Tourism Use History: Exploring a New Framework for Understanding Residents' Attitudes toward Tourism

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Tourism Use History: Exploring a New Framework for Understanding Residents’ Attitudes toward Tourism

Jason Draper,1 Kyle M. Woosnam,2 and William C. Norman1

Abstract
This study attempts to answer the question “What influence does an individual’s travel have on attitudes concerning who should develop tourism in their community as well as the role of the government in such development?” Research on residents’ attitudes toward tourism has traditionally focused on demographic, socioeconomic, and spatial predictor variables, with relatively few consistent findings. Based on the experience use history concept from the leisure and outdoor recreation literature, this study explores a new framework for understanding residents’ attitudes toward tourism in two distinct destinations in South Carolina, United States. Tourism use history was used to create resident groups within each community and assess attitudes about who should develop tourism (e.g., local businesses, outside investors and developers, government, or a public–private partnership) and government support for tourism businesses. Results are discussed in relation to the stage of tourism development in each destination. Further development and testing of tourism use history is recommended.

Keywords
tourism use history, resident attitudes, tourism development, government support for tourism

Introduction
Over the past 40 years, researchers have examined local residents’ attitudes toward tourism based on demographic (e.g., age, gender, education), socioeconomic (e.g., income, ethnicity, length of residency, and economic dependency), and spatial (e.g., physical distance between residents and tourists) variables. According to Harrill (2004) and McGehee and Andereck (2004), few consistent findings have emerged between such variables and tourism attitudes. Interestingly, resident attitude research has not examined the influence of personal behavior, namely an individual’s travel experience, in assessing attitudes about tourism and the accompanying development. Building on the experience use history (EUH) construct used to understand differences among groups of recreationists (Hammitt, Backlund, and Bixler 2004; Perdue, Long, and Allen 1987; Petrick et al. 1998), this study attempts to answer the question “What influence does an individual’s travel have on attitudes concerning who should develop tourism in their community as well as the role of the government in such development?”

Many residents of destinations have been travelers at one time or another. Of course, we all travel. And it is likely we formulate attitudes about tourism in our own communities based on our frequency of travel, where we travel, and our own behavior in general as travelers. Who better to have an opinion on tourism and tourism development than those who have experience being travelers themselves? From this reasoning, it is the thesis of this study that an individual’s personal leisure travel should have an effect on attitudes toward tourism.

Research pertaining to residents’ attitudes has primarily been concerned with positive and negative impacts of tourism in a community (Andereck et al. 2005; Lankford 1994; Long, Perdue, and Allen 1990; McGehee and Andereck 2004), support for tourism (Andriotis and Vaughn 2003; Mason and Cheyne 2000; McGehee and Andereck 2004; Williams and Lawson 2001), benefits of tourism (Gursoy and Rutherford 2004; Jurowski and Gursoy 2004; Wang and Pfister 2008), and options for tourism development (Allen et al. 1988; Andereck and Vogt 2000; Jurowski, Uysal, and Williams 1997; King, Pizam, and Milman 1993; Perdue, Long, and Allen 1990; Snaith and Haley 1995). However, few studies have focused exclusively on who should be responsible for tourism development (see Andriotis and Vaughn 2003). Rather, a singular item is often embedded

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within a list of impact or attitude items that assesses the role or responsibility of a group of individuals (e.g., nonresidents) or organizations (e.g., local government agencies) in developing tourism in a community (Allen et al. 1993; Andriotis and Vaughn 2003; Belisle and Hoy 1980; Davis, Allen, and Cosenza 1988; Long, Perdue, and Allen 1990; Perdue, Long, and Allen 1990). Along with studying residents’ attitude toward what should be developed, research is needed on who should be responsible and/or involved in community or regional tourism development.

Residents’ attitudes toward who should develop tourism are important to the sustainability of a community’s efforts to develop tourism. To this end, local planning and management must go beyond just those who directly benefit by being in the tourism business (Gunn and Var 2002). For sustainable tourism, the business community should seek input from local residents so they can voice their concerns and preferences regarding tourism development and planning (Edgell et al. 2008). Not only may residents’ attitudes toward tourism and who should develop tourism be influenced by factors related to their community as well as factors of economic dependence or personal benefit, but individuals’ own travel experiences might also contribute. Traveling to various destinations may provide residents with varying perspectives of tourism development that influence their beliefs about tourism in their own community. Rarely do studies consider residents’ own personal travel and the implications that such travel can have on why individuals feel the way they do about local tourism in their own communities, ultimately aiding in more constructive dialogue as locals plan and develop sustainable tourism.

**Study Purpose and Research Questions**

Focusing on residents’ perspectives within two South Carolina counties with divergent levels of tourism development, this article serves two main functions. First, it aims to determine whether residents in each county can be classified into distinct groups based on their tourism use history (TUH) and second, to examine differences between TUH groups (in each county) with respect to (1) who should be responsible for developing tourism within the community and (2) the degree of support the local government provides potential developers and tourism-related businesses.

The primary research questions guiding this study were as follows:

1. Can residents be distinctly grouped based on previous (past 2 years’) travel experiences (total number of trips taken and total number of different places visited) or TUH?
2. Do residents’ previous travel experiences affect their attitudes about who should develop tourism in their own community?

3. Do residents’ previous travel experiences affect their attitudes about the degree of support the local government provides potential developers and tourism-related businesses?

