantly different ($p < .05$) by Bonferroni test; * $p \leq .001$

Perceived Value for Money

Corporate Planners

Results of a four-way mixed ANOVA on perceived value for money revealed that the interactions between planner type (corporate vs. non-corporate) and all three treatments were not significant: Sustainability reward program ($F_{1, 68} = 1.072$, $p = 0.304$), location ($F_{1, 68} = 1.631$, $p = 0.206$), overall costs ($F_{1.42, 96.58} = 0.128$, $p = 0.808$). The findings were inconsistent with those on intention to select a venue, indicating that perceived value for money is not necessarily translated into behavioral intention. Means and significance tests results are displayed in Table 14.

Table 14

Simple Effects for Perceived Value for Money by Types of Planner (Corporate Planners)

Types of Planner	Sustainability Reward Program		F	η^2	
	Yes	No			
Corporate	5.520	5.473	$F_{(1, 48)}$ 0.542	n/a	
Non-Corporate	4.881	4.960	$F_{(1, 20)}$ 0.509	n/a	
Location			F	η^2	
	1st-tier (Chicago)	2nd-tier (Cleveland)			
Corporate	5.248	5.745	$F_{(1, 48)}$ 14.273**	.229	
Non-Corporate	4.817	5.024	$F_{(1, 20)}$ 1.627	n/a	
Overall Costs			F	η^2	
	Low	Moderate			High
Corporate	5.959 _a	5.597 _b	4.934 _c	$F_{(1.32, 64.48)}$ 19.588**	0.290
Non-corporate	5.357 _a	4.905 _{ab}	4.500 _b	$F_{(1.56, 31.11)}$ 5.454*	0.214

Note. Greenhouse-Geisser correction was applied to degree of freedom of the overall costs variable; Means without a common subscript letter are significantly different ($p < .05$) by Bonferroni test; * $p < .05$, ** $p \leq .001$

Association Planners

The three-way ANOVA indicated no significant interaction between sustainability reward program and types of planner (association vs. non-association) ($F_{1, 68} = 0.017, p = 0.896$). Venue location was also not found to be significantly interacted with association or non-association planners' perceived value for money ($F_{1, 68} = 0.260, p = 0.621$). A significant interaction effect was found between the type of planner and overall costs ($F_{1.45, 98.53} = 4.048, p = 0.032, \eta^2 = 0.056$). Results of the follow up simple effects test indicated that perception of value for money of both association planner ($F_{2, 50} = 3.631, p = 0.034, \eta^2 = 0.127$) and non-association planners ($F_{1.36, 58.35} = 22.819, p = 0.000, \eta^2 = 0.347$) was influenced by overall costs. However, post hoc test using the Bonferroni correction indicated that, means for association planners were not significantly different between any levels of costs, while mean ratings for non-association planners' perceived value for money were significantly different at all levels of the overall costs: Low cost venue was significantly different from moderate cost venue by 0.357 and from high cost venue by 0.874. Table 15 shows the in-depth information of mean comparisons and the significance test results.

Table 15

Simple Effects for Perceived Value for Money by Types of Planner (Association Planners)

Types of Planner	Sustainability Reward Program		F	η^2	
	Yes	No			
Association	5.513	5.494	$F_{(1, 25)}$ 0.057	n/a	
Non-Association	5.220	5.216	$F_{(1, 43)}$ 0.002	n/a	
Location			F	η^2	
	1st-tier (Chicago)	2nd-tier (Cleveland)			
Association	5.333	5.673	$F_{(1, 25)}$ 4.062*	0.140	
Non-Association	4.992	5.443	$F_{(1, 43)}$ 11.241**	0.207	
Overall Costs			F	η^2	
	Low	Moderate			High
Association	5.740 _a	5.510 _a	5.260 _a	$F_{(2, 50)}$ 3.631*	0.127
Non-Association	5.801 _a	5.318 _b	4.534 _c	$F_{(1.36, 58.35)}$ 22.819***	0.347

Note. Greenhouse-Geisser correction was applied to degree of freedom of the overall costs variable; Means without a common subscript letter are significantly different ($p < .05$) by Bonferroni test; * $p < .055$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p \leq .001$

Figure 11 illustrate the interaction effect between overall costs and type of planner (association vs. non-association).

