INVESTIGATING DESTINATION COMPETITIVENESS THROUGH CUSTOMER VALUE IN SCUBA DIVING TOURISM

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Statement of originality

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma at any university. To the best of my knowledge, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where references are made in the thesis.

________________________________________
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Abstract

Most destination competitiveness models are derived from a suppliers’ perspective, even those that recognise the demand as an important element of the competitiveness of a destination. Some of these studies have investigated competitiveness from a demand perspective based on destination attributes, but these attributes were derived initially from a supplier’s perspective.

This study takes an alternative perspective; that the ability to provide superior value to the customer is critical to destination competitiveness. It addresses a gap in the literature of destination competitiveness by focusing on tourists’ perspectives of value. The research investigates customer value in destination competitiveness in the context of SCUBA diving tourism, a niche tourism market using mixed-methods making use of a multi method approach deploying face-to-face interviews and online surveys.

In the first stage, interviews (n=34) were conducted in four popular SCUBA diving destinations in Australia and Thailand from August to October of 2015. Using thematic analysis, a total of eighty-four destination attributes were mapped. Analysis of the results indicated that the most relevant attributes were related to SCUBA diving services, underwater fauna and environmental conditions of the dive sites. These interviews sought to cover SCUBA divers with different profiles to gather a maximal range of destination attributes. Respondents with little diving experienced were unable to express many destinations attributes due to their lack of experience.

The second stage explored the relative importance of the destination attributes from the perspective of SCUBA diving tourists (n=712). Certified SCUBA divers completed an online questionnaire containing closed and open-ended questions. Data collection took place from January to June of 2016. Among the fifty-two destination attributes used in the second stage, the most important were (1) professional operations, (2) variety and abundance of marine life, (3) quality and environmental conditions of the dive sites, (4) environmental commitment of the dive operator, and (5) friendly staff/casual atmosphere. The least important destination attributes were (a) opportunity to dive in a cave, (b) popularity/fame as a diving destination, (c) adventure
activities, (d) opportunity to dive on an artificial reef, and (e) entertainment activities and facilities.

Further, this research also investigated to what extent the levels of diving experience and travel experience influenced the importance given to destination competitiveness attributes. A series of analytical procedures were used, including descriptive analysis, principal components analysis, cluster analysis, cross-tabulation and analysis of variance with post-hoc pairwise comparison.

Regarding the level of diving experience, this study identified three groups: low, medium and highly experienced divers, each with different importance rankings of destination attributes. Among these three groups, six of ten destination competitiveness factors (groups of attributes) differed significantly (p<.05): diving operations, diving conditions, destination management, diving training, general tourist attraction and visa policy, while four factors: risk perception, price, big wildlife encounters and technical diving, did not differ significantly (p > .05). Diving operations, diving conditions, destination management, diving training, general tourist attractions and visa policy were significantly (p < .05) more important for low experience divers. On the other hand, technical diving emerged as more important to the highly experienced group than the medium experience group.

Regarding the level of travel experience, this study also identifies three groups: low, medium and high travel experience. Among the three groups, seven of ten destination competitiveness factors (groups of attributes) differed significantly (p < .05): diving operations, risk perception, destination management, price, diving training and service, general tourist attraction and visa policy. No significant difference between groups (p > .05) was found for diving conditions, big wildlife encounters and technical diving. These results indicate that the ranking of the importance of destination competitiveness factors also changed according to the level of travel experience. Further, apart from price, all significant factors presented the same trend: the higher the travel experience, the lower the importance given to the destination competitiveness factor. This trend suggested evidence of a career pattern about the importance given to destination competitiveness factors.

The results indicate that the investigation of destination competitiveness through customer value provides a useful and innovative approach to examine competition
among destinations in the same niche market. Therefore, this study provided evidence that destination competitiveness should incorporate destination attributes that tourists in a niche (and sub-niches) value as part of a successful trip.
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Published papers included in the thesis

This thesis includes published, accepted and submitted peer-reviewed papers co-authored with my supervisors as Chapters 3, 4, 5 and 6. My contribution to each co-authored paper is outlined at the front of the relevant chapter. The bibliographic details for these papers follows:


Additional relevant publications

In addition to the papers that form the research chapters of this thesis, other publications were completed during the candidature but do not form part of the thesis itself.

Book chapter


Conference papers


CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the current thesis. Section 1.1 outlines the background of the research, followed by the explanation of the research problem in section 1.2 and the statement of the research aim and research questions in section 1.3. Section 1.4 presents the contextual, theoretical, conceptual boundaries and the key definitions used throughout this thesis. Lastly, the thesis structure is explained in section 1.5.

1.1 – Thesis background

Tourism is an important vehicle for economic growth. Tourism destinations managers around the globe aim to attract new tourists, extend their stay and increase their expenditure. To do so, tourism destination managers and planners seek practical methods to achieve competitive advantage in a sustainable manner.

Since 1990, several studies have sought to understand how to measure and improve destination competitive advantage (Buhalis, 2000; Crouch & Ritchie, 1993, 1999; D'Hauteserre, 2000; Dwyer, Forsyth, & Rao, 2000; Dwyer & Kim, 2003; Dwyer, Mellor, Livaic, Edwards, & Kim, 2004; Faulkner, Oppermann, & Fredline, 1999; Poon, 1993). These studies are based on a supplier’s perspective. From 2010 onwards, a demand point-of-view was introduced to assess the attributes that determine destination competitiveness (Andrades-Caldito, Sánchez-Rivero, and Pulido-Fernández, 2014; Pabel & Coghlan, 2011; Wilde, 2010a, 2010b). Nevertheless, the destination competitiveness attributes applied in these recent studies were derived from the earlier supplier’s perspective studies.

The main issue is disregarding or underestimate the demand perspective on destination competitiveness. The comparison among destinations that do not compete in the same market does not assure the improvement of the level of competitiveness. For instance, Switzerland and Thailand do not compete in the same market because they have different set of destination attributes. Arguing that, how effective would be for Thailand’s competitiveness to use the attributes that made Switzerland the most competitive country in the Travel and Tourism Competitive Ranking (WEF, 2013)? Should small destinations follow the same recipe used on big cities? Or, do tourists
that visit small destinations and big cities expect the same experience? Do tourists value the same things while on a trip? Finally, should tourist destinations be driven by the competitive comparison based on a single and general perspective (suppliers)?

In this thesis, the perspective which will be taken is that that the key to competitiveness is the ability to provide superior value to the customer (Parasuraman, 1997; Pechlaner, Smeral, & Matzier, 2002; Slater & Narver, 1994; Woodruff, 1997; Woodruff & Gardial, 1996). Using this approach, value is determined by the attributes perceived by the customer (Grönroos, 2000) rather than what is delivered by suppliers (Vargo & Lusch, 2004, 2008). As such, the aim of this research is to investigate destination competitiveness as a function of customer value. SCUBA diving tourism was chosen as the context for this study because (1) SCUBA diving tourism is an important market for coastal tropical destinations, specially developing destinations (Lew, 2013; World Bank, 2015) (2) SCUBA diving tourism has great potential for marine conservation (Dixon & Scura, 1993), (3) understanding the values of the SCUBA diving experience will lead to a more successful and sustainable dive industry (Dearden, Bennett, & Rollins, 2006).

1.2 – Research problem

Competition between tourism destinations is increasing while, at the same time, travellers are more demanding and value conscious (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). It is crucial for destination managers to acquire a better understanding of what customer value so that they can improve their destinations’ competitive advantage. A number of destination competitiveness models have been developed to advance this understanding (Crouch & Ritchie, 1993, 1999; D’Hauteserre, 2000; Dwyer & Kim, 2003; Dwyer et al., 2001; Enright & Newton, 2004; Hassan, 2000; Heath, 2003; Hong, 2009; World Economic Forum, 2013).

However, most of these models were derived from a suppliers’ perspective (Crouch, 2011; Crouch & Ritchie, 1999; D’Hauteserre, 2000; Dwyer & Kim, 2003; Hassan, 2000; Kozak & Rimmington, 1999; World Economic Forum, 2013), including those that considered demand as an important element of a destination’s competitiveness (D’Hauteserre, 2000; Dwyer & Kim, 2003; Hassan, 2000; Kozak & Rimmington, 1999).
Studies have also been undertaken which investigated competitive attributes from the demand perspective (Andrades-Caldito, Sánchez-Rivero, & Pulido-Fernández, 2014; Pabel & Coghlan, 2011; Wilde, Cox, Kelly, & Harrison, 2017), but these attributes were derived from a supplier’s perspective also.

Furthermore, competitiveness studies usually assume a homogeneous market (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999; D’Hauteserre, 2000; Dwyer & Kim, 2003; Dwyer et al., 2004; Dwyer et al., 2001; Enright & Newton, 2004, 2005; Gooroochurn & Sugiyarto, 2005; Hong, 2009; World Economic Forum, 2013). As a result, the comparison among destinations that do not compete in the same market does not help destinations to improve competitiveness. Therefore, in this study, destination competitiveness was assessed by tourists participating in a popular tourism niche: SCUBA diving tourism (SDT).

A number of studies have indicated that different levels of customer experience affect customer motivations and the assessment of their experiences (Andersen, Prentice, & Watanabe, 2000; Chen, Bao, & Huang, 2014; Kim, Kim, & Ritchie, 2008; Lamont & Jenkins, 2013; Trauer, 2006). Two experience-based approaches have been applied for segmenting niche markets in tourism studies, i.e., the level of specialisation (Bryan, 1977), (1977) and the travel career pattern (formerly the travel career ladder) (Li, Pearce, & Zhou, 2015; Panchal & Pearce, 2011; Pearce & Caltabiano, 1983). The level of specialisation (Bryan, 1977) has been applied in studies undertaken by, for example, Dearden, Bennett, and Rollins (2006); Sorice, Oh, and Ditton (2009); and Pabel and Coghlan (2011). In these studies, level of specialisation has been implemented using multidimensional variables (i.e., those variables related to motivation, psychological, involvement, experience and expenditure) and unidimensional variables (i.e. self-determination). On the other hand, a travel career approach has not been applied to study destination competitiveness attributes nor to the SCUBA diving tourism niche. In order to investigate in what extent tourists in the same niche differ, two classification approaches were implemented: travel experience (travel career approach) and diving experience (specific variables related to diving experience).
1.3 – Aim and research questions

This research aims to investigate destination competitiveness from a customer value perspective. It recognised that a customer’s perceptions of the value of a leisure activity (in this case, diving experience) are related to the levels of travel experience (travel career pattern) and experience. Therefore, this study specifically examines the customer perspective of value in a tourism niche context: i.e. SDT. In order to achieve this aim, this study bring together two broad theories/concepts: (a) destination competitiveness; and (b) customer value. Four research questions are derived from this aim:

RQ1: What are the destination attributes SCUBA diving tourists value in a successful SCUBA diving destination?

RQ2: From the perspective of SCUBA diving tourists, what is the relative importance of each destination competitiveness attribute?

RQ3: How do SCUBA diving tourists with different travel experience levels differ in the importance given to destination competitiveness attributes?

RQ4: How do SCUBA diving tourists with different diving experience levels differ in the importance given to destination competitiveness attributes?

1.4 – Contextual, theoretical and conceptual boundaries

Destination competitiveness is the contextualisation of the concept of competitiveness in the tourism industry. Introduced by Smith (1776) and refined/discussed by Porter (1980, 1990) and Wernerfelt (1984), the concept of competitiveness was forged in the tourism context by Poon (1993) and Crouch and Ritchie (1993, 1999). These authors were the basis on the contextualisation of competitiveness in the tourism context.

Although the ‘new’ concept of destination competitiveness brought important contributions to destination planning and management (such as the destination competitiveness index and several other studies), two essential elements were disregarded in the inception of the concept: the customer value and the relativity of the competitiveness concept. As pointed out by Feurer and Chaharbaghi (1994, p. 58):
competitiveness is relative and not absolute. It depends on shareholder and customer values, [and] financial strength which determines the ability to act and react within the competitive environment and... can only be sustained if an appropriate balance is maintained between these factors.

Persistent efforts were made to develop a proper delineation to the destination competitiveness concept (section 2.1 presents these efforts). Essentially, destination competitiveness concepts were based on a suppliers’ perspective. The exception was Hassan (2000), who considered customer value as an important element on the destination competitiveness scope. Therefore, Hassan’s (2000, p. 240) definition is a key concept on this thesis:

[destination competitiveness] is the destination’s ability to create and integrate value-added products that sustain its resources while maintaining market position relative to competitors.

Although Hassan (2000) brought the customers’ perspective to the destination competitiveness delineation, an important consideration was disregarded. Hassan (2000) and later on Dwyer and Kim (2003) disregarded in their proposed destination competitiveness models that rather than delivered by suppliers, destination attributes are perceived by customers in use situation (Woodruff, 1997). The demand perspective was considered in theory; however, the destination competitiveness models proposed by Hassan (2000) and Dwyer and Kim (2003) were not based on a customer value perspective. The abovementioned models were not based on destination attributes derived from customers.

There are several approaches on customer value (Section 2.2 on Chapter 2 presents and discuss these definitions). Among the approaches on customer value, the most suitable is the one proposed by Woodruff (1997, p. 142):
Customer value is a customer’s perceived preference for and evaluation of those product attributes, attribute performances and consequences arising from use that facilitate (or block) achieving the customer’s goals and purposes in use situations.