- Do residents in distinct TUH groups differ in their attitudes about who should develop tourism in their own community? (main effect)
- Does travel outside the United States affect residents’ attitudes about who should develop tourism in their own community? (main effect)
- Do residents’ attitudes about who should develop tourism in their own community differ within groups based on whether individuals have traveled outside the United States? (interaction effect)

**Conceptual Background**

**EUH**

Since at least the early 1980s, outdoor recreation researchers recognized the importance of prior knowledge and experience in influencing preferences (Hammitt 1981). Hammitt and McDonald (1983) used past experience to formulate an index of levels of experience among river recreationists based on their resource and management familiarity and exposure to the resource. Not long after, Schreyer, Lime, and Williams (1984) were the first to use the term *experience use history* to explain recreationists’ experience or actual recreation behaviors. Schreyer, Lime, and Williams’s (1984) application of EUH suggests experience “represents an individual’s psychological interpretation of a given event” (p. 34), implying that experience is based on perception. Schreyer, Lime, and Williams (1984) focused on the type of event and frequency of participation to measure actual experience, rather than perception. Since these early studies, prior experience, or EUH, has been used in the outdoor recreation literature as a useful way to categorize recreationists and better understand current and future behaviors and intentions, as well as perceptions.
and support for management options. The resulting EUH framework has been used to classify different levels of recreationists (Hammit, Backlund, and Bixler 2004), golfers (Petrick et al. 2001), and river recreationists (Schreyer, Lime, and Williams 1984).

Schreyer, Lime, and Williams (1984) used the EUH framework to segment river recreationists based on total river trips on the study river, number of rivers participants reported floating on, and total river trips taken by participants. Six segments ranging from novices to veterans were created and the authors found differences between groups’ behaviors, motives, satisfaction, perceived conflict, and management of the resource.

Hammit, Backlund, and Bixler (2004) used the EUH framework to segment trout anglers into four segments—beginners, visitors, locals, and veterans—based on dichotomous levels (high and low) of experience at the study site river and substitute rivers. The authors used the EUH segments to test hypotheses related to place bonding at the study river and use of, as well as ratings of, a substitute river. Petrick et al. (2001) classified golfers using total rounds and courses played, as well as percentage of time played on the study course to identify six segments (i.e., infrequent, loyal-infrequent, collectors, locals, visitors, and veterans) and examine motivations and constraints across each segment.

In the context of tourism, EUH has received less attention. In a study of vacationing golfers, Petrick (2002) identified six segments and looked at differences in perceived value, overall satisfaction, and intentions to revisit, finding significant differences in the latter two measures. In another tourism-related context, Shinew (1993) modified EUH questions to ask about “tourism experience use history” of employees in a study of organizational rewards. The purpose of the study was to see how the attractiveness of employee reward options is affected by employees’ nonbusiness travel experiences during the past year. Shinew (1993) found the importance of travel to be a significant predictor of the attractiveness of incentives, but frequency of travel was not significant.

To some degree, research has focused on the influence or effect of previous travel experience on various phenomena. Sonmez and Graefe (1998) examined the role of prior international travel experiences and perceived risk, and degree of safety felt on prior international travel as predictors of intention to visit or avoid certain international regions. Both perceived risk and sense of safety predicted avoidance of regions, while experience traveling to regions predicted intention to visit again as well as decreased likelihood of avoidance. Lehto, O’Leary, and Morrison (2004) examined the influence of the number of past trips to a destination on reducing risk on a more recent or the current trip, change in amount of activity participation, and change in expenditures on the current trip. The authors found that the number of past trips did not decrease efforts to reduce risk. However, more frequent visitors did reduce or narrow the activities they participated in, and spending became more discretionary.

While the current literature has focused on recreationists’ and tourists’ previous experience in regards to current and future intentions and behavior, no research was found that uses EUH to group residents of a destination based on their travel experiences and explore differences in attitudes toward tourism development in their own community. However, a modification of how EUH has been operationalized may provide a new framework to complement other variables that have been used to examine residents’ attitudes toward tourism in their own community based on prior travel experiences and exposure to tourism.

### Resident Attitudes

A wealth of research has examined the attitudes residents have of both tourism and the accompanying development within their local community. To a large extent, such work has used a plethora of explanatory variables to better understand the source of residents’ attitudes about tourism or at least explain certain differences in attitudes across particular individuals. Recent work by Jurowski and Gursoy (2004) and Gursoy and Rutherford (2004) using structural equation modeling has shown how distance between residents’ homes and tourist attractions, level of community concern, ecocentric values, utilization of tourism resource base, community attachment, state of the local economy, economic benefits, social benefits, social costs, and cultural benefits all have either a direct or indirect affect on residents’ attitudes toward tourism. Most recently, personal benefits of tourism has become popular. As Andereck et al. (2005) found, those who felt tourism should play a major role in the economic development mix and personally benefited the most from tourism perceived high levels of positive impacts of tourism. Harrill (2004) points out that there have been three consistent findings regarding resident attitudes. First, the more a community is economically dependent on tourism, the more likely it will be in support of tourism development. Second, those who stand to gain the most financially in a community have the highest support for tourism development. Third, despite potential negative impacts of tourism, communities tend to favor tourism development.