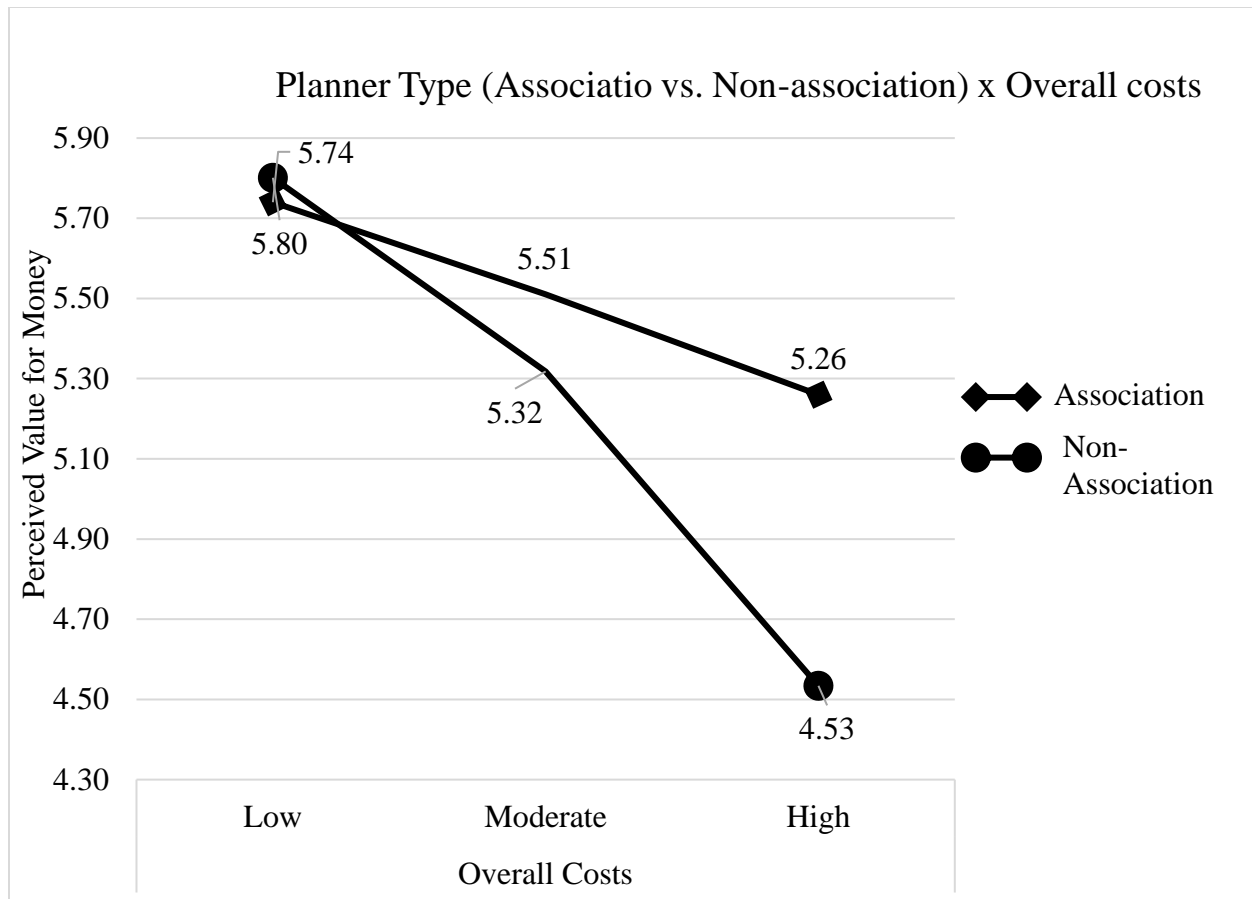


Figure 11. Interaction effect of planner type (association) x costs on perceived value for money.

Government Planners

The three-way mixed ANOVA indicated that there was an interaction effect between sustainability reward program and type of planner at a marginal level (government vs. non-government) ($F_{1, 13} = 2.873$, $p = 0.095$ $\eta^2 = 0.041$). Although follow up simple effects test revealed no significant effect for both government planners ($F_{1, 68} = 2.647$, $p = 0.128$) and non-government planners ($F_{1, 55} = 0.790$, $p = 0.378$), it was interesting to observe that government planners' perception of value for money was lower when venues offer a sustainability reward program ($M = 5.190$) compared to venues without a sustainability reward program ($M = 5.369$). The interaction is displayed in Figure 12.

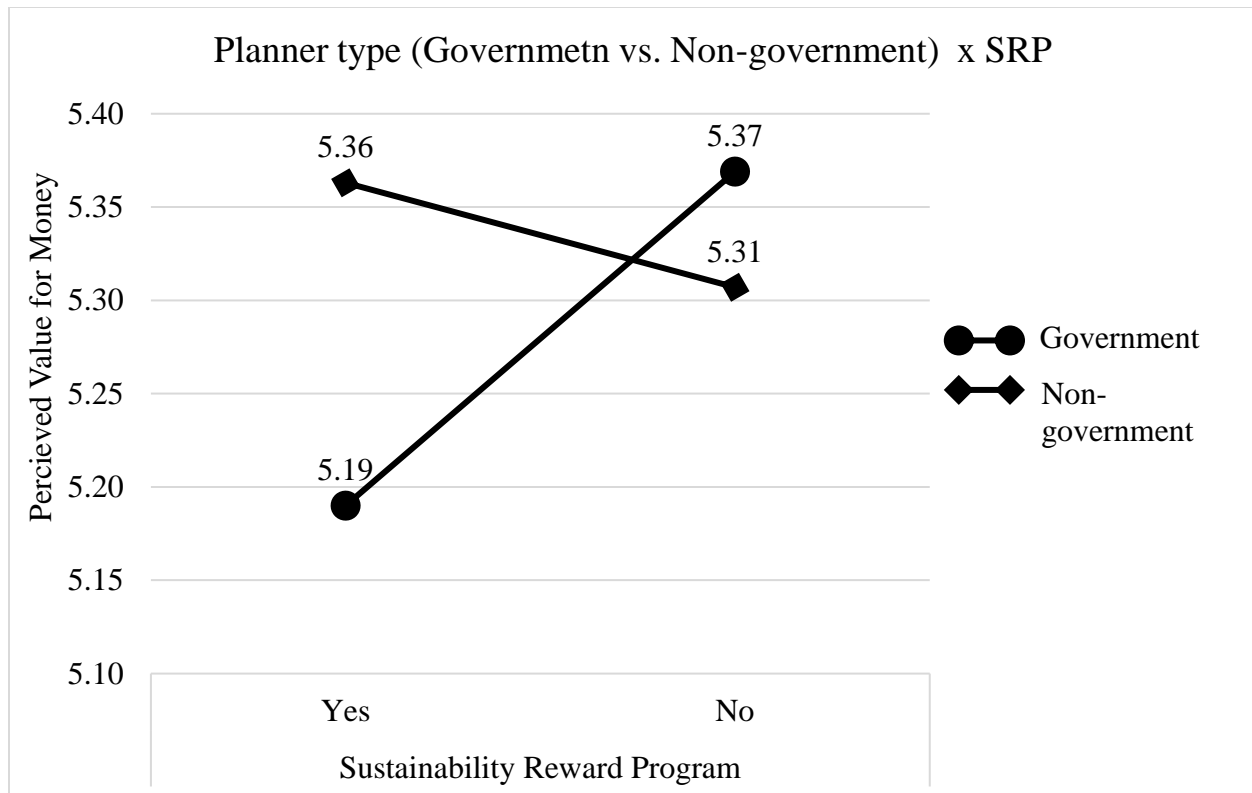


Figure 12. Interaction effect of planner type (government) x SRP on perceived value for money. Note. SRP = Sustainability Reward Program

There was also a marginally significant interaction effect between location and planner type on perceived value for money ($F_{1, 68} = 2.874$, $p = 0.095$, $\eta^2 = 0.041$). The results of the simple effects tests indicated that there was a significant effect of non-government planners' perceived value for money ($F_{1, 55} = 15.380$, $p = 0.000$, $\eta^2 = 0.219$). While location was not a main factor that determine government planners perceived value for money, non-government planners' perceived value for money was influenced by location, whereby venues in Cleveland were perceived as higher value for money ($M = 5.583$) than venues in Chicago ($M = 5.086$). The interaction is displayed in Figure 13.