As explained on Section 2.2, there are three reasons to support the decision to use Woodruff’s (1996) approach. This is because Woodruff and Gardial (1996) do not pre-determine the types of value as can be found in other approaches. In its place, they emerge from qualitative interviews (in-depth interviews of focus groups) with customers. Secondly, Woodruff and Gardial’s (1996) model further investigate the ‘why and what’ customers value rather than only focusing on the attributes (Lusch & Vargo, 2006). Finally, as mentioned previously, this model is the most adequate to high involvement product, such as tourism product (Leroi-Werelds et al., 2014).

The second element disregarded on the inception of the destination competitiveness models was the relativity of competitiveness on tourism studies. Destination competitiveness studies considered tourists as a general market, disregarding the diversity of tourism niches and their motivations (Queiroz Neto, Lohmann, Scott, 2016). The motivations, values and expectations vary according to the tourist. Thus, the destination competitiveness attributes are relative to the tourism niche. For instance, the successful destination attributes on a deep-sea sport fishing trip are significantly different from a dark (tourism) trip or a SCUBA diving trip. Therefore, as incorporating a complete diversity of tourist value in one model is impossible (Dwyer & Kim, 2003), destination competitiveness should be measured among destinations that compete in tourism niches rather than generally.

Due to the exposed, SCUBA diving tourism is the context of this thesis (the reasons to study this context rather than others are explained on section 2.3). The concept of SCUBA diving tourism is defined by Dimmock and Cummins (2013, p. 14) as:
SCUBA diving undertaken on a trip away from a person’s local area. Travel may be designed especially for SCUBA diving, or a subsequent decision to dive may be made at the destination.

Further on the idea that destination competitiveness and values might be relative, this research sought to investigate in what extent sub-niches differ in the importance given to destination competitiveness attributes for a successful SCUBA diving destination. Two different segmentation approaches were implemented: SCUBA diving experience and travel career approach.

Among SCUBA diving tourists, there are different levels of experience that influence their destination choice. Dearden, Bennett, and Rollins (2006) and Pabel and Coghlan (2011) identified significant different preferences according to divers’ levels of experience. The number of logged dives was used to define diver’s experience level. This approach presented higher statistical consistency than previous approaches implemented (more details on Section 5.3).

The second segmentation approach implemented on this thesis was the travel career pattern approach (TCP). According to Pearce and Lee (2005, p.228), TCP is:

A dynamic concept arguing that tourists have identifiable phases or stages in their holiday taking. A pattern of travel motives characterizes or reflects one’s travel career. The state of one’s travel career, like a career at work, is influenced by previous travel experiences and life stage or contingency factors.

Level of travel experience was the basis for the development of the travel career pattern approach — formerly travel career ladder (Pearce & Lee, 2005) — which holds that motivation changes according to the person’s travel experience and life stage. The classification of tourists according to their level of travel experience has been applied mainly in studies on tourism motivations (Chen, Bao, & Huang, 2014; Huang & Hsu, 2009; Oh, Assaf, & Baloglu, 2014; Paris & Teye, 2010; Pearce & Lee, 2005;
Weaver et al. 2007). In light of this use, the application of the travel experience approach in a new area (destination competitiveness) contributes to a better understanding of tourists’ preferences. The use of TCP represents an innovative approach to the theoretical discussion (travel career and destination competitiveness) and contextual discussion (SCUBA diving tourism niche).

Therefore, in this thesis, the key concepts applied in this research are defined below:

**Destination Competitiveness:** ‘The destination’s ability to create and integrate value-added products that sustain its resources while maintaining market position relative to competitors’ (Hassan, 2000, p. 240).

While Hassan’s definition is widely used in the context of tourism, there is no universal definition for competitiveness. As a consequence, competitiveness can have different meaning to different organisations (Feurer & Chaharbaghi, 1994). Arguing that, this thesis focused on Hassan’s (2000) concept based on two rationales. Firstly, the concept is market oriented. At this point, none of the previous conceptualisations on destination competitiveness is market oriented. That means that Hassan’s concept places the demand as a central element on destination competitiveness. Secondly, and as a consequence of the previous point, Hassan’s concept highlights the importance of value-added products to achieve sustainable competitiveness. Different from other studies (Crouch and Ritchie, 1999; Dwyer et al., 2000; D’Hautessere, 2000; Bahar and Kozak, 2007), where destination competitiveness has a strong economics underpinning, Hassan’s (2000) concept merges destination competitiveness with marketing discipline. As a result, this thesis adopts the idea that destination competitiveness is achieved through higher customer value perceived by tourists (Woodruff, 1997).

**Customer Value:** ‘Customer value is a customer’s perceived preference for and evaluation of those product attributes, attribute performances and consequences arising from use that facilitate (or block) achieving the customer’s goals and purposes in use situations’ (Woodruff, 1997, p. 142).
At a broad level, the term value is used in different contexts: monetary value, image value, intellectual value. Various definitions have been used in prior research to delineate customer value. Particularly, Woodruff’s (1997) concept was moulded in the idea that the delivery of a superior value (of a product or service) is the major source to achieve and retain a competitive advantage. More than that, customers were then placed at the heart of the definition of the attributes that were worthy or not to measure competitiveness. Woodruff’s (1997) perspective towards value and competitiveness influenced Hassan’s (2000) conceptualisation of destination competitiveness by considering customer value as an important element of a destination’s competitiveness. However, while the relations between customer value and tourism have been explored by many tourism studies (Gallarza & Saura, 2006; Sanchez, Callarisa, Rodriguez, Moliner, 2006; Chen, Chen, 2010), none of them has investigated through Woodruff’s (1997) perspective of value, with attributes perceived by tourists in the context of a tourism niche (in the case of this thesis, SCUBA diving tourism) and its subniches.

It is important to highlight that destination competitiveness and customer value are two different concepts; therefore, it is not possible to discuss the differences between these two concepts forged by two different areas of studies covering different aspects. Anyway, it is imperative to highlight how these two comments are related. In the case of this thesis, destination competitiveness is achieved through higher customer value perceived by tourists (Woodruff, 1996).

**SCUBA Diving Tourism:** ‘SCUBA diving undertaken on a trip away from a person’s local area. Travel may be designed especially for SCUBA diving, or a subsequent decision to dive may be made at the destination’ (Dimmock & Cummins, 2013, p. 14).

Market segmentation is the classification of customers according to their behaviours and beliefs. That way, marketers and managers can better understand why people act in a certain way – or more specifically, why tourists purchase a particular product or a service (Hennigs & Hallmann, 2015). SCUBA diving tourists have a specific interest while travelling: SCUBA diving activity. Therefore, SCUBA diving tourism is classified as a Special Interest Tourism (SIT). Different scholars studied this marine-based tourism (Dearden et al., 2006; Garrod & Gössling, 2008; Pabel & Coghlan, 2011; Ong
& Musa, 2011; Lew, 2013; Dimmock & Cummins, 2013) and two conceptualisations were implemented: diving tourism (Garrod & Gössling, 2008) and SCUBA diving tourism (Dimmock & Cummins, 2013). Garrod and Gössling’s (2008) conceptualisation covers a broad range of diving activities such as SCUBA, snorkelling and snuba; and Dimmock and Cummins (2013) are based specifically in SCUBA diving activities. While the first conceptualisation covers almost every tourist that undertake a leisure holiday in a tropical destination, the second fits clearly into the idea of a special interest tourism (SIT) while focusing in SCUBA diving tourists.

### SCUBA diving tourism subniches

**Travel career pattern approach:** ‘A dynamic concept arguing that tourists have identifiable phases or stages in their holiday taking’ (Pearce & Lee, 2005, p. 228).

**SCUBA diving specialisation:** ‘The level of SCUBA diving experience among participants in an SCUBA diving activity’.

Understanding the characteristics of each tourism market is paramount to the survival of a tourism product. Kotler (1989) proposed a four-level market segmentation. While consumers/tourists got more experienced new levels appeared. Based on this rationale, a new level of segmentation applied in a destination competitiveness study: sub-niches among SCUBA diving tourists. Two different segmentation approaches were implemented: the level of specialisation (Pabel & Coghlan, 2011) and the level of travel career (Pearce & Lee, 2005). To increase their knowledge and diving experience, divers may seek further training. Different levels of diving experience influence the decision-making process of divers (Dearden et al., 2006; Garrod, 2008; Lew, 2013; Pabel & Coghlan, 2011). Therefore, it is vital to consider the levels of specialisation while investigating SCUBA divers. As is the case of specialisation studies regarding SCUBA diving activities, the level of experience as a tourist influences the travel decision-making process of a tourist (Woodside & Jacobs, 1985; Pearce & Lee, 2005). While the level of specialisation is a concept commonly tested and confirmed in SCUBA diving studies (Dearden, Bennett, & Rollins, 2006; Sorice, Oh, & Ditton, 2009; Pabel & Coghlan, 2011), travel career approach has not been
applied in this tourism niche (Pearce & Lee, 2005). In line with Hassan (2000), Crouch and Ritchie (1999) and Crouch (2011) and through the perspective of customer value (Woodruff, 1997), this thesis also expands the knowledge towards sub-niches on destination competitiveness.

1.5 – Thesis structure

The current thesis comprises seven chapters. Chapter 1 presents an overview of the research and its structure. Chapter 2 provides the literature review and theoretical framework this research was grounded. Chapters 3, 4, 5 and 6 contain manuscripts that either have been accepted for publication (Chapter 4), published (Chapter 5) or are currently under review (Chapters 3 and 6). Regarding the purpose of each manuscript, Chapter 3 clarifies the methodological approach implemented in the whole study; Chapter 4 presents the literature review, methodology, data collection, data analysis and results and findings regarding research question one (RQ1); Chapter 5 presents literature review, methodology, data collection, data analysis and results and findings regarding research questions two (RQ2) and four (RQ4); and, Chapter 6 covers the literature review, methodology, data collection, data analysis, results and findings regarding research question three (RQ3). Finally, in Chapter 7, the main results, contributions, practical implications, limitations of this study and recommendation for future research are provided. Figure 1.1 graphically illustrates the structure of this thesis.

This thesis structure complies with the Griffith University Guidelines and Policy regarding a thesis comprised of published and unpublished papers (reproduced in Appendix 1). As a result of this structure, some repetition can be found within Chapter 1 (Introduction) and Chapter 2 (Literature Review) as well as within the methodology and references included in Chapters 3 to 6.
1.6 – References


CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW

Following the structure defined (Figure 2.1), this literature review provides the conceptual background and theoretical framework for this thesis by grounding it in prior knowledge. It does so by presenting a critical review of the main topics in this research: destination competitiveness, customer value and SCUBA diving tourism.

2.1 – Destination competitiveness

According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), international tourist arrivals per year will reach 1.8 billion by 2030 with substantially stronger growth in emerging markets (UNWTO, 2014). Significantly, the rise in disposable income in recent decades has created the basis of a new lifestyle, where recreation and tourism have become major elements of consumer behaviour (Cracolici, Nijkamp, & Rietveld, 2008). In response, tourism has been promoted by international institutions such as the United Nations, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund as a
development strategy because it has the potential to increase capital, build infrastructure and boost employment rates (Chen, 2012).

The increasing integration of economies and societies stimulated tourism to become a global socio-economic phenomenon. Naibitt (1994) argues that as the world becomes more integrated the more people want to differentiate their experiences. As tourists become more experienced, an emerging trend sees many tourists demand tailor-made services requiring destinations to improve. At the same time, remote or non-traditional destinations aim to gain competitive advantage in tourism as a development strategy to improve the economy and, among other things, quality of life for the local population (Fayos-Solá, 1996).

As a result, increasingly countries, regions or cities (“destinations”) recognize that tourism development can be an important strategy to achieve economic wealth as well as social, cultural and environmental gains. Concomitantly, the growth in the number of destinations in the market means increased competition. Therefore, it can be argued that being more competitive than a direct competitor is required to maintain a competitive position in a competitive tourism market.

To achieve competitive advantage, a tourism destination must ensure that its products can provide better value than a competitor destination (Pechlaner, Smeral, & Matzier, 2002). In order to achieve this objective, i.e. to improve competitiveness, governments and firms should improve the approaches to measure performance and recognise weaknesses and strengths among the components of the tourism industry.

Concept of competitiveness

Adam Smith (1776) introduced the concept of competitiveness in the eightieth century:

...when the quantity of any commodity which is brought to market falls short of the effectual demand, all those who are willing to pay the whole value of the rent, wages, and profit, which must be paid in order to bring it thither, cannot be supplied with the quantity which they want.
Rather than want it altogether, some of them will be willing to give more. A competition will immediately begin among them (Smith, 1776).

The concept of competition is a fundamental concept in all forms of economic theory (Eatwell, Milgate & Newman, 1987). However, the definitions and explanations of competitiveness are often conflicting, with no consensus as to a universally acceptable definition of competitiveness (Feurer & Chaharbaghi, 1994). As an example, Competition was defined as a country’s ability to create, produce and distribute, products and services, both domestically and internationally, while earning rising returns on its resources (Scott and Lodge, 1985). Afterwards, Newall (1992) defined that competition is about producing more and better-quality goods and services that are marketed successfully to consumers at home and abroad.

Feurer and Chaharbaghi (1994, p.58) argued that

...competitiveness is relative and not absolute. It depends on shareholder and customer values, [and] financial strength which determines the ability to act and react within the competitive environment and... can only be sustained if an appropriate balance is maintained between these factors.