#### Categorization of residents

Even though communities overall favor existing and potential tourism development (Wall 1997), residents within such communities possess heterogeneous attitudes about tourism (Mason 2006). Within the travel and tourism literature, residents have commonly been categorized on the basis of their attitudes toward tourism and accompanying development (Davis, Allen, and Cosenza 1988; Fredline and Faulkner 2000, 2002; Jurowski 1996; Madrigal 1995; Williams and Lawson 2001). Rarely (if ever) have residents been grouped based on other criteria, namely, their travel history.
Davis, Allen, and Cosenza (1988) segmented local Florida residents by their attitudes, interests, and opinions toward tourism, and found five groupings: “haters,” “lovers,” “cautious romantics,” “in-betweeners,” and “love ‘em for a reason.” In examining locals’ perception of the role of government in tourism, Madrigal (1995) grouped residents as “lovers,” “realists,” and “haters.” Similarly, in a study concerning the Gold Coast IndyCar Race, Fredline and Faulkner (2000) initially found five clusters, including “haters,” “lovers,” “ambivalent supporters,” “realists,” and “concerned for a reason.” Subsequently, Fredline and Faulkner (2002) once again found five similar clusters of residents based on reactions to two motor sports events in Australia: “most negative,” “moderately negative,” “ambivalent,” “moderately positive,” and “most positive.” Examining 10 New Zealand communities, Williams and Lawson (2001) segmented residents based on their opinions of tourism. Four groups emerged from the data analysis: “lovers,” “cynics,” “taxpayers,” and “innocents.”

Tourism development. Research has also been conducted to assess resident attitudes toward tourism development options (Allen et al. 1988; Andereck and Vogt 2000; Perdue, Long, and Allen 1987). For instance, development option studies have asked residents about their attitudes toward tourism product development (Andereck and Vogt 2000) and relationships between levels of tourism development and perceptions toward dimensions of community life (Allen et al. 1988). Perdue, Long, and Allen (1987) assessed residents’ perceptions of existing tourism impact and attitudes toward additional tourism development based on outdoor recreation participation. However, what is minimally addressed in resident attitudes research is who should actually develop tourism.

Two studies have addressed the role of nonresidents in developing tourism. By asking whether residents agreed or disagreed with allowing nonresidents to develop tourism, Andriots and Vaughan (2003) identified three segments of residents: “advocates,” “socially and environmentally concerned,” and “economic skeptics.” Long, Perdue, and Allen (1990) also asked residents if they agree tourism attractions should be allowed to be developed by nonresidents. In general, they found slightly more than half disagreed or strongly disagreed that tourism development by nonresidents should be allowed.

No studies explicitly asked if tourism should be developed by local business and/or residents. However, some studies have asked residents about providing incentives to encourage tourism development. Belisle and Hoy (1980) found that about 95% of residents agreed that “greater economic incentives should be offered by the government for increased tourism development.” Conversely, Andriots and Vaughan (2003) found that 85% of residents agreed or strongly agreed that “there should be no government incentives for tourism development.” After cluster-analyzing residents, Davis, Allen, and Cosenza (1988) found that 82% of “lovers” agreed to the statement “I believe that state government should relax its statutes, if necessary to stimulate further tourism economic growth in our state,” compared to 15% of the “haters” cluster.

Minimal research has addressed residents’ opinions about the roles of government in tourism. In a series of studies in rural Colorado in the mid- to late 1980s, residents were asked if government should restrict tourism development and government should control tourism development (Allen et al. 1993; Perdue, Long, and Allen 1990). In general, the studies found that residents did not favor restricting tourism development but that the government should control tourism development. Madrigal (1995) explored the relationship between tourism’s perceived impacts and residents’ attitudes regarding the role of the local government in developing tourism in two different communities with differing tourism development histories. The government role items included taxation to support tourism development (Taxes), importance of planning for the long term (Planning), regulation of tourism development (Regulating), and degree to which the destination should become a tourist area (Future). Comparing the two communities, Madrigal found no differences on the Taxes and Future variables.

Study Areas
This research was based on two countywide resident attitude studies conducted simultaneously (during the summer of 2007) in Beaufort and Oconee counties of South Carolina. Tourism in each county can be differentiated in at least three ways. While both are in the same state, Beaufort County (coastal Lowcountry) and Oconee County (foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains in the Upstate) are located more than 200 miles apart. Beaufort County offers beaches, history, and resorts while Oconee County offers mountains, lakes, rivers, waterfalls, and parks.

As of 2007, Beaufort County was home to 142,045 individuals with a median household income of $50,522 (U.S. Census Bureau 2008a). Located approximately 1 hour south of Charleston, South Carolina and 30 minutes north of Savannah, Georgia, Beaufort County is well known as a day-trip destination for cultural-heritage tourists who come to see the numerous historic antebellum homes and plantations as well as ecotourists who come for recreation opportunities associated with the five converging rivers and ocean. In addition, numerous resorts in the area attract many family vacationers each year. Oconee County is a natural amenity–rich rural county of 70,753 people with a median household income of $50,913 (U.S. Census Bureau 2008b). The County is located within about two hours’ drive from both Atlanta, Georgia, and Charlotte, North Carolina, and is home to a portion of Sumter National Forest as well as several state and county parks that offer opportunities for outdoor-based recreation and tourism. In addition, Oconee County has three
The survey of Beaufort County permanent residents was collected through on-site self-administered questionnaires distributed door to door to heads of households or their spouse. Before administering the final questionnaire, the instrument was pretested among permanent residents in two adjacent coastal counties in South Carolina using a similar sampling strategy. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2008a) there are 55,981 households within Beaufort County. A multistage cluster sampling scheme (Babbie 2007) stratified by urban and rural distinction was used to ensure random selection of residents within the county. This scheme involved listing all 25 census tracts within the county, randomly selecting 10 census tracts, randomly selecting within those census tracts, 21 block groups (based on data collection windows), and finally selecting a random starting point within each block group to contact every kth house.