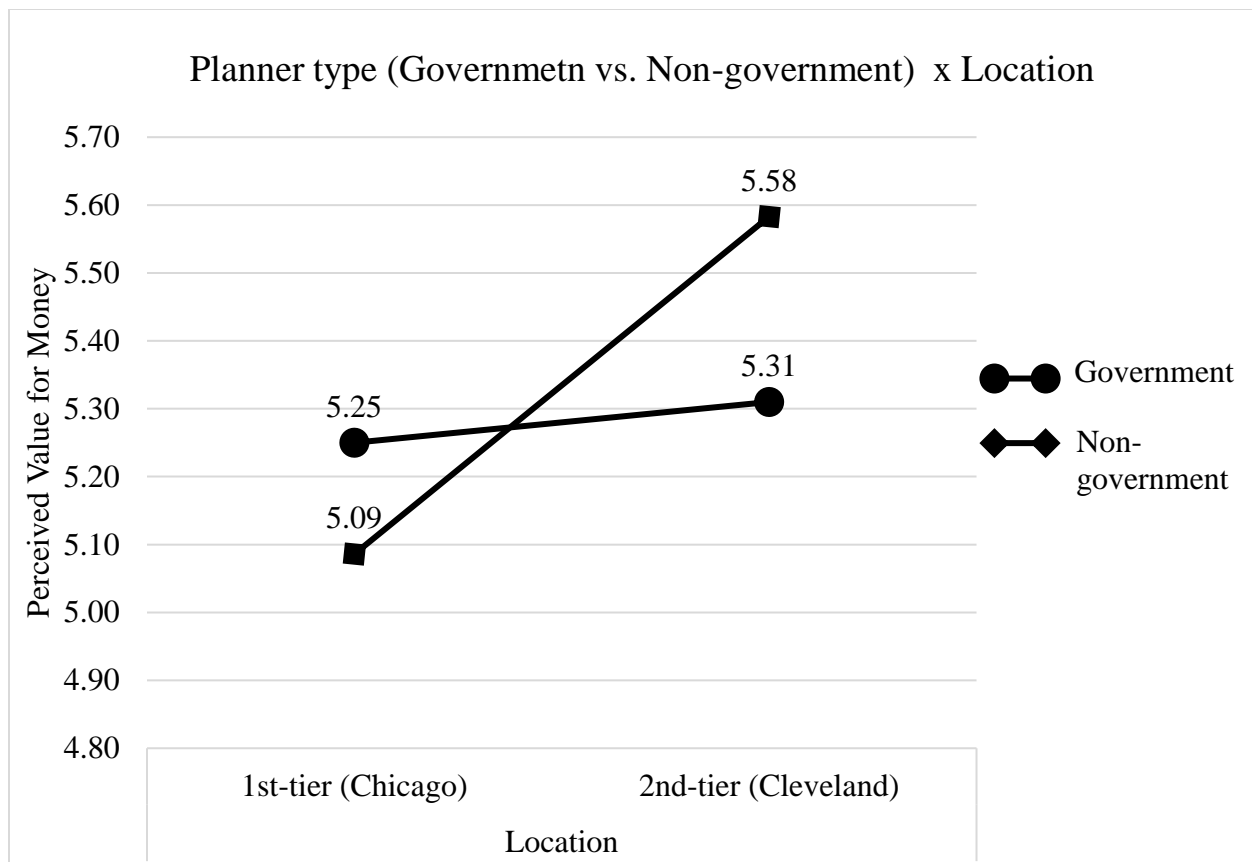


Figure 13. Interaction effect of planner type (government) x location on perceived value for money.

The three-way mixed ANOVA indicated that there was no interaction effect between overall costs and type of planner (government versus non-government) on perceived value for money ($F_{1.42, 96.71} = .128, p = 0.808$). Table 16 displays in-depth information of the analysis.

Table 16

Simple Effects for Perceived Value for Money by Types of Planner (Government Planners)

Types of Planner	Sustainability Reward Program		F	η^2
	Yes	No		
Government	5.190	5.369	$F_{(1, 13)}$ 2.647	n/a
Non-Government	5.363	5.307	$F_{(1, 55)}$ 0.790	n/a
Location			F	η^2
	1st-tier (Chicago)	2nd-tier (Cleveland)		
Government	5.250	5.310	$F_{(1, 13)}$ 0.513	n/a
Non-Government	5.086	5.583	$F_{(1, 55)}$ 15.380**	0.219
Overall Costs			F	η^2
	Low	Moderate		
Government	5.750 _a	5.268 _a	$F_{(1.43, 18.57)}$ 4.069*	0.238
Non-Government	5.786 _a	5.420 _b	$F_{(1.39, 76.41)}$ 20.621**	0.273

Note. Greenhouse-Geisser correction was applied to degree of freedom of the overall costs variable; Means without a common subscript letter are significantly different ($p < .05$) by Bonferroni test; * $p < .05$, ** $p \leq .001$

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The purpose of the current study was to obtain a better understanding of meeting planners' behavioral intentions and perception of various meeting venue packages. Specifically, variables that were manipulated in this experimental study include sustainability reward program, venue location (first-tier convention city versus second-tier city), and overall meeting costs (low, moderate, and high). The present experimental study focuses on examining effectiveness of a new concept of a meeting reward program in the context of environmental sustainability. Therefore, the main goal of this study was to discover if a sustainability reward program would have any significant impact on meeting planners' intention to select a venue and their perceived value for money towards the venues that offer a sustainability reward program. Although the results of the data analysis using ANOVAs indicated that a sustainability reward program has little or no impact on planners' perception and behavioral intention, the findings provide meaningful insights into important factors/conditions that influence the planners' site-selection decision. The findings of the study also contribute to the current event management literature discussing how different conditions of meeting venue packages establish planners' perceived value for money.

Discussion of Findings

In summary, the key hypotheses related to the effect of a sustainability reward program were not supported, while other hypotheses were supported providing some significant theoretical and managerial implications. A detailed summary of the hypotheses testing can be seen in Table 17 and Table 18 respectively for the two dependent variables: intention to select a venue and perceived value for money.