The Word Economic Forum (2015, p. 4) defined Competitiveness as

…the set of institutions, policies, and factors that determine the level of productivity of a country. The level of productivity, in turn, sets the level of prosperity that can be reached by an economy. The productivity level also determines the rates of return obtained by investments in an economy, which in turn are the fundamental drivers of its growth rates. In other words, a more competitive economy is one that is likely to grow faster over time.
Competitiveness is a vast topic that influenced the contemporary world as pointed out by Wilder (2010),

‘The concept of competitiveness is the result of a long history of thoughts, which has helped to define the various aspects of this more modern and complex concept. Those who have made a decisive contribution to the field of knowledge include early economic theorists Adam Smith, David Ricardo, Joseph Schumpeter and Max Weber, through to contemporary theorists such as Peter Drucker and Michael Porter. The aforementioned provide central arguments in the effort to best depict the underpinnings of economic prosperity for nations, regions or firms, as a means of further developing and conceptualising the notion of ‘competitiveness’.

**Destination competitiveness**

The concept of competitiveness was first applied to tourism in the 1990s (Crouch & Ritchie, 1993, 1999; Poon, 1993). According to Poon (1993), due to the oil crisis (1973-1974), mild recession (1980-1981), the Gulf War (1991) and impacts of the crisis of mass tourism (Croall, 1995), new management strategies were required to support destinations and firms to deal with a more competitive world. Thus, the discussion of competitive strategies became more relevant in tourism studies. Two main theories underpin this concept: Porter’s competitive advantage (1980, 1990) - based on seminal studies of Smith (1776) and Ricardo (1817); and, the resource-based view (Collis, 1991; Fahy, 2002; Wernerfelt, 1995). Porter’s theory (1980, 1990) focuses analysis onto a product and the commercial environment and how the management of the product and its processes can result in competitive advantage. The resource-based view focuses on a firm’s resources and how the firm can gain competitive advantage from those resources.
Destination competitiveness is defined as the ability of a destination to provide a high standard of living for residents of the destination through tourism (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999). These authors highlight that competitiveness leads to a sustained improvement in the wellbeing of residents, an improvement measured by economic prosperity, environmental stewardship and a high standard of living for residents. On the other hand, D’Hauteserre (2000, p. 23) defines destination competitiveness as ‘the ability of a destination to maintain its market position and share and/or improve upon them [sic] through time’. Moreover, in her study, D’Hauteserre (2000) extends the concept of competitiveness to product life cycle, arguing that a company that seeks to be more competitive will at the same time extend their product lifetime, postponing a decline. In contrast, Hassan (2000) argues that destination competitiveness is the ability to create and integrate value-added products that sustain resources while maintaining market position relative to competitors. According to Hassan (2000), world-class destinations should focus on special tourist niches (demand-oriented) to become more competitive. On the other hand, Pechlaner et al. (2002) argue that the destination should focus on delivering value to a customer, which is superior to the value delivered by competitors.

The basic principle in the philosophy of science argues that definitions are neither true nor false. Definitions appear to be more or less useful while contributing to formulating hypotheses and developing informal content (Mazanec, Wöber & Zins, 2007). The above arguments help to explain the reasons defining destination competitiveness is a ‘cumbersome endeavour’ (Croes, 2011, p. 432) and a ‘challenge faced by those exploring the topic’ (Abreu et al., 2016, p. 493). To further develop an understanding of destination competitiveness, its definitions are distinguished between descriptive, instrumental and normative (Donaldson and Preston, 1995).

Descriptive definitions intend to describe destination competitiveness and its components. Dwyer, Forsyth and Rao (2000) illustrate the elements that compose destination competitiveness:

‘Tourism competitiveness is a general concept that encompasses price differentials coupled with exchange rate movements, productivity levels of various components of the tourist industry, and
queiroz-neto-a--investigating-competitiveness-through-customer-value-in-scuba-diving-tourism

qualitative factors, affecting the attractions or otherwise of a destination. (Dwyer et al., 2000, p. 9)

Normative definitions encompass statements that claim how destination competitiveness should or ought to be and how to value them. Bahar and Kozak (2007) and Crouch and Ritchie (1999) provide two examples of these types of definitions, focusing both on the visitors as well as the local population:

‘The most competitive destination in the long term is the one which creates well-being for its residents’ (Bahar and Kozak, 2007, p. 62);

‘Destinations must ensure that their overall attractiveness and the integrity of the experiences they deliver to visitors must equal or surpass that of many alternative destinations open to potential visitors’ (Crouch and Ritchie, 1999, p. 139).

Most definitions related to destination competitiveness can be classified as instrumental. This type of definition establishes a cause-effect between individual practices and certain end-states (Jones, 1995). The ‘statements are hypothetical – if X, then Y or if you want Y, then do X. In this sense, X is an instrument for achieving Y’ (Jones, 1995, p. 406). In this regard, the definitions proposed by D’Hauteserre (2000), Hassan (2000), Ritchie and Crouch (2003), Dwyer and Kim (2003), Enright and Newton (2004) and Azzopardi (2011) are better classified as instrumental because they present destination competitiveness as a process to achieve certain objectives (e.g. market position, increase tourism expenditure):

‘The ability of a destination to maintain the market position and share and/ or improve upon them over time’ (D’Hauteserre, 2000, p. 23);

‘Ability to create and integrate value added products that sustain resources while maintaining market position relative to other competitors’ (Hassan, 2000, p. 240);
‘Ability to increase tourism expenditure, to increasingly attract visitors while providing them with satisfying, memorable experiences, and to do so in a profitable way, while enhancing the well-being of destination residents and preserving the natural capital of the destination for future generations’ (Ritchie and Crouch 2003, p. 2);

‘A destination is competitive if it can attract and satisfy potential customers (Enright and Newton, 2004, p. 778);

‘The ability of the destination to identify and exploit comparative advantages and create and enhance competitive advantages to attract visitors to a destination by offering them a unique overall experience for a fair price that satisfies the profit requirement of the industry and its constituent elements, as well as the economic prosperity objective of the residents, without jeopardizing the inalienable aspirations of future generations’ (Azzopardi, 2011, p. 22).

Apart from the idea that destination competitiveness is a process (instrumental definitions better emphasise this aspect), it is evident that there is no consensus on what destination competitiveness is or how it can be achieved. As a result, the differences among the perspectives towards the concepts of destination competitiveness produce distinct ways to measure and frame destination competitiveness.

Crouch and Ritchie (1993; 1999) and Crouch (2011) have been widely cited on the field of destination competitiveness. Their seminal work summarises eighteen years of research and can divided into three phases: the conception of their ideas (Crouch and Ritchie, 1993), the consolidation of their conceptual model (Crouch and Ritchie, 1999) and importance ranking of the determinant attributes of their model (Crouch, 2011). In all of these three phases, only a suppliers/academic perspective was considered. Crouch and Ritchie’s conceptual model and the ranking of its attributes (factors and sub-factors) are incorporated into Figure 2.2.
Figure 2.2 – Adapted conceptual model of destination competitiveness
Source: Adapted from Crouch and Ritchie (1999) and Crouch (2011)
In another well-cited study in the destination competitiveness field, Dwyer and Kim (2003) developed a model aiming to compare countries (among countries) and tourism sectors (e.g. accommodation and restaurants). Their model presents a similar approach to Crouch and Ritchie’s model. The main difference between these models is that Dwyer and Kim recognize demand as an important attribute of destination competitiveness whereas Crouch and Ritchie did not. Dwyer and Kim’s destination competitiveness model (Figure 2.3) contains eight main factors and thirty-two sub-factors. It is interesting to note Dwyer and Kim’s model has not been empirically evaluated to define the importance or weight of its factors and sub-factors. Indeed, the authors highlight that more investigation needs to be undertaken to describe the weighting of objective and subjective factors in determining overall destination competitiveness.

Despite of the effort to understand/measure the competitiveness of a tourism destination, both models (Figures 2.2 and 2.3) present particular questions relating to the set of indicators used to measure it. For instance, what indicators (units of measurement) are going to suitable to measure ‘comfortable climate for tourism’ one of the sub-factors of the ‘endowed resources’ in Dwyer and Kim’s model? Therefore,
there are still questions to be answered in relation to the measurement scales (indicators) used.

Dwyer and Kim (2003, p. 372) argue that destination competitiveness is ‘not an end but a means to an end’. The idea of ‘end’ raised by these authors varies according to other authors’ focus on the topic, e.g., the ultimate goal of destination competitiveness is to increase the standard of living of a nation (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999; Dwyer & Kim, 2003), to sustain their environments and market demand (Hassan, 2000), to promote the country (Dwyer and Kim, 2003) and the success of the tourism activity, delivering satisfying experiences to visitors (Dwyer, Mellor, Livaic, Edwards, & Kim, 2004; Mazanec & Ring, 2011; Pechlaner et al., 2002; Ritchie, Crouch, & Hudson, 1999).

The literature on destination competitiveness is extensive. Table 2.1 presents the key references on destination competitiveness studies that aimed to develop a particular model to assess the competitiveness of a tourism destination. Furthermore, it sets out the principal elements of these studies, i.e. elucidates the main theoretical support, level of perspective, weights/method implemented, application and research respondents on those studies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competitiveness Model and Authors</th>
<th>Main Theoretical support</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Weights/Method</th>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Research Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
As can be seen in Table 2.1, traditional destination competitiveness models take a single supplier perspective. Hassan (2000) suggested that the concept of destination
competitiveness has limited the focus of analysis to the factors associated with rivalry among firms, i.e. measuring competitiveness through econometric indicators (e.g. market growth, GDP). Further, these models do not appear to be sufficiently developed to allow for the measurement of competitiveness so as to improve the market position. Dwyer and Kim (2003, p. 408) highlighted that destination competitiveness studies might explore the role of demand factors in comparing the competitiveness of different destinations. These authors argue that ‘a substantial amount of empirical research is needed to develop suitable measures of destination competitiveness from the viewpoint of different types of tourists with their different travel motivations’.

Pursuing the gap identified by Dwyer and Kim (2003), Wilde (2010a, 2010b; Wilde et al., 2017) was one of the first to study destination competitiveness from the demand perspective. Based on the findings of Dwyer and Kim (2003), Ritchie et al. (1999) and also on the findings of focus group discussions with tourism industry stakeholders, Wilde (2010a, 2010b) investigated the importance of 38 destination competitiveness attributes (Table 2.2). Although Crouch and Ritchie (1999) and Dwyer and Kim (2003) have organised their models by factors, sub-factors and indicators, Wilde has employed individual un-weighted indicators (Table 2.2). Thus, Wilde’s model assumes that all of these variables have the same order of importance (for instance, the quality of tourism/hospitality service has the same importance that health and medical facilities). Therefore, through a post-consumption analysis, his survey was applied to tourists who visited two destinations in different levels of development in Australia: The Coffs Coast and the Great Lakes tourism region.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2.2 – Attributes of tourism destination competitiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value for money in destination tourism experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes of residents towards visitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security and safety of visitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value for money of shopping items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destination's ability to 'listen' to the needs of tourists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of tourism/hospitality services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value for money in accommodation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A favourable destination image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety and quality of Accommodation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and medical facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleanliness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety of food services (e.g. Restaurants)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dwyer and Kim’s (2003) model was used by Pabel and Coghlan (2011) to understand divers’ perceptions of the environmental quality of Australia’s Great Barrier Reef (GBR). In addition, Pabel and Coghlan (2011) compared GBR to other major destinations worldwide. Adopting Dwyer and Kim’s (2003) model, the authors measured the importance and performance of sixteen dive trip attributes organized in three main groups: environmental, setting and service attributes (Table 2.3). Although the attributes were derived from Dwyer and Kim’s (2003) model, the study implemented a narrowed focus by incorporating elements exclusively related to SCUBA diving activity, such as diversity of marine life, underwater scenery and knowledge of the dive master. However, the perception of other trip attributes (such as accommodation, restaurants, transport infrastructure) was not considered in this study due to the delimitation of the research (environmental quality).

Table 2.3 – Dive trip attributes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environmental attributes</th>
<th>Diversity of marine life</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Underwater scenery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quality of the coral</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Similarly to Wilde (2010a, 2010b) and Pabel and Coghlan (2011), Andrades-Caldito et al. (2014) also analysed destination competitiveness from the demand point-of-view. Applying their research to tourists that had visited the Spanish region of Andalucía, the authors implemented a theoretical model based on previous research that used only selected factors as determinants of destination competitiveness. According to the authors, the reason for omitting some factors was that tourists could not assess all of the destination competitiveness attributes (such as ‘market ties’, ‘environmental management’ or ‘destination marketing management’) and they therefore used a model based on only sixteen attributes (Table 2.4).

**Table 2.4 – Tourism destination competitiveness attributes for Andalucía**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tourism destination competitiveness</th>
<th>Duration of the stay</th>
<th>Expenses per person</th>
<th>Perceptions versus expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Created resources</td>
<td>Accommodations</td>
<td>Restaurants</td>
<td>Leisure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endowed resources</td>
<td>Beaches</td>
<td>Natural Landscape</td>
<td>Urban Landscape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourists’ perceptions about destination management</td>
<td>Treatment and attention</td>
<td>Value for money</td>
<td>Accessibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cleanliness</td>
<td>Traffic pollution</td>
<td>Tourist signal points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tourism information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (Andrades-Caldito et al., 2014)
The attributes tested by these three studies are from a supply perspective rather than from one based on demand. These prior studies did not investigate if the destination competitiveness attributes they used were suitable or not to assess the competitiveness of tourism destination from a demand perspective. Furthermore, it appears that the authors did not intend to examine other attributes in any great detail, i.e. that tourists themselves use to assess a successful trip to a tourism destination, in a similar way to what Crouch and Ritchie (1999) did with the suppliers. As pointed by Wilde ‘other attributes or indicators not discussed or measured as part of this study may be present’ (Wilde, 2010a, p. 189). In addition to Wilde’s quote, ‘a more refined measure of the TDC construct would be advisable […] researchers should further identify and examine other factors that influence TDC, such as tourism carrying capacity as a factor modulating tourist experiences’ (Andrades-Caldito et al., 2014, p. 438).