Over a period of four weekends throughout the summer of 2007, residents were contacted and asked to participate in the study. If they agreed, two contacts were made later that day to collect completed questionnaires. A similar sampling strategy has been used by other researchers recently (Andereck and Nickerson 1997; Andereck and Vogt 2000; McGehee and Andereck 2004). The overall effective response rate was 67.8%, yielding a sample size of 445 residents.

Items for the Oconee County resident survey were developed from relevant literature and discussion with county leaders. Once the questionnaire was developed, it was pretested with an Oconee County–related tourism committee and members of a local Rotary Club. This phase of pretesting was conducted to obtain feedback about question clarity and wording. From the pretests and resulting feedback, item wording was revised for clarity where necessary. The final phase of pretesting was conducted with a random sample (n = 100) of Oconee County residents from the list used for the main study. The purpose of this phase of the pretest was to emulate procedures that would be used for the study, identify if issues of item and/or section nonresponse might be a concern, and approximate response rate. No problems were identified in the second phase of pretesting.

The Oconee County survey of permanent residents was conducted using a modified Dillman (2007) mail survey method composed of three contacts of 1,900 randomly selected individuals asking that a head of household complete the self-administered questionnaire. The first contact included a cover letter, self-administered questionnaire, and business reply envelope. The second contact was a reminder/thank-you postcard. The final contact included a cover letter, self-administered questionnaire, and business reply envelope. A total of 549 questionnaires were returned for an effective response rate of 31.3% once undeliverable addresses were removed. Measures were taken to ensure representative samples were derived for each study. For instance, probability sampling strategies (i.e., multistage cluster

### Table 1. Tourism Statistics for Beaufort and Oconee Counties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Beaufort County</th>
<th>Oconee County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic travel</td>
<td>$958.1 million</td>
<td>$43.6 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expenditures and</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>county rank in</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolinaa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State tax receiptsa</td>
<td>$53.7 million</td>
<td>$2.6 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local tax receiptsa</td>
<td>$31.1 million</td>
<td>$2.5 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel-generated jobsa</td>
<td>12.8 thousand</td>
<td>0.4 thousand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payrollb</td>
<td>$198.1 million</td>
<td>$7.2 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year to date</td>
<td>$5.5 million</td>
<td>$0.1 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accommodations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taxes (fiscal year)b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a. TIA (2007).

*b. South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism (2007).*

lakes, the Chattooga National Wild and Scenic River, and more than 25 named waterfalls.

The counties also differ greatly in the economic impact of tourism. In 2006, Beaufort County ranked third in the state for domestic traveler expenditures with more than $958.1 million, compared to Oconee County’s $43.6 million and 21st ranking among 46 counties in the state (TIA 2007) (Table 1). These expenditures resulted in $84.8 million state ($53.7 million) and local ($31.1) taxes for Beaufort County, compared to $5.1 million in state ($2.6) and local ($2.51) taxes for Oconee County. Tourists’ spending in 2006 supported 12,800 jobs in Beaufort County and 430 in Oconee County.

The differences in the economic impact of tourism in Beaufort County and Oconee County are not surprising given the stages of development for each county. Beaufort County is likely to fall within the critical range of elements of capacity according to Butler’s (1980) life cycle, somewhere between the consolidation and stagnation stages. This placement is based on the number of visitors far exceeding the local population, the growth of major franchises and chains, and national and international marketing of the destination. On the other hand, tourism development in Oconee County is in the early stages according to Butler’s (1980) life cycle. Oconee County could be placed in the involvement stage with the recent approval and development of a visitor bureau that will begin more actively promoting Oconee County as a tourism destination (Galarza 2008).

### Method

To test TUH and differences in tourism attitudes, data for this study were collected from permanent residents of Beaufort County and Oconee County, South Carolina. Each study was conducted independently of the other using slightly different data collection methods. However, two common sections of questions were included on each questionnaire for analysis in this article: TUH and resident attitudes about who should develop tourism and the role of government in tourism.
sampling for Beaufort and simple random for Oconee) were used (Babbie 2007).

Variables

TUH. Studies using the EUH framework have used two (Shinew 1993), three (Petrick 2002; Petrick et al. 2001; Schreyer, Lime, and Williams 1984), or four (Hammitt, Backlund, and Bixler 2004) variables to measure experience. Most studies use the experience measures to segment or create a composite experience variable. Shinew used the two variables of number of nonbusiness trips taken in the past year and importance of nonbusiness trips as individual independent variables.

For this study, four questions were used to measure three travel experience dimensions during the past 2 years among residents. The first two questions were continuous and included the total number of day trips and overnight trips taken outside the county of residence in the past 2 years. The sum of these two questions was used to calculate total trips in the past 2 years. The second travel experience variable was the total number of different places outside the county of residence visited in the past 2 years. The third variable was dichotomous (yes or no), asking if respondents traveled outside the United States in the past 2 years. The use of the travel outside the United States variables was included to further differentiate residents. The international experience(s) may provide international travelers with a different view of tourism that differentiates them from less experienced travelers. Residents who did not provide responses to TUH items were excluded from analysis. Final sample sizes for Beaufort County and Oconee County were 426 and 457, respectively.

Tourism attitudes. Six attitude items were used in this study. Residents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with four items pertaining to who should develop tourism (i.e., local businesses, outside investors and developers, government, public–private partnerships). Residents were then asked to indicate their level of agreement with two items concerning local government support roles (e.g., county government should support local businesses serving tourists, and county government should support private business development in tourism).