Intention to Select a Venue

Table 17

Summary of Hypotheses Support for Intention to Select a Venue

Hypotheses		Supported
H1	Meeting planners will be more likely to select a venue with a sustainability reward program compared to a similar venue without the reward program.	N
H2	Meeting planners will be more likely to select a venue located in a first-tier convention city compared to a similar venue located in a second-tier city.	N
H2a	Meeting planners will be more likely to select a venue located in a second-tier convention city when there is a sustainability reward program compared to a similar venue without the reward program.	N
H2b	Meeting planners will be more likely to choose a venue located in a first-tier city versus a second-tier city when there is not a sustainability reward program.	N
H3	Meeting planners will be more likely to select a lower cost venue compared to a similar venue with a higher cost.	Y
H3a	Meeting planners will be more likely to select a higher cost venue when there is a sustainability reward program compared to a similar venue without the reward program.	N
H3b	Meeting planners will be more likely to select a lower cost venue versus a higher cost venue when there is not a sustainability reward program.	N

Intention to select a venue was the first dependent variable of this experimental study to measure meeting planner's behavioral intention toward 12 different meeting venue packages.

The results of the three way, repeated measure ANOVA suggest that the effect of a sustainability reward program was not significant, whereas there were significant effects of venue location and

overall costs. The findings did not indicate that meeting planners would take into account a sustainability reward program, but did find that location (destination) and/or overall meeting costs were significant in their selection decision-making process. It is unclear whether the planners were not interested in environmental sustainability or if it was just that the benefits of sustainability reward programs were not as attractive as other variables (location, overall costs, and/or other factors). It appears that it is more important for planners to select a venue located in a preferred destination with a reasonable cost than to choose a venue that rewards their sustainability participation.

It was surprising to observe that the respondents' mean score for a second tier city (Cleveland) was higher than a first-tier city (Chicago). As indicated by meetingsource.com (2014), Chicago has long been selected as one of the top-tier destination for meetings and conventions by attendees. Although Cleveland is an emerging destination hosting an increasing number of meetings and events, this result cannot be directly interpreted from the standpoint of a standalone effect. Since all three variables were incorporated and manipulated in every venue package, participants' responses must be analyzed based on their complete views of each venue set rather than on one single variable. Previous researchers have also stressed the importance of a comprehensive view of planners' site-selection criteria because of the complexity of the site-selection process (Huo, 2014; Opperman, 1996).

When the instrument was designed, the range for overall costs of two different locations were determined based on pre-test results and price information from Cvent (2017). Reflecting the city's market prices, the overall costs of the venues located in Cleveland were lower than the venues in Chicago. Hence, the result of planners' decision to select Cleveland over Chicago may be driven by the lower cost of the venues in the second-tier convention city. This analysis is

supported statistically. The Bonferroni Post Hoc test shows that the mean difference between venues with low overall cost versus high overall cost in intention to select a venue was 0.486. However, the mean difference between the two locations was 0.346, which was 0.140 lower than that of between high and low cost venues. Therefore, the overall results indicate that planners' site-selection decisions were more influenced by overall costs than location.

The analysis did not provide any statistical evidence as to whether or not planners' site-selection intention was influenced by the interaction between sustainability reward programs and overall costs, between sustainability reward programs and location, or between all three main independent variables. This may be due to the fact that planners are focused on one or two main factors when selecting a venue rather than taking into account every single aspect of each venue. On the contrary, the results may be attributed to the presence of other factors such as key highlights, services, and/or equipment availability that were incorporated into the venue packages but were not hypothesized in this study. Although it is unclear which specific factor actually drove planners' decision intentions, previous research shows that planners' site selection criteria are diverse and change over periods of time (Elston & Draper, 2012). Therefore, it is crucial to continuously investigate site-selection trends with various approaches (e.g., with an intention to find important site selection criteria for different segments of the meeting industry) and from different perspectives (e.g., from the perspectives of different industry associations or different types of planner).

Perceived Value for Money

Table 18

Summary of Hypotheses Support for Perceived Value for Money

Hypotheses		Supported
H4	Meeting planners perceive greater value-for-money for a venue with a sustainability reward program than without a sustainability reward program.	N
H4a	Meeting planners perceive greater value-for-money for a higher cost venue with a sustainability reward program than without a sustainability reward program	N
H4b	Meeting planners perceive greater value-for-money for a lower cost venue than a higher cost venue when there is not a sustainability reward program.	N

This study examined the effectiveness of a sustainability reward program and its relational effects with overall costs on planners' perceived value for money toward meeting venues (the second dependent variable). As shown in Table 18, the results indicate that planners' perceived value for money toward a meeting venue is not affected by a sustainability reward program. Instead, planners perceived greater value for money of venues with lower overall costs than venues with higher overall costs. In line with Zeithaml (1998)'s definition of perceived value, the lack of support for Hypothesis 4 could be because of planners' low assessment of the utility of the venues that offer a sustainability reward program. In other words, planners' perceptions of what will be received (i.e., benefits earned by choosing the venue with a sustainability reward program) appear to not be as valuable as what will be given (i.e., overall costs of the venue).

Since perceived value for money is considered an important predictor of customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions, the findings are consistent with the theory of price sensitivity (Gabor & Granger, 1964), whereby consumers' decisions are affected by price of a product. The support for hypothesis 4b backs this statement that planners typically lean towards the venues with a lower cost compared to venues with a higher cost unless there are benefits that are appealing enough to be perceived as valuable for the money spent. Lastly, even though it was not hypothesized in this study, main effect of location on perceived value for money was consistent with its effect on intention to select a venue, whereby planners perceived a greater value for money of a second-tier city over first-tier city.

Differentiation by types of planner

In order to interpret the data in-depth, an additional analysis of differences between the types of planner was conducted. Responses on both dependent variables differed by the three planner types: corporate, association, and government planners. The analysis was conducted by categorizing the types of planner into one type versus the rest. For example, association planners were compared to non-association planners (a grouping of corporate and government planners).

The results of this study did not find that sustainability reward programs were effective in planners' site-selection decision and perceived value for money regardless of the type of planner. Though a description of a sustainability reward program was incorporated into half of the venue sets, it appears that the reward program was not attractive enough to any of the planners. The reasons why sustainability reward programs did not look enticing to planners may be attributed to their lack of information, low perceived benefits/value, and/or unfamiliarity. From a theoretical standpoint, the psychological mechanisms from three specific domains (status, habit, relational) by Henderson et al. (2011) did not seem to be fulfilled in the sustainability reward

program used in this experimental study. Specifically, the program tier structure (the aspects of status and relational) and benefits (the aspect of habit) of the sustainability reward program were not found to be rewarding enough to influence planners' behavioral intentions and perceived value for money.