More recently, Ayikor Ayikoru (2015) and Abreu Abreu-Novais, Ruhanen, and Arcodia (2016) argue that there is a need to critically investigate the notion of competitive advantage in non-traditional or developing countries’ tourism sectors. The authors highlight that a new approach is necessary to look beyond delivering appropriate scholarly and policy support to destinations in developing and managing their tourism resources.

This discussion has identified a number of gaps in knowledge. The main issue with competitiveness studies such as Crouch and Ritchie (1999); Dwyer and Kim (2003); and the World Economic Forum (2015) is that they underestimate the importance of the demand in tourism by not investigating the attributes tourists value. Following Pechlaner et al. (2002), i.e. that destination competitiveness arises from a superior value delivered to customer, (Grönroos, 2000) argues that customer value is perceived by customers and that competitive advantage do not arise from the product whilst Woodruff (1997) argues from the supplier’s perspective but from the value derived from customers (Woodruff, 1997). Consequently, it is the premise of the proposed research that a destination should focus on providing value for tourists rather than on the supply side. Adopting such a model should produce a more reliable framework, which can be applied to support decision-makers in a destination to
improve that destination’s competitiveness and consequently market position by focusing on the demand.

2.2 – Customer value

Understood as value for customers (Paananen & Seppänen, 2013), the concept of customer value is viewed as indispensable to improve the competitiveness of an organization (Dodds, 1999; Gale, 1994; Gallarza & Gil, 2008; Holbrook, 1999; Slater, 1997; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001; Vargo & Lusch, 2004; Vargo, Maglio, & Akaka, 2008; Woodruff, 1997; Woodruff & Flint, 2006). The literature of customer value involves different definitions, frameworks/models and measurement methods (Butz Jr & Goodstein, 1996; DeSarbo, Jedidi, & Sinha, 2001; Dodds, 1999; Gao, 2013; Graf & Maas, 2008; Holbrook, 1999; Slater, 1997; Woodruff, 1997; Woodruff & Gardial, 1996; Zeithaml, 1988). The most relevant studies for this research is scrutinized below. Zeithaml (1988, p. 14) defines customer value as “the consumer’s overall assessment of the utility of a product based on perceptions of what is received and what is given”. Woodruff (1997, p. 142) states that customer value is ‘a customer’s perceived preference for and evaluation of those product attributes, attribute performances, and consequences arising from use that facilitate (or block) achieving customer goals and purpose in use situations. Chen and Dubinsky (2003, p. 326) define customer value as ‘a consumer’s perception of the net benefits gained in exchange for the costs incurred in obtaining the desired benefits’. In tourism studies, customer value is seen ‘when the perceived benefits of a product/service exceed the perceived costs.’ (Pechlaner et al., 2002, p. 18). On the other hand, Woodall (2003) considered the concept of customer value as any demand-side, personal perception of advantage resulting from a customer’s association with an organization’s offering. As noted by Paananen and Seppänen (2013), existing definitions partially overlap, reinforcing many interpretations.

Aiming to synthesize this diverse literature, Leroi-Werelds, Streukens, Brady, and Swinnen (2014) listed key insights of the concept of value. Customer value is perceived by the customer and not by the supplier. In other words, customer value is personal where each customer perceives value based upon personal needs, desires,
knowledge, previous experiences, and financial support. Value is perceived by circumstances such as time frame and location. Also, customer value requires interaction between the customer and the product or service; customer value is not created and delivered by the suppliers, it arises during consumption or in use situations.

The concept of customer value can sometimes be confused with the concepts of quality and satisfaction. Gallarza, Gil-Saura, and Holbrook (2011) reviewed these concepts by comparing them in pairs and developed a conceptual framework as an attempt to delimit them (Figure 2.4). Whereas value and quality are multi-dimensional, the former is dual-stimulus (positive and negative components) and the latter is single-stimulus (major positive ‘get’ component of value). In turn, while satisfaction is only assessed in a post consumption situation, value can be perceived to be gained pre- or post-use. Further, it is common to consider value as a predecessor of satisfaction, rather than satisfaction as an antecedent of value (Caruana, Money, & Berthon, 2000; Gallarza et al., 2011; Gordon & Levesque, 2000). It therefore appears, as raised by Parasuraman (1997) and reinforced by the discussion proposed by Gallarza et al. (2011), that more empirical examination is required to clarify the overlaps among the concepts of quality, satisfaction and value.

Figure 2.4 – Conceptual delimitation quality, satisfaction and value
Due to this multifaceted conceptualization, different scholars have proposed different models for measuring customer value. Zeithaml (1988) Dodds, Monroe, and Grewal (1991), Sheth et al. (1991), Gale (1994), Woodruff and Gardial (1996), Holbrook (1999) have developed measurement approaches that are related to their perspective towards the concept of customer value. There are one-dimensional and multi-dimensional models to assess customer value.

Recognized as for their simplicity and ease of implementation (Lin, Sher, & Shih, 2005), one-dimensional methods (Dodds et al., 1991; Zeithaml, 1988) perceive value as ‘a single overall concept that can be measured by a self-reported item (or a set of items) that evaluates the customer’s perception of value’ (Sánchez-Fernández & Iniesta-Bonillo, 2007). However, these models are criticised for their inability to capture the complexity of customer value through a single dimension (Ruiz, Gremler, Washburn, & Carrión, 2008; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001).

Many studies have assessed the use of one-dimensional methods in favour of multi-dimensional approaches. For example, Gale (1994); Holbrook (1999); Sheth et al. (1991); Woodruff and Gardial (1996) have evolved models composed of several interrelated component or dimensions. For instance, Sheth et al. (1991) propose five types of values such as functional value, social value, emotional value, epistemic value and conditional value; Holbrook (1994) presents a three-dimensional model of value, i.e. intrinsic/extrinsic, self-oriented/other-oriented and active/passive. These dimensions embrace eight kinds of value: efficiency, excellence (quality), politics (success), esteem, play, aesthetics, morality and spiritually. In the case of Woodruff and Gardial (1996), there is no intent to pre-determine different types of value but instead, to derive them from further investigation. These studies were designed in the 1990s and have been applied to different contexts since then.

In Gale’s model (1994), the basic premise is that customer value is a trade-off between a weighted quality score (market-perceived quality) and a weighted price score (market-perceived price). While market-perceived quality is based on key characteristics (attributes) of the product, market-perceived price is a combination of key cost that affects the customer decision (such as purchase price, resale price, and
finance rates). Gale’s model (1994) presents a value measurement approach where the types of value intended to be measured do not have to be pre-determined. Both market-perceived quality and market-perceived price attributes originate from the customer.

On the other hand, the model developed by Holbrook (1999) is recognized as ‘the most comprehensive approach to the value construct because it captures more potential sources of value than do other conceptualisations’ (Sánchez-Fernández et al., 2009, p. 97). Holbrook’s model presents a framework that compromises three underlying dimensions: extrinsic value x intrinsic value; self-oriented value x other-oriented value; and, active value x reactive value. Based on these three dimensions, Holbrook (1999) proposes a matrix comprehending eight types of customer value: efficiency (O/I, convenience), play (fun), excellence (quality), aesthetics (beauty), status (success, impression, management), ethics (justice, virtue, morality), esteem (reputation, materialism, possessions), and, spirituality (faith, ecstasy, sacredness).

As recognized by Holbrook (1999), due to its comprehensive and pre-determined catalogue of values, the delimitation between them is problematic and the distinction between them can often be blurred. Some authors adapted Holbrook’s value typology to provide a better understanding and consequently more accurate measurement scales (Bourdeau, Chebat, & Couturier, 2002; Gallarza & Gil-Saura, 2006; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001).

From a different perspective, Woodruff and Gardial (1996) argue that rather than simply focusing on attributes, organisations might seek to understand how and why customers prefer certain products attributes. Thus, value judgments from the customers arise from the relationship between the product (and its attributes), the use situation (its consequences) and the user (its values, goals). Based on this premise, Woodruff and Gardial (1996) developed the customer value hierarchy (Figure 2.5).
In Figure 2.5, “Attributes” relate to the most concrete level (where the customer defines the product in terms of its attributes), while “Consequences” relate to the customers’ more subjective analysis that result from the use of the product (i.e. what the product does for the user and its desired and undesirable outcomes). At the top, “Desired End-States” represents the most abstract level and consists of the customer’s core values, purpose and goals. While there is a gap in knowledge about the linkage between these levels (Desired End-States, Consequences and Attributes), Woodruff and Gardial’s (1996) model is useful to measure the customer’s value for a high involvement product (Leroi-Werelds et al., 2014).

Excluding the uni-dimensional approach to value (due to its inability to cover the complexity of value), among three main multi-dimensional approaches to measure customer value (see e.g. Gale, 1994, Holbrook, 1999, Woodruff and Gardial, 1996), the most appropriate method to be applied for this research is Woodruff and Gardial’s model (1996). This is because Woodruff and Gardial (1996) do not pre-determine the types of value as can be found in other approaches. Instead, they emerge from qualitative interviews (in-depth interviews of focus groups) with customers. Secondly, Woodruff and Gardial’s (1996) model goes further into the ‘why and what’ the customers value rather than only focusing on the attributes (Lusch & Vargo, 2006). Finally, as mentioned previously, their model can be applied to high involvement product, such as tourism product (Leroi-Werelds et al., 2014).
Due to this thesis’s proposed focus (customer value) and the heterogeneity of the tourism market - different motivations, markets and sub-markets (Albayrak and Caber, 2016; Benur & Bramwell, 2015; Chen & Chen, 2015; Hennigs & Hallmann, 2015; Hvenegaard, 2002; Jenkins & Jones, 2001; Meisel-Lusby & Cottrell, 2008; Melián-González, Moreno-Gil, & Araña, 2011; Oh, Assaf, & Baloglu, 2014; Tassiopoulos & Haydam, 2008; Toften, 2013); this research is applied in the context of a niche market, SCUBA diving tourism. There are three main reasons that support this approach. Firstly, SCUBA diving tourism is an important market for coastal tropical destinations whose waters provide an important resource for developing countries (Lew, 2013; World Bank, 2015). Secondly, when effectively managed, SCUBA diving tourism has potential for marine conservation (Dixon & Scura, 1993). Thirdly, understanding the dimensions of diving experience will ultimately lead to a more successful and sustainable dive industry (Dearden, Bennett, & Rollins, 2006). SCUBA diving tourism is discussed in further detail in Section 2.3.

2.3 – SCUBA diving as a tourism niche

Recreational SCUBA diving is one of the six major types of diving, along with technical, commercial, public safety, scientific and military diving. The term recreational indicates that ‘having fun’ is the main purpose of this type of diving (PADI, 2008). Recreational diving is limited to diving no deeper than 40 meters and within the no stop limits defined by recognised dive tables (or dive computers). Ascending and descending underwater require conservative protocols due to changes on the ambient pressure and its impacts in the human body (Wienke, 1991). These rules are important for the safety for the SCUBA diving system: divers, dive operators and training organisations.

Dive training for recreational SCUBA diving can be undertaken through different training organisations recognised worldwide such as the Professional Association of Diving Instructors (PADI), SCUBA Schools International (SSI), the ‘Confédération Mondiale des Activités Subaquatiques’ – World Underwater Federation (CMAS), the

\[\text{1 SCUBA is the acronym of self-contained underwater breathing apparatus. It was developed by Jacques-Yves Cousteau and Emile Gagnan in the invention of the ‘Aqua Lung’ in 1943.}\]
National Association of Underwater Instructors (NAUI) and SCUBA Diving International (SDI). These international organisations follow different diving standards and nomenclatures. Aiming to establishing a series of minimum specifications for safety practice and the provision of service, the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) developed a series of standards for recreational SCUBA diving (European Committee for Standardisation, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c, 2003d, 2004) (Table 5). Lately, these standards have been adopted fully worldwide by the International Organization for Standardization – ISO (ISO 24801-1:2007, ISO 24801-2:2007, ISO 24801-3:2007, ISO 24802-1:2007, ISO 24802-2:2007). In countries such as Portugal, these standards have been incorporated into national law (República Portuguesa, 2007). However, no standards yet exist for a wide variety of specialist dive training such as night diving, wreck diving, cave diving, drift diving and altitude diving.

Table 2.5 – SCUBA diving levels and competencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Competencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supervised diver</td>
<td>dive to a recommended maximum depth of 12 m under the direct supervision of a dive leader; dive in groups of up to four level one SCUBA divers per dive leader provided the dive leader is capable of establishing physical contact with all level one SCUBA divers at any point during the dive; make dives which do not require in-water decompression stops; dive only when appropriate support is available at the surface; dive under conditions that are equal or better than the conditions where they were trained.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EN 14153-1:2003</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISO 24801-1:2007</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomous diver</td>
<td>maximum depth of 20 m with other SCUBA divers of the same level; make dives, which do not require in-water decompression stops; dive only when appropriate support is available at the surface; dive under conditions that are equal or better than the conditions where they were trained.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EN 14153-2:2003</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISO 24801-2:2007</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dive leader</td>
<td>conduct any specialized recreational SCUBA diving activities for which they have received appropriate training; plan and execute emergency procedures appropriate for the diving environment and activities; may help to control students and improve safety but may not assess or teach any skills or knowledge to students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EN 14153-3:2003</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISO 24801-3:2007</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor level one</td>
<td>teach and assess students up to level one in accordance with EN 14153-1 on their theoretical knowledge; teach and assess students up to level one in accordance with EN 14153-1 in confined water.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EN 14413-1:2004</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISO 24802-1:2007</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There is a “career” or expertise development path in SCUBA diving (shown in Table 2.5) due to the need for further training after acquiring a certain level of skill. Divers necessarily start as a supervised diver and may progress more advanced levels, becoming a dive master, an instructor or remaining as a supervised diver. In order to increase their dive competency, divers may record the number of dives executed (logged dives), seek further and specialised training; and if very serious, may purchase (rather than rent) their own specialised (and expensive) diving gear. Along their career, divers can experience different kinds of underwater environment, such as a drift dive, wreck dive, cave dive, night dive, drift dive or diving with animals (e.g. sharks, whales, dolphins and sunfish). Further, different levels of experience will influence the decision-making of divers with respect to their choice of destination to dive (Dearden et al., 2006; Garrod, 2008; Lew, 2013; Pabel & Coghlan, 2011). This is discussed in more detail below.