Covariates. Numerous studies use variables as covariates to control for their effect while assessing the importance of other variables toward tourism attitudes. Length of residence and economic dependence on tourism were identified as covariates given the significant nature of such variables in recent studies (Allen et al. 1993; Madrigal 1995; Perdue, Long, and Allen 1990; Smith and Kramnich 1998). Because of the significance of length of residence and economic dependence in predicting residents’ attitudes in prior studies, each variable was treated as covariates in this study to control their effects and examine the unique effect of TUH variables. In this regard, economic dependence can be considered a form of personal benefit as Andereck et al. (2005) claim. For Beaufort County, respondents were asked to indicate how many years they have been a permanent resident. For Oconee County, respondents were asked to indicate how many years they have lived in Oconee County as an adult (18 years of age). For Beaufort County, respondents were asked to indicate the percentage of their income derived directly or indirectly from the tourism industry. For Oconee County, respondents were asked if anyone in the household was employed by a tourism-related business.

Results

Demographics

The average age of Beaufort County residents completing the questionnaire was 50, with 51.2% of the respondents being female. The majority of individuals were either employed full-time (64.1%) or retired (18.4%). Forty percent had a household income less than $60,000, with more than a quarter (27.6%) of households earning at least $100,000. Only 9.7% of respondents were employed in the hospitality/tourism sector.

Oconee County residents completing the questionnaire ranged from 25 to 90 years of age (M = 58.7). Almost two-thirds (63.4%) of respondents were male. Almost half (47.2%) were retired, and 44.1% were employed full-time. Half (51.8%) had a household income less than $60,000 and one-fifth (20.8%) $100,000 and above. One of 20 (4.9%) reported that someone in the household was employed in a tourism-related business (i.e., hotel, retail store, restaurant, recreational facility).

Beaufort and Oconee County TUH Comparisons

The average number of trips taken outside the county in the past 2 years by Beaufort County residents was 14.5, visiting on average 8.2 different places. During that same time period, 35.9% of the Beaufort County respondents claimed they traveled outside the United States.

Oconee County respondents averaged 14.0 total trips outside Oconee County in the past 2 years and visited an average of 5.4 different places. One-fourth (25.8%) of Oconee County respondents traveled outside the United States in the past 2 years. Overall, respondents from each study county took a similar number of average trips outside their home county in the past 2 years (Table 2). However, Beaufort County respondents visited more places and were more likely to travel outside the United States than Oconee County respondents.

TUH

Drawing from procedures used in previous EUH studies (Hammitt, Backlund, and Bixler 2004; Hammitt and McDonald 2005) claim. For Beaufort County, respondents were asked to indicate how many years they have been a permanent resident. For Oconee County, respondents were asked to indicate how many years they have lived in Oconee County as an adult (18 years of age). For Beaufort County, respondents were asked to indicate the percentage of their income derived directly or indirectly from the tourism industry. For Oconee County, respondents were asked if anyone in the household was employed by a tourism-related business.
Mean number of total trips in the past 2 years. This follows a similar protocol used by timeshare and has made several trips to that property during former. An example of the latter is a person who owns a but visited 20 cities during the trip is an example of the groups. Someone who took one trip during the past 2 years into one group given the apparent similarity between the ent places and high trips, low different places) were collapsed at the end of the segmentation process. At this point, two groups (i.e., low trips, high different places were used to create bivariate categories of low and high for each variable, resulting in four groups. For Beaufort County residents, the median number of trips taken was 11.0 and the median for different places visited was 6.0. For Oconee County residents, the median number of trips taken was 9.0 and the median for different places visited was 4.0.

The grouping procedure resulted in four groups for each county. At this point, two groups (i.e., low trips, high different places and high trips, low different places) were collapsed into one group given the apparent similarity between the groups. Someone who took one trip during the past 2 years but visited 20 cities during the trip is an example of the former. An example of the latter is a person who owns a timeshare and has made several trips to that property during the past 2 years. This follows a similar protocol used by Petrick (2002) and Petrick et al. (2001), where two segments were collapsed at the end of the segmentation process.

At this point, three groups were formed: infrequent traveler (low trips, low different places), intermediate traveler (low trips, high different places or high trips, low different places), and frequent traveler (high trips, high different places). These groups were not further delineated by the variable “travel outside the U.S. in the past 2 years” given the resulting small sample size within each cell. However, the variable was examined as a main effect and interaction effect in subsequent ANCOVAs.

To determine if the three groups were truly distinct in their prior travel experiences, ANOVAs were conducted to test if groups differed by total number of trips and total number of different places for each study county. Table 3 provides means of the TUH items for the three groups within each study county. ANOVA results for both counties indicate significant differences between the three groups for total number of trips and total number of different places.

Within each study county, results of Levene’s test of homogeneity indicated unequal variances. In addition, the groups tested had unequal sample sizes. Alternative analyses to traditional follow-up tests are available: “When the group variances are unequal or both the variances and the ns are unequal” (Lomax 2001, p. 128). As a result, between-group differences were tested using the Tamhane T2 procedure, which is a desirable conservative post hoc test when variances are unequal (Dunnett 1980; Tamhane 1979), minimizing chances for a Type I error. Results reveal significant differences (p < .001) between each of the three groups within each county. This suggests that for each study, respondents can be distinctly grouped by their travel experiences (total number of trips and total number of different places). A description of the three categories along with respective sample sizes is found in Figure 1.