Corporate planner

The results of the study reveal that effect of location varies by the three planner types. Corporate planners, when compared to non-corporate planners (association and government planners), were more influenced by the location of venues in their site-selection decision. In other words, corporate planners appear to have more significant preferences on their destination selection. Their willingness to choose a second-tier convention city over a first-tier city can be attributed to the inexpensive overall costs for their attendees in the second-tier city as explained earlier. However, no interaction effect was found between location and planner type on perceived value for money. These contrasting findings can be explained by the characteristics of corporate meetings. One of the main responsibilities for corporate planners is to meet a variety of needs from corporate attendees to achieve the goals of the firms (Fenich, 2014). Additionally, corporate meeting attendees, unlike association attendees, are typically required to attend their meetings because it is mandated by their organization as the content is directly related to their job. Therefore, corporate planners are more mindful of other factors besides the first-tier city aspect when choosing a venue as long as the venue satisfies the majority of the objectives of their clients (i.e., corporation).

Corporate planners seem to be more price sensitive than non-corporate planners when it comes to selecting a venue. While non-corporate planners showed significant differences on both their site-selection decision and perceived value for money between low cost venues and high

costs venues, corporate planners' intention to select a venue and perceived value for money fluctuated between all three levels of overall costs (low, moderate, and high). Corporations have limited budgets for meetings and do not generate any revenue from holding the meetings (Bonn, Brand, & Ohlin, 2008). Since the overall costs of what a venue charges for meeting space (and other various services) is one of the main negotiation concerns for corporate planners, their site-selection intentions could fluctuate even at small price differences.

Association Planner

There was no significant interaction effect between sustainability reward programs on association planners' intention to select a venue and perceived value for money. There was also no significant difference between association planners and non-association planners (corporate and government planners) in terms of the influence of a sustainability reward program on either dependent variable. This finding might be derived from the overall diversity of associations in which individuals and/or companies band together to accomplish a common purpose (Convention Industry Council, 2011). The main purpose of association meetings is as unique as the type of association (e.g., social, military, educational, religious, fraternal, or different industries). For example, an educational association for school business would focus on providing its members with opportunities for networking, project development, and knowledge-exchange. This may cause association planners to pay less attention to sustainability reward programs but be mindful of other factors that can satisfy their members and sponsoring individuals/companies. Furthermore, because of the larger size of association meetings, it could be harder for association planners to maintain and keep track of reward points from multiple memberships of different hotel chains.

As discussed in the section of corporate planners, non-corporate planners (including association planners) seem to be less influenced by location than non-association planners. Again, the goal of association meetings varies depending on the type of association. Therefore, selecting a destination for smaller association meetings varies by what the purpose of the association meeting is and what drives members/non-members to attend the meeting (American Society of Association Executives, 2003). This finding is consistent with the previous literature in that no significant differences were found among association planners in terms of destination selection unless the type of meetings that the planners are dealing with are different (Dipietro, Breiter, Rompf, & Godlewska, 2008).

Association planners were not as price sensitive as non-association planners to overall costs in their site-selection process and perceived value for money. This finding is surprising since previous literature has found that association planners take costs into account significantly. Baloglu & Love (2005) indicated that one of the reasons why association planners favored Las Vegas as a meeting destination was because of its low cost. As association planners typically deal with larger size meetings, such as exhibition and tradeshow, they tend to focus more on generating revenue than other types of planners (Fenich, 2014). The key to a profitable meeting is to ensure return on investment (ROI). Negotiating pricing for room blocks and food and beverage is especially challenging for association planners because of attrition clauses, where rooms contracted for but not used and minimum food and beverage purchases must be paid by the association. However, these costs can often be overcome by with the help of sponsoring companies and paid vendors (Convention Industry Council, 2011).

Therefore, association planners take into consideration costs in addition to developing various revenue sources through creating innovative sponsorship opportunities and marketing

their meetings to potential exhibitors/attendees. On the other hand, the typical objective of corporate or government meetings is not generating revenue but educating, training, or updating information. Thus, planners who plan these meetings do not focus on revenue generating opportunities, but plan the meeting in accordance with a fixed budget set by the organization or government agency. This difference may cause non-association meeting planners to be more concerned with overall costs than association planners.

Government Planners

While overall meeting planners' site-selection intention was not influenced by a sustainability reward program, the results of this study found an interesting interaction effect between sustainability reward program and planner types (government vs. non-government) on planners' perceived value for money toward venues. Government planners perceived a slightly greater value for money of venues without a sustainability reward program than venues with a reward program. This interesting and unexpected finding could be tied to the restrictions that government planners have to abide by. Specifically, constraints and policies on type of venues, spending caps, ethics codes, and security can limit government planners' authority in delivering value to their clients (Monroe, 2013). Thus, government planners could be less likely to perceive value for money on nontraditional items such as sustainability reward program or other benefits. Instead, they tend to focus on the program, content-delivery methods, and resources available from CVBs and local government agencies due to the objective of the meeting (Monroe, 2013).

Government planners are not likely to be affected by location or by overall costs. This result may be also driven by government regulations and the operating policies that government planners must comply with when selecting a meeting venue for government-related gatherings. Government meetings are also subject to per diem rates set by General Services Administration

(GSA) office for lodging, meals, and incidental expenses for individual travelers for all locations in the United States (Fenich, 2014). Therefore, government planners do not hold as much decision authority as other types of planner.

Theoretical Implications

The findings of this research contribute to the current literature in the field of both event management and marketing. First, the current study extends the existing marketing literature by investigating the effectiveness of sustainability reward programs, which is an emerging concept of loyalty programs. Customers are more likely to show a “true loyal” behavior (e.g., revisit or re-patronage, recommend to others) when corporations’ marketing efforts, such as a reward program, successfully establish both attitudinal and behavioral loyalty (Baloglu, 2002; Engel & Blackwell, 1982; Mayer-Waarden, 2007). In line with the theory of operant conditioning (Skinner, 1974), the present research examined if planners’ site-selection intention and perceived value for money were influenced (e.g., strengthened or repeated) by sustainability-focused reward programs as positive reinforcement. Green loyalty programs have emerged into the marketplace as a way of extending the relationship marketing strategy (Liu & Matilla, 2016). Hotels and the meeting industry are quickly adopting this cutting-edge marketing strategy, thus, it is of importance to examine the effectiveness of them both in a theoretical and a practical context.