The desire to dive in locations away from the diver’s home has created one of the fastest growing, multi-billion-dollar niches in recreational sport (Ong & Musa, 2011). SCUBA diving tourism is a market niche, which falls under special interest tourism (SIT). In contrast to general interest tourism (GIT) where the destination and its components provide the major motivation for a travel, special interest tourists have a specific interest-based motivation; in this case, the recreational SCUBA diving activity.

SCUBA diving tourism is defined as ‘SCUBA diving undertaken on a trip away from a person’s local area. Travel may be designed especially for SCUBA diving, or a subsequent decision to dive may be made at the destination’ (Dimmock & Cummins, 2013, p. 14). From a broad perspective, Garrod and Gössling (2008, p. 12) argue that ‘diving tourism involves individuals travelling from their usual place at least one night
away, and actively participating in one or more diving activities, such as SCUBA diving, snorkelling, snuba² or the use of rebreathing apparatus’.

These two abovementioned definitions present two distinct perspectives: the former focuses on SCUBA divers or those that undertake a SCUBA diving at a destination whilst the latter covers a broad range of underwater activities (such as snorkelling, snuba and rebreathing apparatus). The issue with the second definition is that it may include almost every person that takes a leisure holiday to a tropical destination and engages in such activities as snorkelling. The first definition is more relevant to the proposed research and fits into the idea of SIT (Brotherton & Himmetoglu, 1997).

Brotherton and Himmetoglu (1997) view SCUBA diving tourism as a SIT; Ong and Musa (2011) argue that SCUBA diving tourists are mainly motivated by intrinsic factors derived from their interest in SCUBA diving. In other words, the destination by itself is no longer the primary focus for this type of tourist but instead, the fact that the tourist is going to dive in a particular place. There are other characteristics harboured by SCUBA diving tourists that fit into the special interest tourists. For example, they constitute a minority of the travelling population; view alternative destinations as the context for the pursuit of their special interest. They are usually from middle to upper-middle socio-economic groups; tend to be experienced; and are adventurous, allocentric, types of people who do not like to follow the majority (Dimmock & Musa, 2015; Edney, 2012; Garrod, 2008; Plessis & Saayman, 2017; K. R. Smith, Scarpaci, Scarr, & Otway, 2014)

Further, SCUBA diving tourists are predominantly male, well-educated, have well-paid jobs earning higher than average incomes educated (Edney, 2012; Garrod, 2008; Tabata, 1992; Thapa, Graefe, & Meyer, 2005) and spend at least three times more than general tourists (Dearden et al., 2006). It is estimated there are at least 28 million active divers globally; one-third of these divers are Europeans, and many are Americans. Because the most popular dive sites are located in the tropical zone, frequently international travel is linked to the practice of SCUBA diving (Garrod & Gössling, 2008; Lew, 2013). According to the UNWTO (2001), one in three divers

— Snuba is a form of surface-supplied diving in which an underwater breathing system is used mix of snorkel and SCUBA (SNUBA, 2015).
Queiroz Neto, A. – Investigating competitiveness through customer value in SCUBA diving tourism

regularly takes an overseas diving holiday. However, the number of those who practice SCUBA diving tourism is not known. There is a consensus that among SCUBA divers there are different types of diving experiences (Table 5) that influence their destination choice (Garrod & Gössling, 2008; Lew, 2013; Pabel & Coghlan, 2011).

Dearden et al. (2006), Pabel and Coghlan (2011) and Sorice, Oh, and Ditton (2009) advance the concept of specialisation in diving (Bryan, 1977). While the former study implemented a multi-dimensional approach, the latter employed a single self-classification approach to segment divers into levels of specialisation. In turn, Lew (2013) divided divers in warm-or cold-water divers and salt or fresh water divers. In addition to the environmental characteristics of diving, divers can be segmented by their specialty, e.g. night diving; cave diving; wreck diving; high altitude diving, shark or predator diving; live-aboard diving; muck diving; and free, snuba and SCUBA-doo diving. According to Lew (2013), some of these types of specialty divers may blur along the continuum of the diver’s career. Edney (2012) sought to segment wreck divers who visited Chuuk Lagoon (Micronesia) using a combination of three variables related to diving experience: number of dives logged, number of years diving and their highest certification level. In her study, it was possible to confirm, based on recognition of the risks involved in the activity, that wreck divers are well-experienced divers (90% with more than 100 dives logged). Hence, the nuances among the divers might be appropriate to investigate if sub-segments change their value or the order of importance of the attributes they considerate to assess the competitiveness of a SCUBA diving tourism destination.

Alternatively, it is important to recognise that there is another well-implemented approach to segment tourist in particular niches, the travel career pattern (TCP) (Getz (Getz & McConnell, 2011; Li, Pearce, & Zhou, 2015; Panchal & Pearce, 2011; Paris & Teye, 2010; Pearce, 1985; Pearce & Lee, 2005). Initially defined as the travel career ladder (Pearce & Caltabiano, 1983) and refuted by Ryan (1998), TCP aims to measure the motivational pattern across different levels of travel experience. According to Pearce and Lee (2005) and Woodside and Jacobs (1985), different levels of travel experience differ according to the motivational elements to travel. While members of

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3 SCUBAdoo is a tour in which the passengers will use the personal submarine. The passenger’s head goes inside a roomy air bubble, which allows enjoying the underwater world. (SCUBAdoo, 2015)
the highly experienced travel group focus on ‘self-development through host-site involvement’, lesser-experienced tourists focus on ‘stimulation, personal development, self-actualization, security, nostalgia, romance, and recognition motivational elements’. Despite the importance and implications of the TCP in tourism studies, this approach has not yet been applied to SCUBA diving tourism.

Almost any underwater location can be a SCUBA diving spot. Although there are dive sites located in cold-water locations (i.e. temperate and polar regions), the most popular SCUBA diving destinations are found in warm waters which host the greatest diversity of fish and marine life (Lew, 2013). Also, most coral reefs can be found in the Tropical Zone. Divetime.com (a website that provides detailed information about dive sites around the world (Table 2.6) lists 13,144 SCUBA diving sites around the world data base (Divetime.com, 2014).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Number of dive sites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>2693</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>2473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania and Pacific</td>
<td>2379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>1826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>1440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean</td>
<td>1332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South and Central America</td>
<td>825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antarctica</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>13144</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Divetime.com (2014)

Lew (2013) highlighted that Divetime.com’s SCUBA diving list presents a significant over-representation of sites in Europe and North America (Figure 2.6). This bias probably occurred because users are most likely European or US-based divers who speak English and have greater access to the Internet than other countries (Lew, 2013).
Although Divetime.com’s list is biased, it is still considered one of the best publicly available websites on the topic worldwide and reflects the reach and spread of the SCUBA diving industry globally. It shows there are many sites that are not part of the mainstream tourism market. Also, it is imperative to highlight that the Tropical Zone is for the most part home to developing countries (World Bank, 2015). Furthermore, from a market perspective, there are a significant number of SCUBA diving destinations with great potential missing the opportunity to become part of this relevant market.

For instance, Brazil is a notable example of a country that presents great potential to become an international SCUBA diving destination. The country has favourable geographical features for diving activities with about 8,500 km of coastline, 35,000 km of inland waterways, and 9,260 km of freshwater reservoirs, lakes and lagoons in addition to ocean currents and a favourable climate (Ministério do Turismo do Brasil, 2005). However, in the list of top 50 dive sites presented by Lew (2013) and in the Encyclopaedia of Recreational Diving (PADI, 2008), there is no mention of any dive site in Brazil. Furthermore, in the latter case, there is no mention of any dive destination in South America. Hence, there is a substantial number of potential diving destination missing the opportunity to host SCUBA diving tourism as a form of development. Therefore, the results of this thesis might help managers in those
destinations to understand the competitiveness level of their SCUBA diving destinations.

Regarding the literature on SCUBA diving tourism, there are several references covering different aspects of the diving activity: tourism motivations, SCUBA development and environmental and social impacts of the diving activity (Cater, 2008b, 2008a; Cater & Cater, 2007; Chung, Au, & Qiu, 2013; Giglio, Luiz, & Schiavetti, 2015; Queiroz Neto, 2012; Smith, Scarpaci, Scarr, & Otway, 2014; Sorice, Oh, & Ditton, 2007; Stolk, Markwell, & Jenkins, 2007; Terrón-Sigler, León-Muez, Peñalver-Duque, & Torre, 2016; Van der Merwe, Slabbert, & Saayman, 2011; Worachananant, Carter, Hockings, & Reopanichkul, 2008; Pegas, Castley, & Queiroz Neto, 2018). The abovementioned references were not critically analysed in this thesis because they stand beyond the proposed scope of this thesis (SCUBA diving tourists’ perceptions of destination competitiveness attributes).

2.4 – Conceptual framework

As discussed above, there is a lack of reliable tools to support a destination’s understanding how competitive it can be through the eyes of the tourists who visit that destination (using attributes derived from customer value). As a consequence, in a SCUBA diving tourism context, there are many potential destinations missing the opportunity to host SCUBA diving tourism, thereby missing out on local development. On this basis, the concept of destination competitiveness should be extended to incorporate a customer value perspective, considering the nuances among levels of travel career and experience of tourists in the SCUBA diving tourism niche market. Based on this need, the following research framework was applied (Figure 2.7).
2.5 – References

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CHAPTER 3 – THE PRAGMATIC PARADIGM IN DESTINATION COMPETITIVENESS STUDIES: THE CASE OF SCUBA DIVING TOURISM NICHE

The previous chapter presented the literature review and theoretical framework that supported this thesis. It delivered the current state of the knowledge of three main topics of this study: destination competitiveness, customer value and SCUBA diving tourism niche. It identified the knowledge gaps that are then addressed in Chapters 3, 4, 5 and 6.

Following the structure defined for this thesis (Figure 3.1), the present chapter reflects on the experience of investigating destination competitiveness through the perspective of demand. It explains in detail the methodological approach implemented in this study. The chapter shows how the pragmatic paradigm shaped the research design and therefore how the data was collected and analysed.
This chapter consists of the manuscript version of a book chapter co-authored with my three supervisors. The original article is incorporated into the current thesis, with minor adaption to formatting as required by Griffith University Guidelines and Policy. The bibliographic details of the book chapter, including all authors, are:


My contribution to the paper involved: initial concept, compilation of literature review, research design, preparation of the manuscript, table and figures and submission to the book editors.

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(Signed) ____________________________ (Date) _____________
Noel Scott

(Signed) ____________________________ (Date) _____________
Kay Dimmock
This chapter reflects on the experience of investigating destination competitiveness through the perspective of demand, rather than the traditional supply viewpoint. Guided by a pragmatic paradigm, the chapter showed how the research study was designed, and data was collected and analysed. The study applied a mixed-method approach with two sequential stages: first semi-structured interviews followed by an online survey. The interview stage used deductive and inductive approaches to investigate the attributes of a hypothetical successful SCUBA diving destination that tourists value. An online survey was adopted to study the importance of these destination attributes across different segments of the SCUBA diving market. Issues faced throughout the two stages of the study are discussed to provide tourism and hospitality scholars with insight into the implementation of research within a pragmatic paradigm.

Keywords: pragmatism, mixed method, destination competitiveness, demand, SCUBA diving tourism

3.1 Introduction

A paradigm provides an intellectual framework that can guide a scientific investigation. A paradigm is a set of beliefs that orientates a researcher towards what should be studied, how research should be designed and how results should be interpreted (Bryman, 1988). This paper discussed how the pragmatic paradigm shaped an investigation of destination competitiveness and customer value in a tourism niche market. It describes the implementation of a mixed-method approach consisting of two sequential stages: first semi-structured interviews and then an online survey. The interviews provided a view of SCUBA diving tourists' thoughts on what makes a successful SCUBA diving destination. The quantitative survey evaluated differences in the perceptions of different groups of SCUBA diving tourists about what makes a successful SCUBA diving destination.
CHAPTER 4 – ATTRIBUTES, CONSEQUENCES AND DESIRED END-STATES OF A SUCCESSFUL SCUBA DIVING DESTINATION

The previous chapter presented the methodological approach and research design developed in this thesis. It described in details the methodological procedures implemented within the two stages of this study.

Following the structure defined for this thesis (Figure 4.1), the present chapter investigates the attributes of a successful SCUBA diving destination from the point of view of SCUBA diving tourists (Research question one). Moreover, this manuscript also covers the consequences and desired end-states of a successful SCUBA diving destination. The results reveal a comprehensive picture of customer value in SCUBA diving tourism with eighty-four destination attributes, six consequences and seven desired end-states for a successful SCUBA diving destination.