As can be inferred from the diagram, each group is arranged in hierarchical form, based on total trips taken and total number of different places visited during the past 2 years. The inverted pyramid reflects an increase in both travel experience variables moving from the bottom to the top of the diagram.

### TUH and Residents’ Attitudes toward Tourism

Means and standard deviations for the six items measuring resident attitudes are listed in Table 4 for each study county. Both Beaufort and Oconee County residents generally indicated tourism should be developed by local businesses, as opposed to outside investors and developers, and that the local government should support local businesses serving tourists. The residents of both study counties also slightly agreed that local government should support tourism development by private businesses.

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### Table 2. Tourism Use History Variables Comparisons between Residents of Study Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Beaufort County Residents (n = 426)</th>
<th>Oconee County Residents (n = 457)</th>
<th>Test Statistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean number of total trips in past 2 years</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>t = 0.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean number of total different places</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>t = 6.61**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traveled outside United States in past 2 years (% yes)</td>
<td>35.9</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>χ² = 10.56*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*<p < .01. **p < .001.

1983; Petrick 2002; Petrick et al. 2001; Schreyer, Lime, and Williams 1984). TUH questions were used to categorize residents in each county. While other procedures (i.e., clustering) could have been used, this study used the traditional EUH grouping procedure to ensure the respective samples resulted in similar and comparable groups between study counties. First, the median for total number of trips and total number of different places were used to create bivariate categories of low and high for each variable, resulting in four groups. For Beaufort County residents, the median number of trips taken was 11.0 and the median for different places visited was 6.0. For Oconee County residents, the median number of trips taken was 9.0 and the median for different places visited was 4.0.

Within each study county, results of Levene’s test of homogeneity indicated unequal variances. In addition, the groups tested had unequal sample sizes. Alternative analyses to traditional follow-up tests are available: “When the group variances are unequal or both the variances and the ns are unequal” (Lomax 2001, p. 128). As a result, between-group differences were tested using the Tamhane T2 procedure, which is a desirable conservative post hoc test when variances are unequal (Dunnett 1980; Tamhane 1979), minimizing chances for a Type I error. Results reveal significant differences (p < .001) between each of the three groups within each county. This suggests that for each study, respondents can be distinctly grouped by their travel experiences (total number of trips and total number of different places). A description of the three categories along with respective sample sizes is found in Figure 1.

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### Table 3. Comparisons of Tourism Use History Groups within Study Counties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Beaufort County</th>
<th>Oconee County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Infrequent</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean total trips</td>
<td>4.58*</td>
<td>15.18b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean total different places</td>
<td>3.31a</td>
<td>7.00b</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Means with different letters a, b, or c are significantly different. *p < .001.
Research question 2 states, “Do residents’ previous travel experiences affect their attitudes about who should develop tourism in their own community?” Research question 3 states, “Do residents’ previous travel experiences affect their attitudes about the degree of support the local government provides potential developers and tourism-related businesses?” For each of these research questions, three subquestions were posed. The first two (TUH categories and traveled outside the United States or not) are measured as main effects and third is an interaction effect between the two main effects in a series of ANCOVAs. Length of residence and economic dependence on tourism are included in each model as covariates. Results for the ANCOVAs are presented in Table 5 for each study county.

For Beaufort County residents, the overall model for the dependent variable “Beaufort County should support local businesses serving tourists” was significant ($p = .007$), although the model explains a small amount of variance ($R^2 = .03$). The main effects for TUH and traveled outside the United States or not and the interaction term were not significant. The covariate “years of residency” was significant ($p = .002$), indicating that for an increase in years of residence, residents’ agreement with the item “Beaufort County should support local businesses serving tourists” slightly decreased ($\beta = -0.01$). The covariate “economic dependence on tourism” was significant ($p = .017$), indicating that as dependence on tourism increases, residents agreement with the item “Beaufort County should support local businesses serving tourists” slightly increased ($\beta = 0.01$). The other five dependent variables did not have significant models, main effects, or interaction effects.

Two models were significant in the Oconee County study. “Tourism in Oconee County should be developed by outside investors/developers” was significant ($p < .001$), explaining a relatively small amount of variance ($R^2 = .07$). The main effect for travel outside the United States was significant ($p < .001$), while the main effect of TUH and the interaction were not significant. Residents who had not traveled outside the United States slightly disagreed ($M = 3.10$)
that tourism in Oconee County should be developed by outside investors, while those who had traveled outside the United States were neutral \( (M = 3.96) \). The covariate “economic dependence” was significant \( (p = .017) \), indicating that as dependence on tourism increases, residents’ agreement with the item “Tourism in Oconee County should be developed by outside investors/developers” increased \( (\beta = 0.90) \). “Tourism should be developed through a public–private partnership” was significant \( (p = .003) \), although only explaining a small amount of variance \( (R^2 = .05) \). The main effect of travel outside the United States was significant \( (p < .001) \), while TUH and the interaction term were not significant predictors in the model. Residents who had traveled outside the United States in the past 2 years had a higher level of agreement \( (M = 5.57) \) that a public–private partnership should develop tourism than
those who had not traveled outside the United States in the past 2 years ($M = 4.76$).