These findings indicate that the influence of sustainability reward program on planners’ site-selection decision and their perceived value for money is trivial. However, the results leave room for the development of a preferential treatment to loyalty program members and non-members who have potential to become a member. Based on the loyalty circle components developed by Shoemaker and Lewis (1999) and implications suggested by Tanford, Shoemaker,

and Dinca (2016), the component of communication or value recovery should be more emphasized in current loyalty programs. The findings of this research imply that sustainability reward programs are not influential to meeting planners. Assuming that information about the reward program was not effectively controlled in this experiment compared to other controlled variables such as location and overall costs, a more effective way of presenting financial value of such reward programs should be considered. This became one of the limitations of this research since there was a lack of extant literature on how to deliver information on sustainability reward programs effectively such as how the service works, benefits, and program structure.

This study also adds to event management literature since the field of event management studies is still not as established as other segments of the hospitality management literature body. With the event phenomena momentum during the latter half of the twentieth century, there has been a steady increase in academic interest in meeting and event management. This includes emerging topics such as technology and sustainability as well as traditionally important topics such as site-selection and consumer behavior (Getz & Page, 2016; Park & Park, 2016).

This research provides valuable insights into the body of knowledge in venue selection criteria, suggesting that meeting planners are not influenced by a sustainability-focused reward program, but are more influenced by factors such as location (destination), overall costs, or the combination of the two in conjunction with other conditions. It was disappointing that sustainability reward programs were not significant in meeting planners' site-selection intention or perceived value for money. However, this finding still provides a meaningful theoretical implication in that the concept of sustainability or benefits of participating in sustainability-focused reward programs is still far from meeting planners' primary concerns in their site-selection process when compared to other site-selection criteria. Although meeting planners'

attention to sustainability has been growing, and numerous ideas and best practices have been proposed by meeting professionals (Draper et al., 2010), there is still a theoretical gap between the current state of sustainable events and planners' intention to plan a sustainable meeting or event.

Location or destination image has been included as a key variable in extant site-selection criteria research (Baloglu & Love, 2005; Dipietro et al., 2008; Katz, 2007; Opperman, 1996), but few studies have investigated the effectiveness of location by comparing first-tier convention cities to second-tier convention cities. Surprisingly, in this study a second-tier convention city (Cleveland) was preferred by all types of planners with corporate planners' site selection intention specifically affected. This indicates that the variable of "attractive location/destination" which has been identified as important by previous literature (Comas & Moscardo, 2005; Katz, 2007; Opperman, 1996), does not necessarily mean that the venue has to be located in a first-tier convention city such as Chicago. As this study adds to previous research by introducing a new perspective to the site selection variable, further research should be conducted to understand in-depth the rationale behind corporate planners' preference on location.

While previous research has consistently identified overall costs and planners' value perception as an important venue selection factor (Boehmer, 2010; Crouch & Louviere, 2004; Dipietro et al., 2008), the results of this study suggest that there are considerable differences between the three types of planner (corporate, association, and government). Corporate planners were the most price sensitive group in terms of choosing a venue as well as perceiving value for money. Because of the diverse revenue streams of association meetings, association planners were not as highly volatile as corporate planners on overall costs. Government planners who must comply with federal travel regulation, such as per diem rates, are neither influenced by

overall costs nor venue location in their intention to select a venue or perceived value for money. This may be because their decision authority is limited in venue selection. These findings extend previous literature of site selection criteria by providing in-depth information of how different levels of overall costs influence each type of planner's perception and behavioral intention.

Practical Implications

Green Marketing Strategies

The issue of environmental conservation in the meetings and events industry is a major concern. This area influences the industry in various aspects including management systems, operational strategy, and product development (McKinley, 2015). As expectations on sustainability are evolving, meeting venues are taking leadership in embracing best environmental practices (Draper et al., 2011). To achieve true sustainability, it is critical to ensure that meetings are held at sustainable venues (Sorrells, 2016). The leading hospitality venues should not only embrace sustainability but promote their best sustainable practices by developing innovative sustainability marketing strategies (Baker & Sinkula, 2005). In pursuit of achieving a true sustainable meeting or event, it is not unusual for venues to dedicate considerable time and cost in acquiring and/or maintaining verified third party certifications such as LEED. It is also becoming more popular that meeting venues, especially hotels, extend their loyalty marketing program to sustainable-conscious individuals/groups (Liu & Matilla, 2016). However, meeting venues also need to find a way to effectively communicate their sustainability efforts with their clients. The present research is a major first step in testing the effectiveness of a green marketing strategy, rather than a solution, to this matter. With a refined program structure, substantive benefit to planners, and an effective layout in the venue description, sustainability

reward programs have great potential for enhancing planners' and attendees' participation in sustainability programs.

Budget Concerns

According to the 26th Annual Meetings Market Survey released by PCMA (2017), overall meeting budgets in 2016 were steady, increasing by only 1.7 percent, when compared to 2015. Frustration over budgetary constraints has yet to be resolved for meeting planners from all segments of the meeting industry. This report specifies that associations in particular are tightening their budgets on meetings and conventions because they barely make a profit. Another budget-related issue concerning association planners might be derived from legal challenges. As alternate forms of accommodation, such as Airbnb, grows in popularity, attendees might turn to alternatives instead of staying in the room block contracted between an association and a hotel. This can cause planners an increasing risk of attrition, as planners are required to provide payment when meetings fail to fully utilize the room block specified in the contract (Convention Industry Council, 2011). Consequently, planners would try to lower the number of the group's room block to lessen the risk of attrition. With a lowered room block, hotels would increase the overall costs of the meeting space and other services to sustain their revenue. The findings of this study indicate that planners are significantly influenced by overall costs. Particularly, corporate planners, who account for over 50 percent of the meetings and events market, are most affected by overall costs.