Figure 4.1 – Structure of the thesis
Original for the study
This chapter presents the literature review, methodology, data collection, data analysis and results and findings regarding research question one – RQ1. The original manuscript is incorporated into the current thesis, with minor adaption to formatting as required by Griffith University Guidelines and Policy. The bibliographic details of the paper, including all authors, are:


My contribution to the paper involved: initial concept, compilation of literature review, methodology design, data collection, data analysis, preparation of the manuscript, table and figures and submission to the editors.

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Gui Lohmann

(Signed) _________________________________   (Date) _____________
Kay Dimmock
This study investigated the attributes, consequences and desired end-states of a successful SCUBA diving destination from the point of view of SCUBA diving tourists. It followed a similar approach implemented by Crouch and Ritchie (1999) and based on the customer value determination process. Semi-structured interviews (n=34) were conducted in four popular SCUBA diving destinations: Phuket and Koh Tao in Thailand, and Gold Coast and Cairns in Australia. The results presented a comprehensive picture of eighty-four destination attributes, six consequences and seven desired end-states for a successful SCUBA diving destination. This paper contributed academically by applying the customer value determination process in a tourism product. The managerial contribution for this study can help stakeholders to better understand what tourists value in a successful SCUBA diving destination.
CHAPTER 5 – RETHINKING COMPETITIVENESS: IMPORTANT ATTRIBUTES FOR A SUCCESSFUL SCUBA DIVING DESTINATION

The previous chapter addressed question one – RQ1. The results revealed eighty-four destination competitiveness attributes.

Following the structure defined for this thesis (Figure 5.1), the current chapter investigates the relative importance of 52 destination competitiveness attributes (RQ2). The 84 destination attributes obtained in the first stage were renamed and reduced to 52 attributes based on number of mentions by the interviewees (Appendix 10). Further, this study also investigates to what extent level of experience as a SCUBA diver influences the importance given to destination competitiveness attributes (RQ4). The results identified diving operations is the most important factor of destination competitiveness and that divers with different levels of experience value differently six of the ten destination competitiveness factors.
This chapter presents the literature review, methodology, data collection, data analysis, results and findings regarding research questions two (RQ2) and four (RQ4). The original manuscript is incorporated into the current thesis, with minor adaption to formatting as required by Griffith University Guidelines and Policy. The bibliographic details of the paper, including all authors, are:


My contribution to the paper involved: initial concept, compilation of literature review, data collection, data analysis, preparation of the manuscript, table and figures and submission to the editors.

(Signed) _________________________________   (Date) _____________
Ambrozio Correa de Queiroz Neto

(Signed) _________________________________   (Date) _____________
Gui Lohmann

(Signed) _________________________________   (Date) _____________
Noel Scott

(Signed) _________________________________   (Date) _____________
Kay Dimmock
Queiroz Neto, A. – Investigating competitiveness through customer value in SCUBA diving tourism

Rethinking competitiveness: important attributes for a successful SCUBA diving destination

Authors: Ambrozio Queiroz Neto – Griffith University/ CEFET/RJ – Nova Friburgo
Gui Lohmann – Griffith University
Noel Scott – Griffith University
Kay Dimmock – Southern Cross University

Abstract

Competitive advantage arises from a superior value that, rather than delivered by suppliers, is co-created by tourists. Using a set of destination competitiveness attributes, this study investigates the importance of destination competitiveness attributes in a 'hypothetical successful SCUBA diving destination' from the perspective of SCUBA diving tourists. Further, this study also investigates to what extent level of experience as a SCUBA diver influences the importance given to destination competitiveness attributes. An online survey (n=712) identified ten underlying factors (groups of attributes): diving operations, risk perception, diving conditions, price, destination management, big wildlife encounters, diving training, technical diving, general tourist attraction and visa policy. Furthermore, this research established that the attributes related to diving operations are the most important and that divers with different levels of experience value differently six of the ten destination competitiveness factors. This research presents evidence that destination competitiveness may be explored through unique demands in tourism niches (and within niches) rather than generally for a destination.

Keywords: destination competitiveness, customer value, SCUBA diving tourism, diving experience, niche.

5.1 - Introduction

Competitive advantage arises from superior customer value delivered to tourists (Pechlaner, Smeral, & Matzier, 2002) which is co-created by customers in use, rather than delivered by suppliers (Woodruff, 1997). Despite this, tourism destination competitiveness models are essentially derived from a suppliers’ perspective, even those that consider demand an important element (Andrades-Caldito, Sánchez-Rivero, & Pulido-Fernández, 2014; Dwyer & Kim, 2003; Pabel & Coghlan, 2011; Pansiri, 2014). This indicates a gap in tourism competitiveness studies (Queiroz Neto, Lohmann & Scott, 2016), i.e., the absence of destination competitiveness models with attributes derived from demand. In addition, most tourism competitiveness models published in the literature are based on a generic destination, disregarding the reality...
CHAPTER 6 – DESTINATION COMPETITIVENESS: HOW DOES TRAVEL EXPERIENCE INFLUENCE CHOICE?

The previous chapter addressed research questions two (RQ2) and four (RQ4). The results revealed that diving operations is the most important factor of destination competitiveness and that divers with different levels of experience value differently six of the ten destination competitiveness factors.

Following the structure defined for this thesis (Figure 6.1), the current chapter investigates the extent to which the level of travel experience influences the importance given to destination competitiveness attributes in a hypothetical SCUBA diving destination (RQ3). The results revealed three groups with different levels of travel experience. Further, significant differences were apparent in seven of ten destination competitiveness factors among the three groups.

This chapter presents the literature review, methodology, data collection, data analysis, results and findings regarding research question three - RQ3. The original
manuscript is incorporated into the current thesis, with minor adaption to formatting as required by Griffith University Guidelines and Policy. The bibliographic details of the paper, including all authors, are:


My contribution to the paper involved: initial concept, compilation of literature review, methodology design, data collection, data analysis, preparation of the manuscript, table and figures and submission to the editors.

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Destination competitiveness: how does travel experience influence choice?

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Abstract
Traditionally, previous studies regard destination competitiveness as a static concept. More recent studies adopting a demand perspective consider competitiveness to be dynamic, with destination competitiveness varying according to tourism niche. Competitiveness also varies within tourist segments in the same niche. The authors apply the concept of travel experience to better understand destination competitiveness. Using the SCUBA diving tourism niche, the authors investigate the extent to which tourists' level of travel experience influences the importance they give to destination competitiveness attributes in a hypothetical SCUBA diving destination.

Cluster analysis of results from an online survey (n=712) revealed three groups with different levels of travel experience. Significant differences among the three groups were apparent in seven of ten destination competitiveness factors. The findings demonstrate the dynamism of destination competitiveness when measured from the demand perspective. Results also demonstrate that travel experience is an appropriate characteristic for classifying tourists regarding destination competitiveness attributes.

Keywords: destination competitiveness, demand, travel experience, SCUBA diving tourism

6.1 - Introduction
While destination competitiveness has been studied mainly from a supplier's perspective, some recent studies have considered competitiveness from the demand viewpoint (Andrades-Caldito, Sánchez-Rivero, & Pulido-Fernández, 2014; Pabel & Coghlan, 2011). Research from the demand perspective studies competitiveness changes over time (Li, Pearce, & Zhou, 2015; March, 2000; Pearce & Lee, 2005). However, apart from Pabel and Coghlan (2011), researchers have considered only a static view in destination competitiveness studies. Investigating the importance of destination competitiveness attributes in a tourism niche and sub-niches offers a comprehensive approach to framing and ranking tourism destinations.
CHAPTER 7 – DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The preceding four chapters cover the methodological approaches, data collection, data analysis, and results for the four research questions proposed. Following the structure defined for this thesis (Figure 7.1), the current chapter summarises the findings for each research question, the theoretical and practical contributions of this thesis. The chapter will conclude with an outline of the limitations and directions for future research.

![Figure 7.1 – Structure of the thesis](image)

Destination competitiveness has been studied since Crouch and Ritchie (1993) and Poon (1993). Subsequent research into destination competitiveness gave attention...
largely to destination attributes which were derived from a suppliers’ perspective. This left the demand side poorly understood (see Chapter 2). This lack of understanding is of concern when considering that destination attributes are co-created by tourists during their travel experience rather than purely delivered by suppliers (Pechlaner, Smeral, & Matzier, 2002).

This thesis addressed knowledge gaps regarding the investigation of destination competitiveness from a demand perspective in a popular tourism niche. The research addressed four research questions: (1) What are the destination attributes SCUBA diving tourists value in a successful SCUBA diving destination?; (2) From the perspective of SCUBA diving tourists, what is the relative importance of each destination’s competitiveness attributes?; (3) How do SCUBA diving tourists with different travel experience levels differ in the importance given to destination competitiveness attributes?; and (4) How do SCUBA diving tourists with different diving experience levels differ in the importance given to destination competitiveness attributes?

Overall, the results from the data demonstrate that destination competitiveness is a relative and dynamic concept. As shown in Chapters [4, 5 and 6], the attributes required for a SCUBA diving destination vary according to the tourist. Overall, the results presented in this thesis support the importance of studying destination competitiveness from the demand perspective (as presented in Chapters 5 and 6). These results apply not only to a tourism niche (in this study, SDT) but also to the nuances within a niche (i.e. sub-niches according to the level of diving and travel experience). Therefore, to improve market position (Hassan, 2000), destination competitiveness should be measured among destinations that compete in the same niche, considering sub-niches at the same time.

7.1 – What are the destination attributes SCUBA diving tourists value in a successful SCUBA diving destination?

In the Literature Review (Chapter 2), a knowledge gap was identified regarding destination attributes derived from the demand side. The interviews conducted with 34 SCUBA diving tourists identified a total of 84 destination attributes for a successful SCUBA diving destination.
The results for RQ1 (Chapter 4) showed that the attributes of a successful SCUBA diving destination depend primarily on the motivation of the tourist. Almost half (46%) of the destination attributes obtained in the data were based on the SCUBA diving activities, namely, diving safety (e.g. professional operations, reliable boats) diving services (e.g. general service quality, information given by dive master, good dive master, rental equipment available), environmental conditions (e.g. good underwater visibility, unpolluted dive sites), fauna (e.g. variety of marine life, manta rays, whales, sharks) and physical attributes (e.g. variety of dive sites, underwater scenery, wreck dive sites). The results indicate no single set of destination competitiveness attributes can be applied to all destinations as previously advocated by Dwyer and Kim (2003). Therefore, the approach implemented in this study provides potential to be applied in different tourism niches (e.g. ski tourism, wine tourism, cruise ship tourism, bird-watching, golf tourism, cycling tourism). Future studies may reproduce the steps developed in this study to investigate what different tourists in different tourism niches value.

Furthermore, it was clear that different types of SCUBA diving tourists value different destination attributes for a successful destination. For example, easy diving conditions and challenging diving conditions are considered to be valuable destination attributes for inexperienced SCUBA divers compared to experienced divers. Successful is a relative concept at the same time as value is individual (Leroi-Werelds, Streukens, Brady, & Swinnen, 2014).

Considering that individuals interpret value differently, the methodological approach to measure customer value requires further development (Woodruff, 1997; Woodruff & Gardial, 1996). The customer value determination process (Woodruff & Gardial, 1997) suggests two methods to identify the attributes of a product’s value in use situations, i.e., focus groups and face-to-face interviews. The practical experience and results obtained in this research demonstrated that the use of focus groups is not suitable to identify the complexity and richness of the destination attributes which are valued by different types of tourists in a successful tourism destination. Therefore, only face-to-face interviews should be considered to identify the destination attributes of a successful tourism experience.
7.2 – From the perspective of SCUBA diving tourists, what is the relative importance of each destination competitiveness attributes?

The Literature Review (Chapter 2) showed the relevance of measuring the relative importance of each destination competitiveness attribute as well as ranking their importance (Crouch, 2011; Dwyer, Mellor, Livaic, Edwards, & Kim, 2004).

Among the 52 destination competitiveness attributes implemented in the second stage of this research, the most important were related to diving operations and diving conditions such as professional operations (6.38), the variety and abundance of marine life (6.25), the quality and environmental conditions of the dive sites (6.15), environmental commitment of the dive operator (6.09) and the assistance of friendly staff and a casual atmosphere (6.09). On the other hand, the least important attributes were opportunity to dive in a cave (3.50), a destination’s popularity/fame as a diving destination (3.50), the availability of adventure activities (3.47), the opportunity to dive on an artificial reef (3.40) and the availability of entertainment activities and facilities (2.98) (Chapter 5 – Table 4).

With respect to the relative importance of the groups of destination attributes obtained through the principal components analysis (Chapter 5 – Table 5), the results indicated that diving operations and risk perception were cited as the most important factors for a successful SCUBA diving destination. General tourist attractions and visa policy were considered to be the least important. Furthermore, because visa policy is only applicable to international trips, it can be assumed that technical diving and general tourist attractions were the least important factors regarding domestic trips. Distinct from other studies that investigated destination competitiveness (Andrades-Caldito, Sánchez-Rivero, & Pulido-Fernández, 2014; Crouch, 2011; Hong, 2009; Pabel & Coghlan, 2011; Wilde, Cox, Kelly, & Harrison, 2017), this study was the first to demonstrate that factors which are not related to core attractions or that tourism services were most important.
7.3 – How do SCUBA diving tourists with different travel experience levels differ in the importance given to destination competitiveness attributes?

Travel experience forms the basis of the concept of travel career approach (Filep & Greenacre, 2007; Paris & Teye, 2010; Pearce & Lee, 2005). Pearce (1985) argued that tourists change their motivation to travel once they gain more experience as a tourist. At this point, the classification of tourist according to their level of travel experience has been applied primarily using travel motives. This research question seeks to investigate the extent to which the level of travel experience influences the importance given to destination competitiveness factors for a successful SCUBA diving destination (Chapter 6).