**Discussion and Conclusions**

Recreation experiences have been used to segment in prior studies (Hammitt, Backlund, and Bixler 2004; Petrick et al. 2001; Schreyer, Lime, and Williams 1984), which served as a template in this study to group residents based on personal travel behavior. The EUH framework used in earlier studies had greater predictive power than that used in the current study. A number of reasons can help explain the difference. First, the EUH framework was used with a specific reference point or experience with a specific place. The current studies were not place-specific given they asked about residents’ travel behavior outside their home county. Second, prior studies have used the EUH framework to examine specific outcomes, such as management actions at the specified study site. The current studies used travel behavior outside the county of residence to examine attitudes toward tourism development and support for tourism in the county of residence. Prior studies have categorized residents based on their attitudes toward tourism in their own community (Davis, Allen, and Cosenza 1988; Fredline and Faulkner 2000, 2002; Jurowski 1996; Madrigal 1995; Williams and Lawson 2001). Few studies have explored how residents’ own travel experiences might affect their attitudes toward tourism in their community. This study used travel behavior to group residents in two different South Carolina counties and examine attitudes toward who should develop tourism and government support for tourism in their own county.

Across both studies, residents indicated that tourism should be developed by local businesses above any other potential developer. In a sense, residents understand that they can control their own destiny best when it comes to developing sustainable tourism. Andriotis and Vaughn (2003) found that residents in Crete thought allowing local interests to control tourism development was very advantageous for the community. This lack of faith in outside developers was echoed in the work by Long, Perdue, and Allen (1990), wherein a majority of residents in Colorado agreed that the community should have control over tourism development and that nonresidents should not be allowed to develop the local area for tourism. The acknowledgment that tourism should be developed by locals indicates the potential importance residents place on developing tourism in a sustainable manner, which has the best interests of the local community as a primary focus (Richards and Hall 2000). In both samples, residents also communicated that they highly agreed the government should play a major role in supporting local businesses serving tourists and private business development in tourism. Such findings are supported in the work of Belisle and Hoy (1980) and Davis, Allen, and Cosenza (1988) highlighting residents’ agreement with statements that the government should provide financial support (in the way of tax relief) to local businesses’ development services and infrastructure for tourism.

Support for the addition of TUH into the mix of multiple variables explaining residents’ attitudes within this study were mixed. This is indicative of the existing body of knowledge pertaining to research on residents’ attitudes (Harrill 2004; McGehee and Andereck 2004). Other variables that have produced mixed findings in the past include age, education, gender, length of residence, and physical distance between resident and tourist (Harrill 2004). Regardless of mixed findings, these variables continue to be used in recent studies (see Wang and Pfister 2008). Despite the modest support for TUH in explaining residents’ attitudes, the importance of this variable should not be discounted. As tourism research moves toward developing a grand theory of residents’ attitudes, researchers must be cognizant of potential predictor variables (i.e., TUH) of attitudes as approximately 40% of the variance of residents’ attitudes is still undetermined (Gursoy and Rutherford 2004). Beaufort and Oconee counties vary in numerous ways when looking at their tourism products, stages of development, and residents’ travel experiences. Beaufort County is a developed destination in the “Critical Range of Elements of Capacity” in Butler’s (1980, p. 7) life cycle, while Oconee County is just entering the involvement stage. Results suggest that in light of where each destination is in the tourism life cycle, travel experiences (while controlling for traditionally used predictors) can provide a relevant approach to study residents’ attitudes toward tourism development.

For Beaufort County, travel experiences (main effects and interaction) were not significant predictors of who (i.e., local businesses, outside investors and developers, government, public–private partnership) should develop tourism. However, the model containing the item “Beaufort County government should support local businesses serving tourists” was significant based on the covariates of length of residence and economic dependence. Similar to this study, Madrigal (1995) found the length-of-residence covariate to be a significant predictor of residents’ attitudes toward tourism. Contrary to the Madrigal (1995) study, however, the regression coefficient was negative, indicating a negative relationship between length of residence and attitudes toward tourism. In other words, the longer someone lives in a particular area, the less likely he or she is to agree that the government should support local businesses. Economic dependence (as a covariate) was also found by Madrigal (1995) to be a significant predictor of residents’ attitudes toward tourism. In this instance, the regression coefficient was positive just as other studies (e.g., Haley, Snaith, and Miller 2005; McGehee and Andereck 2004; Pizam 1978) found linking economic dependence to residents’ attitudes toward tourism.

Beaufort County has a history steeped in tourism and is currently among the most popular counties in South Carolina.
for tourism. The results of this study suggest that residents feel that tourism has been developed sufficiently and the local government should now support existing tourism businesses for the industry to remain sustainable.

For Oconee County, traveling outside the United States or not was significant in two of the development models and one government support model. Those who traveled outside the United States had higher agreement levels with the item “tourism should be developed by outside investors/developers” and “through a public–private partnership.” This suggests that traveling outside the United States exposes residents to more diverse, novel destinations, which allows them to understand that tourism development and planning requires a collaborative effort with government, nonprofit, and private sectors to have a chance at success (Gunn and Var 2002). Although the model was not significant, the main effect for travel outside the United States or not was a significant predictor for the dependent variable asking if the local government should support businesses serving tourists. Once again, those who had traveled outside the United States in the past 2 years had a higher level of agreement with the item than did those who had not traveled outside the United States. Traveling outside the country appears to provide residents with an understanding that tourism development requires a collaborative effort and partnerships and once developed there is still the need for support from the local government (Sharpley 2002).

Oconee County is in relatively early stages of tourism development, and some residents may fear overdevelopment of tourism. However, it was recognized that outside investors and developers were needed to help develop tourism and that there should be a public–private partnership involved. This provides a potential framework for the local government to be proactive and work with outside developers, as well as locals involved in tourism, so that the community is not taken over by outsiders and future development is sustainable.