Taking all these facts into accounts, meeting venues should consider leaving room for negotiation for planners to choose the venue and join a sustainability-focused reward program. Even though it is expected for the next few years that the meetings and events industry will continue to be a seller's market (PCMA Convene, 2017), suppliers (e.g., meeting venues) are

encouraged to constantly develop diverse and effective communication channels for their current and potential clients (e.g., different types of meeting planners) to build a long-term relationship, rather than overcharging or increasing prices for space/equipment rental and services.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

As with all experimental research, this study has several limitations. First, responses of planners were based on hypothetical scenarios with controlled conditions. While this can maximize internal validity, the findings of this study may not be generalized to planner's site selection situations in the industry or their perceived value for money (Campbell & Stanley, 1966).

Second, there seemed to be a systematic error in developing twelve different experimental venue sets. For example, sustainability reward programs could have been designed in a more effective way to appeal to participants to select the venue with this program. Future research should consider refining the layout of venue description, the explanation of how the reward program works including how to earn points, and include reward benefits with pictures and tier information. In addition, the overall costs variable and the location variable were confounded to reflect the real market situation. For example, all three levels of overall costs of the venues in Chicago were higher than those in Cleveland were. This limits the internal validity because the overall costs variable was not completely controlled. Other decision variables such as meeting room space, distance from airport, and number of sleeping rooms, that were not controlled, may also have affected participants' decisions. Although the other variables and pictures of each venue used in this study were designed to be equivalent, it is recommended that a future study take a more comprehensive look considering control on additional important site-

selection criteria such as proximity to dining, shopping, and airport. All the relevant information may become noise that could influence planners' decisions.

Third, experimental research is a powerful tool for determining whether the hypotheses are supported or not, but there were many findings that were unclear about why the outcome occurred. Consequently, further analysis of the stimuli on the two dependent variables by the three different types of planner was not initially hypothesized but was later conducted to interpret the results in-depth. However, there are some statistical results that leave room for other views or interpretations.

With the plethora of research on site selection criteria, novel ways of examining the site selection research process are suggested. For instance, rather than focusing on one type of meeting or event (e.g., association, corporate, or government), results from different sizes and types of meetings or events could be compared to determine if there is any significant difference in site-selection criteria. Furthermore, emerging issues needs to be updated in the consideration set, thereby the practical implications are applied to the current economic and social state. There have been few studies that assessed sustainability in the planners' selection criteria. While event management literature has become diverse, the topic of socio-cultural and environmental impacts of events should be gaining more attention in event research (Getz & Page, 2016; Mair & Whitford, 2013). Accordingly, future studies should continue to include items related to sustainability to explore how such practices would make a shift in the site-selection process. This will provide destinations and venues with more practical and pertinent insights, which in turn will bring more research opportunities to both academia and industry.

Summary

This chapter discussed key findings from the results of this study, which provided theoretical and practical implication to academia and the meetings and events industry. As the demand for a variety of meetings increases, employment of meeting planners is projected to grow 10% from 2014 to 2024 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015). Therefore, it is of importance that researchers and industry professionals stay up to date on changes to key factors that influence meeting planners' perception and behavioral intentions toward meeting and event venues.

APPENDIX A : IRB Exempt Notice



UNLV Social/Behavioral IRB - Exempt Review Exempt Notice

DATE: February 3, 2017

TO: Yensoon Kim, Ph.D.
FROM: Office of Research Integrity - Human Subjects

PROTOCOL TITLE: [1022051-1] Influence of Sustainability Reward Program on Meeting Planners' Site Selection Process

ACTION: DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT STATUS
EXEMPT DATE: February 3, 2017
REVIEW CATEGORY: Exemption category #2

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this protocol. This memorandum is notification that the protocol referenced above has been reviewed as indicated in Federal regulatory statutes 45CFR46.101(b) and deemed exempt.

We will retain a copy of this correspondence with our records.

PLEASE NOTE:

Upon final determination of exempt status, the research team is responsible for conducting the research as stated in the exempt application reviewed by the ORI - HS and/or the IRB which shall include using the most recently submitted Informed Consent/Assent Forms (Information Sheet) and recruitment materials. If your project involves paying research participants, it is recommended to contact Carisa Shaffer, ORI Program Coordinator at (702) 895-2794 to ensure compliance with subject payment policy.

Any changes to the application may cause this protocol to require a different level of IRB review. Should any changes need to be made, please submit a **Modification Form**. When the above-referenced protocol has been completed, please submit a **Continuing Review/Progress Completion report** to notify ORI - HS of its closure.

If you have questions, please contact the Office of Research Integrity - Human Subjects at IRB@unlv.edu or call 702-895-2794. Please include your protocol title and IRBNet ID in all correspondence.

Office of Research Integrity - Human Subjects
4505 Maryland Parkway . Box 451047 . Las Vegas, Nevada 89154-1047
(702) 895-2794 . FAX: (702) 895-0805 . IRB@unlv.edu

APPENDIX B : Instrument

A. Informed Consent

TITLE OF STUDY: Meeting Planners' Perception of Different Meeting Venue Packages

INVESTIGATOR(S): Yen-Soon Kim, Ph.D., Shinyong (Shawn) Jung, MBA

For questions or concerns about the study, you may contact Shinyong (Shawn) Jung at shinyong.jung@unlv.edu.

For questions regarding the rights of research subjects, any complaints or comments regarding the manner in which the study is being conducted, contact the UNLV Office of Research Integrity – Human Subjects at 702-895-2794, toll free at 877-895-2794 or via email at IRB@unlv.edu.

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to find out meeting planners' intention to select venues and perception on various meeting venue packages. You are being asked to participate in the study because you are currently working as a meeting planner.

If you volunteer to participate in this study you will be asked to rate 12 different meeting venue packages. There may not be direct benefits to you as a participant in this study. However, we hope to learn important site selection criteria and value perceptions when you take into different venues into consideration for your meeting. The study will approximately take 15-20 minutes of your time.

All information gathered in this study will be kept as confidential as possible. No reference will be made in written or oral materials that could link you to this study. All records will be stored in a locked facility at UNLV for two years after completion of the study. After the storage time, the information gathered will be destroyed.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate in this study or in any part of this study. You may withdraw at any time without prejudice to your relations with UNLV. You are encouraged to ask questions about this study at the beginning or anytime during the research study.

Participant Consent:

I have read the above information and agree to participate in this study. I have been able to ask questions about the research study. I am at least 18 years of age. A copy of this form has been given to me.

☐

Agree

☐

Disagree

B. Screeners / Instructions

My job responsibilities include the site-selection process for one of the following meetings (corporate, association, or government).