The methodological approach to measuring travel experience in this study is based on the approach recently developed by Pearce (Li, Pearce, & Zhou, 2015; Panchal & Pearce, 2011). This approach involves doubling the number of international trips plus the number of domestic trips. Cluster analysis was used to determine levels of travel experience. Three groups were identified, namely, low, medium and high travel experience. Among the three groups, statistically significant differences between groups was found for seven out of ten destination competitiveness factors (Figure 7.1): (1) diving operations; (2) risk perception; (3) destination management; (4) price; (5) dive training and service; (6) general tourist attractions; and (7) visa policy. In contrast, no statistical significance was found in (1) diving conditions; (2) big wildlife encounters; and (3) technical diving factors. With the exception of price, all significant factors demonstrated the same trend, namely, that the higher the travel experience, the lower the importance given to the destination competitiveness factors (i.e., diving operations, risk perception, destination management, diving training and service, general tourist attractions and visa policy). Also, the importance given to destination factors by the experience level of each travel group was ranked to identify the important and unimportant factors across different levels of travel experience (Figure 7.2).
These results demonstrate the importance of using travel experience to classify diving tourists. The results obtained showed that the level of travel experience influenced the importance given by the SCUBA diving tourists. However, as explained and suggested in Chapter 6, the methodological approach to travel experience requires enhancement (using more refined variables and weights).

**7.4 – How do SCUBA diving tourists with different diving experience levels differ in the importance given to destination competitiveness attributes?**

The literature on SCUBA diving tourism has revealed that the level of diving experience influences the importance given to a set of destination attributes or to the motivation to travel (Dearden, Bennett, & Rollins, 2006; Pabel & Coghlan, 2011). The results obtained in this study confirm that the level of diving experience also influences the importance given to six out of ten destination competitiveness factors (Chapter 5 – Table 6).
In contrast to previous studies (Deardone et al., 2006; Pabel & Coghlan, 2011; Thapa, Graefe, & Meyer, 2005; Van der Merwe, Slabbert, & Saayman, 2011), diving experience was measured based on the number of dives logged. As discussed in Chapter 5, the method used in this study is more consistent than the use of a composite variables (i.e. level of diving certification and years diving). The results revealed three groups of diving experience levels, i.e., low, medium and high diving experience.

The results showed that a diver’s level of experience influences the importance given to destination competitiveness attributes, i.e., low experience divers valued dive training and service attributes but considered technical diving less important. In contrast, medium and high experience divers valued diving conditions and considered visa policy and technical diving less important while high experience divers valued diving conditions and not visa policy and diving training. As reported above, all groups value diving operations as the most important destination competitiveness factor (Figure 3).
However, it was not possible to assert with any certainty that SCUBA diving tourists change their perspective as they become more experienced. Due to time and funding constrains, this research has not investigated how the same individual changed (or not) through time. However, the results suggest that a respondent's SCUBA diving career level influences his/her travel decision-making.

7.5 – Contributions to academic knowledge

This study contributes to destination competitiveness theory by analysing destination competitiveness from the demand side in a tourism niche. It also contributes to travel experience (travel career approach) and the customer value determination process.

Specific contributions to knowledge in the topic of destination competitiveness included the investigation of destination competitiveness in detail from the perspective of tourists, especially with respect to their perceptions of value. By doing so, this research concludes that destination competitiveness should be considered as a dynamic concept, different from Crouch and Ritchie (1999) and Dwyer and Kim (2003). In other words, rather than use general destination competitiveness attributes, studies should consider a more refined set of destination attributes based on the demand.

This study also reveals that tourists and suppliers differ as to their perceptions of the attributes which make a destination successful. Furthermore, it demonstrated that there were different perspectives even within a market niche (SDT), expressed in terms of the level of diving experience and the level of travel experience. The results obtained demonstrate potential for application in different tourism niches in future studies: e.g. sky tourism, wine tourism, cruise ship tourism, bird-watching, golf tourism, cycling tourism.

The travel experience approach has been applied by measuring tourists' motivations (travel career approach). This thesis demonstrates that the concept of travel experience is also valid to classify tourists according to a set of variables (destination attributes) which are different from travel motives. Therefore, the thesis contributes a new application for this theory (Pearce and Lee, 2005).
Another important contribution is related to the customer value determination process. As noted in chapter 4, the attributes of a tourism product vary with each individual. Therefore, this study concludes that focus group interviews should not be used to investigate the attributes of a successful tourism product. As such, this research established that the face-to-face interview is the most suitable method to gather the customer value of a tourism product.

7.6 – Practical implications

It is clear that SDT brings economic benefits to local communities and, if well managed, it provides incentives to conserve the destinations (Hawkins et al. 1999). Therefore, the results of this thesis provided significant practical contributions for stakeholders in SDTs. The results showed the destination attributes for a successful SCUBA diving destination. Moreover, it showed the importance given to destination attributes by different profiles of SCUBA diving tourists in terms of their level of travel experience and level of diving experience. In addition, the results showed that the approach developed in this thesis has potential to be applied in different tourism niches. Arguing that, destination managers need to take into account that customer value is an important source of competitiveness and that a tourist's perspective is different from that of the manager. Therefore, destination managers need to incorporate the destination attributes that SCUBA diving tourists value in a successful trip in order to improve the competitiveness of their destination. The results showed that diving operations, diving conditions and risk perception are important while general tourist attractions, technical diving, and visa policy were found to be unimportant for a successful SCUBA diving destination. The results also showed that there was a significant difference between how SCUBA diving tourists with different levels of diving or travel experience perceived the importance of destination competitiveness attributes. Therefore, a destination can be more or less competitive depending in the sub-niche (low, medium or high diving experience or low, medium or high travel experience). Awareness of these nuances is essential in this highly competitive market.

Therefore, destination managers have the opportunity to adopt a more refined approach to investigate the current level of competitiveness of their destination.
through tourism niches. This comprehensive approach would help destination managers better understand the strengths and weaknesses of their destination from a tourist perspective. The approach should follow six steps: (1) identify the destination attributes for a successful destination in a particular tourism niche; (2) measure the relative importance of the destination attributes in the tourism niche; (3) measure the relative importance of the destination attributes within tourism niche (subniches); (4) measure the current performance in those particular destination attributes; (5) compare the current performance among competitors in the same niche (and subniches); and (6) preparation of report of strengths and weaknesses.

7.7 – Limitations and directions for future research

Some limitations need to be recognised in the interpretation of the results in this thesis. Firstly, the results cannot be generalised to other tourism niches. Secondly, this study included only certified SCUBA divers and the respondents were from different social, political and environmental backgrounds. Plus, non-certified divers such as tourists doing trial dives or those undertaking SCUBA training were excluded. Thirdly, regarding the questionnaire (Appendix 11) implemented in the second stage (Chapters 5 and 6), a few limitations must be considered: the questionnaire might be inadequate to understand the respondent’s feelings and behaviour; the respondents may interpret each question differently and therefore answer based on their interpretation of the question. For instance: destination attributes, such as ‘professional operations’, ‘environmental commitment of the dive operations’, ‘short distance to dive site’, ‘warm water’, could provide doubtful interpretation. Therefore, it is not possible to assess precisely what variables were misunderstood by the respondents. Nevertheless, future online studies could use technological tools (such as videos or audios) to explain each variable better to avoid doubtful interpretation by the respondents. Lastly, there are three issues which must be considered with respect to the online survey specifically: (1) the survey was distributed only to SCUBA divers who had access to the Internet; (2) because the survey was distributed through the Internet, the interviewer was not present to answer any of the respondents’ doubts regarding the misunderstanding of any question; and (3) Although cross-check questions were implemented in the questionnaire (Appendix 11 - Questions 11 and
12), it was not possible to ascertain whether respondents answered the questionnaire precisely. Future studies regarding SCUBA diving tourism niche, should investigate other non-divers participants such as, trial divers or divers under training and non-diving family members.

As discussed above, this study established the importance of destination attributes for a hypothetical successful SCUBA diving destination from the demand perspective. Although past experiences were considered in the first part of the study, where respondents listed the attributes for the most successful SCUBA diving destination they have visited in the past, no real destination was asked to be considered in the second part of the study. This limitation could provide speculative results. Therefore, further research should be undertaken to measure the current performance of real SCUBA diving tourism destinations (case studies) with the set of attributes and importance obtained in this study. This would enable the performance of destinations engaged in niche tourism sectors to be ranked across different sub-niches. Also, the comparison among other competitors would facilitate a more detailed identification of the strengthness and weaknesses of a destination in a manner which has not been possible using previous approaches. For example, the low importance of the attributes related to general attractions and the importance of attributes related to diving operations. Future studies could also investigate the proposed approach (section 7.6) within other tourism niches (e.g. sky tourism, wine tourism, cruise ship tourism, bird-watching, golf tourism, cycling tourism), or how other individuals’ characteristics (e.g. travel experience, engagement, socio-economic indicators) affect the value given to destination competitive attributes.

Future research should also be undertaken with respect to travel experience, and the variables that define the level of travel experience. Furthermore, the importance (weight) of these variables should be evaluated so as to better define the level of travel experience of tourists.

Lastly, future studies could also use the results obtained in this study to further investigate the topic. Therefore, inferential methods, such as confirmatory factor analysis, regression or structural equation models could be used to compare results and further analyse the subject.
7.8 – Conclusions

This thesis has explored the demand side of destination competitiveness. Methodologically, this thesis followed an approach similar to that implemented by Crouch and Ritchie (1993, 1999) and Crouch (2011) using customer value (Woodruff, 1996) to identify the destination competitiveness attributes according to the demand. This research was conducted in a specific tourism niche (i.e. SDT) rather than conceptually, at a general level. Therefore, this thesis also investigated to what extent tourists’ level of travel experience and level of diving experience influence the importance given to destination competitiveness attributes for a successful SCUBA diving destination. The results obtained were different from previous studies on destination competitiveness (see, e.g., Andrades-Caldito, Sánchez-Rivero, & Pulido-Fernández, 2014; Crouch, 2011; Dwyer, Draćićević, Armski, Mihalič, & Knežević Cvelbar, 2014; Hong, 2009; Pabel & Coghlan, 2011; Wilde, Cox, Kelly, & Harrison, 2017) because: (1) this research was applied into a tourism niche (2) This research used a set of destination attributes derived from the demand (3) This research used a comprehensive list of destination attributes (incorporating items related to the whole destination: e.g. accommodation, restaurants, diving services, visa policy, diving attractions). The outcomes of this study demonstrate that destination competitiveness is a relative and dynamic concept, concluding that attributes of a competitive destination vary across tourism niche and sub-niche.

In conclusion, destination competitiveness should be measured among destinations that compete in the same tourism niche, also taking sub-niches into consideration. The proposed approach might help destination managers improve market position by considering the destination attributes tourists value in a successful destination.

7.9 – References


Queiroz Neto, A. – Investigating competitiveness through customer value in SCUBA diving tourism


Appendix 1 – Griffith University Thesis Policy

Inclusion of papers within the thesis

Overview

This information is not relevant to those candidates enrolled in the PhD by Prior Publication program, 6002 or 6024. PhD by Prior Publication candidates should refer to the program specific thesis formatting information (https://www.griffith.edu.au/higher-degrees-research/current-research-students/candidature/requirements/publishing).

HDR candidates may include one or more papers within the body of their thesis where such papers have been produced under supervision and during the period of candidature; and where the quality of such papers is appropriate to Doctoral or Masters (Research) level research. A thesis prepared in this way is a different thesis format, it is not a different degree. There are several advantages to organising a thesis in this way:

- Preparing papers for publication saves time when preparing the thesis for examination as papers may make up one, or several, chapters within the thesis.
- It is to your advantage to publish work from your thesis as a means of disseminating your research, and developing your writing skills.
- It may improve the quality of your thesis as part of your thesis has already been subjected to peer review.
- Examiners may have more confidence in your thesis if they can see that you have already published your research. In addition, you will have already met one of the criteria of examination, with the thesis suitable for publication.

As a candidature requirement, all doctoral candidates are expected to have at least one peer reviewed output accepted for publication during candidature (https://www.griffith.edu.au/higher-degrees-research/current-research-students/candidature/requirements/publishing). Whilst not compulsory, candidates are encouraged to include this publication in the body of the thesis due to the advantages as outlined above.

Requirements for inclusion of papers within the thesis

Higher degree by research is a program of independent supervised study that produces significant and original research outcomes, culminating in a thesis, exegesis or equivalent (refer to Higher Degree by Research Thesis (https://www.griffith.edu.au/higher-degrees-research/current-research-students/thesis/preparation/definition)). Inclusion of papers within a thesis is not a suitable thesis format for all research projects, for example: collaborative projects where there may be several co-authors for each paper which may make it difficult for the examiner to establish the independence of the candidates work; where primary data is not collected, or results obtained, until late in the candidature; or where the research will not produce a logical sequence of papers that are able to be presented as an integrated whole. Candidates should also take into account whether this thesis format is an accepted practice within their discipline and likely to be received well by the thesis examiners (refer also to the examination requirements below). Candidates are required to consult with their supervisor(s) early in their candidature to determine if this thesis format is appropriate. It is expected that candidates will identify as part of the confirmation of candidature milestone (https://www.griffith.edu.au/higher-degrees-research/current-research-students/candidature/requirements/confirmation) if their thesis is to be prepared in this format.

Candidates should consult their Group specific guidelines in addition to the requirements detailed below.