From a practitioner or tourism development and planning perspective, the TUH framework for understanding residents’ attitudes has potential implications for communities seeking development and planning of sustainable tourism. Edgell et al. (2008) suggest that businesses should seek residents’ input regarding their needs and preferences. Murphy (1985) suggests that including residents in tourism planning can help identify acceptable and balanced levels of development that can not only minimize the negative impacts but also the potential negative feeling residents may have toward tourists themselves. Processes for including all residents could include town hall meetings and/or planning workshops where everyone is welcome to share their perspectives about tourism development and planning in the community. This input should be sought from all residents regardless of factors such as who directly benefits from tourism, length of residence, and residents’ personal travel experiences (all of which may affect individuals’ attitudes toward tourism), leading to a healthy discussion that may foster a more balanced and sustainable plan. Residents with more travel experiences may be able to provide insight to those with less or no travel experiences who may be more opposed to tourism development. In addition, the experienced travelers may be able to provide and explain examples of how tourism in other sustainable destinations has benefited the overall community and minimized negative impacts. Studies have shown that residents believe tourism development can help a community’s economy, create job opportunities, and increase the tax base through spending by tourists (McGehee and Andereck 2004; Perdue, Long, and Allen 1990), as well as that residents may support increased tourism development and the benefits that may coincide (Andereck and Vogt 2000). However, residents with little or no travel experience (especially those who live in communities with little or no tourism) may not realize some of the positive impacts that may result as well as how negative impacts can be minimized.

Limitations and Future Research

While both surveying procedures used probability sampling and achieved a sufficient sample size, this does not ensure that the respondents are fully representative of the population regarding other measures. For Beaufort County, the sample was representative of the population when comparing household income to U.S. Census Bureau figures. However, compared to U.S. Census Bureau data, the Oconee County sample was skewed with a higher percentage of respondents with a household income of $100,000 and above than the study population.

Grouping participants to test for differences may be done in a number of ways. In this study, we chose the grouping method of low and high based on the median of two continuous variables for two reasons. First, the procedure followed prior research using the EUH framework, whereby numerous authors used the same grouping strategy. Second, this study included two samples that remained independent in the grouping procedures and analyses. To compare results between the counties, it was deemed necessary to have similar groupings in the respective study sites. Other available procedures, such as clustering, may have resulted in different types of clusters in each county and made comparisons complex or impossible. However, clustering techniques for grouping respondents are available and might help advance EUH and TUH studies. Such techniques might be used in single-site studies or where multiple study sites are combined for grouping and analyses.

The power for a number of the ANCOVA tests was below an ideal 0.80 level (Pallant 2005). This potentially indicates the possibility of Type II errors. Further development and testing of the TUH framework may help to better determine if residents’ attitudes toward tourism are indeed influenced by their own travel experiences.
The current study did not ask about the destination(s) residents traveled to, while the EUH framework is often site-specific. Another variable addressing the types of destinations (i.e., rural or urban) respondents frequently visit will help provide a reference point. This variable can be included in future TUH studies to determine if the type of destination (i.e., metropolitan or rural), which may indicate the level of tourism development, has an effect on attitudes toward tourism in one’s own community. Another variable to include related to the residents’ perspective would be the type of community in which they live. It would be interesting to examine if residents visit destinations that are similar or different than their own community and how such differences might influence residents’ attitudes.

The TUH questions used in this study asked respondents about total trips, total number of different places, and a dichotomous variable for travel outside the United States. Future development of TUH questions should ask about domestic and international travel at more precise levels. For example, both domestic and international travel items could focus on the total number of trips and total number of different places visited. If all continuous variables are used to segment, it will likely result in a greater ability to differentiate residents based on their domestic and international travel experiences.

Another limitation to this study is that validity of independent variables and dependent variables was not assessed. This was primarily due to the fact that additional common items between the two survey instruments were not readily available to test for criterion validity. Subsequent studies including either TUH or similar tourism development and government support items should use such validity tests.

This study explored a new framework for resident research in tourism in two counties varying greatly in their level of tourism development. The TUH framework can be used to study destinations at additional stages of Butler’s (1980) life cycle, including exploration, development, and different levels within the critical range of elements of capacity. This will provide an even more comprehensive picture of how residents’ travel experiences affect their attitudes toward tourism in their own community. In addition, as a minor limitation to this study, we did not ascertain how important residents feel tourism is to them and the local community. Knowledge of such importance could serve to explain residents’ TUH and why they feel the way they do about tourism and the potential tourism development in their community.

While the predictive nature of TUH is modest within this study, inclusion of residents’ personal TUH should be included in future studies where models are formulated to predict residents’ attitudes. For example, work emulating that of Gursoy and Rutherford (2004), Jurowski and Gursoy (2004), and Ko and Stewart (2002) could gain from the addition of TUH. Potentially, TUH may increase the variance explained in residents’ attitudes toward tourism and tourism development.

The TUH framework can be used to address additional outcome variables involving residents’ perceptions of tourism development and tourists, in particular. For example, future research using TUH can go beyond looking at who should develop tourism and examine resident attitudes toward tourism, such as positive and negative impacts as a result of tourism in their community. In addition, TUH can be applied to study residents’ feelings toward the tourist, or the emotional solidarity residents experience with tourists. This could potentially uncover a more intimate relationship (i.e., empathy or emotional closeness) that exists between residents and tourists in a destination.

**Authors’ Note**
The first two authors (Draper and Woosnam) contributed to this article equally and are first authors; names are listed in alphabetical order.

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