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Venue Selection Practice

Scenario: You are planning a conference for approximately 200 attendees for 2 days and are looking for a hotel type meeting venue. Based on your Request for Proposal (RFP), the Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) of Chicago and Cleveland has provided you with 6 options, each in different venues. Please carefully review the key highlights of each venue and rate them by answering the questions following the venue description.

- ☐ Understood

C. Sample Online Experiment:

With sustainability reward program, First-tier convention city, High overall costs

Venue A in Chicago																				
		Key Highlights																		
		<table><tr><td>Venue Type:</td><td>Hotel</td></tr><tr><td>Brand:</td><td>Crown</td></tr><tr><td>Rating:</td><td>4 Stars</td></tr><tr><td>Distance from airport:</td><td>18 miles</td></tr><tr><td>Year built/Year renovated:</td><td>1920/2010</td></tr><tr><td>Number of sleeping rooms:</td><td>535</td></tr><tr><td>Number of meeting rooms:</td><td>19</td></tr><tr><td>Meeting room space:</td><td>35,000sq.Ft.</td></tr><tr><td>Parking: Paid / Valet parking:</td><td>\$35 / \$60</td></tr><tr><td colspan="2">Total Estimated Cost (Per attendee): \$535</td></tr></table>	Venue Type:	Hotel	Brand:	Crown	Rating:	4 Stars	Distance from airport:	18 miles	Year built/Year renovated:	1920/2010	Number of sleeping rooms:	535	Number of meeting rooms:	19	Meeting room space:	35,000sq.Ft.	Parking: Paid / Valet parking:	\$35 / \$60
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Distance from airport:	18 miles																			
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Meeting room space:	35,000sq.Ft.																			
Parking: Paid / Valet parking:	\$35 / \$60																			
Total Estimated Cost (Per attendee): \$535																				

Description

The Crown Hotel, Chicago is located on the corner of North Michigan Ave. and Wacker Dr. in a Chicago historic landmark building along with an all-new 22-story all glass City Tower. The hotel features 452 luxurious rooms and suites, a spa, fitness center, chef-driven restaurant, tri-level rooftop, lobby bar and 25,000 sq. ft. of flexible event and meeting space.

Equipment Available:

Portable Walls, Staging, Piano, Dance Floors, Portable Heaters, Loading Dock

Business Services:

Business Center, Audio/Video Capabilities, Video Conferencing, VIP Services

Recreational Activities:

Health Club, Spa/Salon

Sustainable Meeting Rewards Program

The Crown Sustainable Meeting Rewards Program was created to reward groups that participate in our sustainable meeting program. To join the program, participants simply have to book group business in any Crown property located in the United States and agree with our sustainability policy. Planners who join our customized sustainable meeting program will earn 10 bonus points as their group achieves our various sustainability goals during meetings and stays. Reward benefits include free A/V equipment rental, free room nights, dining vouchers, beverage services, and more.

D. Measure

How likely are you to select this venue for your conference?

Extremely unlikely	Somewhat unlikely	Slightly unlikely	Neither likely nor unlikely	Slightly likely	Somewhat likely	Extremely likely
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

This venue is good value for the money.

Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly agree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

E. Demographics

What is your gender?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

What is your Ethnicity?

- ☐ African American
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Hispanic
- ☐ Pacific Islander
- ☐ Caucasian
- ☐ Other

What is your age?

- ☐ 18-29 years old
- ☐ 30-49 years old
- ☐ 50-64 years old
- ☐ 65 years and over

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- ☐ Some high school
- ☐ High school graduate
- ☐ Trade/technical/vocational training
- ☐ Bachelor's degree
- ☐ Masters' degree
- ☐ Ph.D., law or medical degree
- ☐ Others

Which region of the country do you live in?

- ☐ Midwest - IA, IL, IN, KS, MI, MN, MO, ND, NE, OH, SD, WI
- ☐ Northeast - CT, DC, DE, MA, MD, ME, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT
- ☐ Southeast - AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA, WV

- ☐ Southwest - AZ, NM, OK, TX
- ☐ West - AK, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY

What types of meeting planner are you? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Corporate
- ☐ Association
- ☐ Government
- ☐ Individual

How many hours per week do you usually spend your time for meeting planning-related work?

- ☐ Less than 20 hours
- ☐ 20 hours a week or more
- ☐ Less than 35 hours
- ☐ 35 hours a week or more

What level of decision-making authority do you have on selecting a venue?

- ☐ Final decision-making authority (individually or as part of a group)
- ☐ Significant decision-making or influence (individually or as part of a group)
- ☐ Minimal decision-making or influence
- ☐ No input

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CURRICULUM VITAE

Shinyong (Shawn) Jung, CHE, CHIA, MBA

EDUCATION

<u><i>Doctor of Philosophy in Hospitality Administration</i></u> William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration University of Nevada, Las Vegas	2014 - 2017 Las Vegas, NV
<u><i>Master of Business Administration</i></u> Lee Business School	2010 - 2012 Las Vegas, NV
<u><i>Master of Science in Hotel Administration</i></u> William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration University of Nevada, Las Vegas	
<u><i>Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management (Second degree)</i></u> William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration University of Nevada, Las Vegas	2007- 2009 Las Vegas, NV
<u><i>Bachelor of Tourism</i></u> College of Tourism Sciences Kyonggi University	2001 - 2005 Su Won, S. Korea

PUBLICATIONS

Refereed Journal Articles

- Jung, S., & Tanford, S.** (2017). What contributes to convention attendee satisfaction and loyalty? A meta-analysis. *Journal of Convention & Event Tourism*, 18(2), 118-134
- Tanford, S., & **Jung, S.** (2017). Festival attributes and perceptions: A meta-analysis of relationships with satisfaction and loyalty. *Tourism Management*, 61, 209-220.
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Other Peer-Reviewed Articles

- Jung, S., & Yoon, S. S.** (2016). More participation, efficiency, and consistency: The case of Las Vegas Sands Expo ECO 360°, *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Case*, accepted on August 19th
- Zemke, M. D., **Jung, S.** (2015). How can academia plant the seeds of sustainability in future managers? *Hotel Business Review*, http://hotelexecutive.com/business_review/4305/how-can-academia-plant-the-seeds-of-sustainability-in-future-manager

AWARD

- Best Paper Award (2016): The Academy of Global Hospitality and Tourism Conference (AGHTC), Seoul, South Korea.