Refer also to the Griffith University Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (http://policies.griffith.edu.au/search/Pages/results.aspx?k=responsible%2Fc%20conduct%20of%20research), specifically the sections pertaining to publication ethics and the dissemination of research findings, and authorship.

Status of papers

A thesis may include papers that have been submitted, accepted for publication, or published.

Some disciplines may specify a variation to the status of papers requirement, refer to your Group specific guidelines.

Type of papers

For the purpose of this requirement, papers are defined as a journal article, conference publication, book or book chapter. Papers which have been rejected by a publisher must not be included unless they have been substantially rewritten to address the reviewers’ comments, or have since been accepted for publication. Some disciplines may specify a variation to the type of papers requirement, refer to your Group specific guidelines.

Number of papers

A thesis may be entirely or partly comprised of papers. A paper may be included as a single chapter if the paper contributes to the argument of the thesis, or several papers may form the core chapters of the theses where they present a cohesive argument. Where a thesis is entirely comprised of papers, there is no minimum requirement for the number of papers that must be included (except as noted below) and is a matter of professional judgment for the supervisor and the candidate. Overall, the material presented for examination needs to reflect the research thesis standard required for the award of the degree. For example, PhD candidates, on the basis of a program of independent supervised study, must produce a thesis that makes a significant and original contribution to knowledge and understanding in the relevant field of study. This remains a matter of professional judgment for the supervisor and the candidate.

Where a thesis is entirely comprised of papers, some disciplines may specify a minimum number of papers to be included, refer to your Group specific guidelines.

Authorship

The candidate should normally be principal author (that is, responsible for the intellectual content and the majority of writing of the text) of any work
Queiroz Neto, A. – Investigating competitiveness through customer value in SCUBA diving tourism

included in the body of the thesis. Where a paper has been co-authored, the candidate is required to have made a substantial contribution to the intellectual content and writing of the text. Co-authored work in which the candidate was a minor author can only be used and referenced in the way common to any other research publication cited in the thesis. A signature from the corresponding author is required in order to include co-authored material in the body of the thesis, refer to the declarations section below.

For co-authored papers, the attribution of authorship must be in accordance with the Griffith University Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (https://policies.griffith.edu.au/pdf/policies%20of%20the%20University%20of%20Responsible%20Conduct%20of%20Research.pdf), which specifies that 'authorship must be based on substantial contributions in one or more of:

- conception and design of the research project
- analysis and interpretation of research data
- drafting or making significant parts of the creative or scholarly work or critically revising it so as to contribute significantly to the final output'.

Some disciplines may specify a variation to the authorship requirement, refer to your Group specific guidelines.

Quality of papers
Candidates should endeavour to publish their research in high quality peer reviewed publications. Papers to be included in the body of the thesis should be published (or submitted for publication) in reputable outlets that are held in higher regard in the relevant field of research. Candidates should consult their supervisor(s) for advice on suitable publications specific to their research discipline. Some disciplines may specify quality standards that must be met for papers to be included, refer to your Group specific guidelines.

The library also provides support and advice to candidates on choosing a journal. Candidates are advised to note in particular advice in order to avoid ‘predatory’ publishers.


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As copyright in an article is normally assigned to a publisher, the publisher must give permission to reproduce the work in the thesis and put a digital copy on the institutional repository. Information on how to seek permission is available at: Copyright and Articles in thesis (https://intranet.secure.griffith.edu.au/copyright-matters/copyright-guide/hdr-candidates/articles-in-thesis).

If permission cannot be obtained, students may still include the publication in the body of the thesis, however following examination the relevant chapter(s) will be redacted from the digital copy to be held by the Griffith University Library so that the copyright material is not made publicly available in the institutional repository. Students are required to advise the copyright status of each publication included in the thesis via a declaration to be inserted in the thesis, as detailed below.

Students requiring further advice regarding copyright issues can contact the Information Policy Officer (https://app.secure.griffith.edu.au/phonebook/phone-de tails.php?id=167233&depting=Arony) on (07) 3735 5695 or copyright@griffith.edu.au.

Group and discipline requirements
Some Groups or Elements may specify additional requirements for including papers within a thesis, refer below:

- Arts, Education and Law
- Griffith Health

Format of thesis
General
Consult the thesis preparation and formatting guidelines (https://www.griffith.edu.au/higher-degrees-research/current-research-students/thesis/preparation) for general information about the requirements for formatting the thesis. Some disciplines may specify a variation to the thesis format requirements below, refer to your Group specific guidelines.

Structure of Thesis and Linking Chapters
The structure of the thesis will vary depending on whether the thesis is partly or entirely comprised of papers. Whatever the format, the thesis must present as a coherent and integrated body of work in which the research objectives, relationship to other scholarly work, methodology and strategies employed, and the results obtained are identified, analysed and evaluated.

In general every thesis should include a general introduction and general discussion to frame the internal chapters. The introduction should outline the scope of the research covered by the thesis and include an explanation of the organisation and structure of the thesis. The general discussion should draw together the main findings of the thesis and establish the significance of the work as a whole, and should not just restate the discussion points of each paper.

It is important that candidates explicitly argue the coherence of the work and establish links between the various papers/chapters throughout the thesis. Linking text should be added to introduce each new paper or chapter, with a foreword which introduces the research and establishes its links to previous papers/chapters.

Depending on the content of the paper(s) and nature of research, a research methods chapter may also be necessary to ensure that any work that is not included in the paper(s), but is integral to the research, is appropriately covered. Any data omitted from a paper may also be included as an addendum to the thesis.
For further information on the thesis structure, refer to the following examples of acceptable ways to format the thesis when including papers.

- See Examples of Table of Contents (https://www.griffith.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/807226/Examples­of­Table­of­Contents.pdf)

**Format of papers**
The papers may be rewritten for the thesis according to the general formatting guidelines; or they can be inserted in their published format, subject to copyright approval as detailed above.

**Pagination**
Candidates may repaginate the papers to be consistent with the thesis. However, this is at the discretion of the candidate.

**Declarations**
All theses that include papers must include declarations (https://www.griffith.edu.au/higher-degrees-research/current-research-students/thesis/preparation/formatting) which specify the publication status of the paper(s), your contribution to the paper(s), and the copyright status of the paper(s). The declarations must be signed by the corresponding author (where applicable). If you are the sole author, this still needs to be specified. The declaration will need to be inserted at the beginning of the thesis, and for any co-authored papers, additional declarations will need to be inserted at the beginning of each relevant chapter. You may wish to consult the declaration requirements for inclusion of papers (https://www.griffith.edu.au/higher-degrees-research/current-research-students/thesis/preparation/formatting) diagram to ensure that you insert the correct declaration(s) within the thesis. Please note that completion of the declaration(s) does not negate the need to comply with any other University requirement relating to co-authored works as outlined in the Griffith University Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (https://www.griffith.edu.au/higher-degrees-research/current-research-students/candidature/requirements/publishing).

**Examination Requirements**

**Assessment by Examiners**
Candidates who wish to include papers within their thesis, and who have determined that this thesis format is appropriate to the research project, should also consider whether this thesis format will be well received by the thesis examiners. The inclusion of papers may negatively impact on the thesis upon assessment by the examiners where: the thesis format is not a common or accepted practice within the candidates discipline area; where the inclusion of co-authored papers makes it difficult for the examiner to establish the independence and originality of the candidates work; where the thesis does not present to the examiner as an integrated whole; or where there is too much repetition in the thesis which an examiner may view as a weakness.

Theses that include papers are subject to the same examination criteria as theses submitted in the traditional format. It should also be noted that the inclusion of published papers within the thesis does not prevent an examiner from requesting amendments to that material.

Candidates should discuss the suitability of this thesis format for examination with their supervisor(s).

**Nomination of examiners**
It is the responsibility of the principal supervisor to nominate thesis examiners (https://www.griffith.edu.au/higher-degrees-research/current-research-students/thesis/submission/nominating-appointing-examiners), and the process dictates that the principal supervisor must approach all nominees to determine their willingness to examine. Where a candidate’s thesis is formatted to include papers, the principal supervisor must also ensure that the examiners are familiar with and/or accepting of, this thesis format.

Upon dispatch of a candidate’s thesis to an examiner, the examiner will be reminded that the thesis has been formatted to include papers. The examiner will also be provided with the relevant information and regulations regarding this thesis format.
Appendix 2 – Griffith Sciences Thesis Guidelines

Griffith Sciences
Inclusion of Papers within the Thesis Guidelines

Candidates undertaking a Higher Degree by Research program with Griffith Sciences are expected to have at least one peer reviewed output published or accepted for publication during candidature. [http://www.griffith.edu.au/higher-degrees-research/current-research-students/candidature/requirements/publishing](http://www.griffith.edu.au/higher-degrees-research/current-research-students/candidature/requirements/publishing). This document is supplementary to the Griffith University Inclusion of papers within the thesis guidelines.

Whilst it is an expectation to have at least one paper published or accepted for publication during candidature, paper/s are included in the thesis at the discretion of the candidate in consultation with the supervisors. The format of the thesis must be discussed with supervisors early in the candidature.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status of papers</th>
<th>Thesis PARTLY comprised of papers</th>
<th>Thesis PREDOMINANTLY comprised of papers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>At least one of the included papers must be published or accepted for publication, while the remaining papers (if any) must have been submitted and awaiting a final outcome.</td>
<td>Papers must be published or accepted for publication while the remaining papers (if any) must have been submitted and awaiting a final outcome. Candidates will discuss this detail with their supervisors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of papers</td>
<td>The output must be peer reviewed and may be a journal article, conference publication, book or book chapter and must meet ERA guidelines.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of papers</td>
<td>At least one publication.</td>
<td>The number of papers will be dependent upon discussion with supervisors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authorship</td>
<td>The candidate should normally be principal or first author. Where a paper has been co-authored, the candidate is required to have made a substantial contribution. Co-authored work may be included as an appendix and referenced from the body of the work.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of papers</td>
<td>The output must be peer reviewed and may be a journal article, conference publication, book or book chapter and must meet ERA guidelines for publication. Candidates should consult their supervisor(s) for advice on suitable publications specific to their research discipline. Please discuss predatory publications with your supervisor/s to ensure you are aware of the impact of publishing in any such journals.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Format of papers</td>
<td>Please refer to the Griffith University Inclusion of papers within the thesis guidelines to ensure the seamless integration of your papers into the thesis.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

July 2016
Appendix 3 – Ethical Clearance

From: rmas@griffith.edu.au
Subject: Your Human Ethics Protocol 2015/523 has been Fully approved
Date: 23 November 2017 at 3:44 PM
To: noel.scott@griffith.edu.au, a.queirozneto@griffith.edu.au, g.lohmann@griffith.edu.au
Cc: research-ethics@griffith.edu.au

GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Dear Dr Gui Lohmann

I write in relation to your application for ethical clearance for your project “PR: Investigating destination competitiveness through customer value in scuba diving tourism - ECN-14-293” (GU Ref No: 2015/523). The research ethics reviewers resolved to grant your application a clearance status of "Fully Approved".

This is to confirm receipt of the remaining required information, assurances or amendments to this protocol.

Consequently, I reconfirm my earlier advice that you are authorised to immediately commence this research on this basis.

The standard conditions of approval attached to our previous correspondence about this protocol continue to apply.

Regards

Ms Kim Madison
Policy Officer
Human Research Ethics and Integrity
Office for Research
Bray Centre, Nathan Campus
Griffith University
ph: +61 (0)7 373 58043
fax: +61 (0)7 373 57994
email: k.madison@griffith.edu.au

Researchers are reminded that the Griffith University Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research provides guidance to researchers in areas such as conflict of interest, authorship, storage of data, & the training of research students.

You can find further information, resources and a link to the University’s Code by visiting Griffith’s webpage: Griffith University Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research

PRIVILEGED, PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL
This email and any files transmitted with it are intended solely for the use of the addressee(s) and may contain information which is confidential or privileged. If you receive this email and you are not the addressee(s) or responsible for delivery of the email to the addressee(s), please disregard the contents of the email, delete the email and notify the author immediately.
Appendix 4 – Participant recruitment advertisement for stage one

Do you have experience travelling to scuba diving destinations?

I would like to hear from you!

Ambrozio Queiroz Neto – PhD Candidate
ambrozio.queirozneto@griffithuni.edu.au
Griffith Institute for Tourism
Appendix 5 – Participant recruitment advertisement for stage two

GIFT - Griffith Institute for Tourism

What makes a successful scuba diving destination?

Answer the survey and help me find out

www.scubabestchoice.com

Investigating destination competitiveness through customer value

Ambrozio Queiroz Neto - PhD Candidate
GU Ref no: 2015/523
Appendix 6 – Information Sheet and Consent Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Griffith University School of Natural Sciences Information Sheet – In Depth Interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INVESTIGATING DESTINATION COMPETITIVENESS THROUGH CUSTOMER VALUE IN SCUBA DIVING TOURISM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My name is Ambrozio de Queiroz Neto and I am conducting a research as part of my PhD degree at Griffith University, Australia.

My research project is entitled ‘Investigating destination competitiveness through customer value in scuba diving tourism’. It involves two stages of data collection: in-depth interviews and questionnaire-based survey online.

If you are a recreational scuba diver, I would like to hear from you. The interview aims to learn more about destination attributes divers do value in a successful trip to a scuba diving destination.

The interviews will last around 30 minutes. Participation is voluntary and you can skip questions that you do not want to answer or leave the interview any time. **You should be at least 18 year of age.**

This research does not collect any private information that could identify individuals. As a result, responses will remain anonymous. The sessions will be recorded in audio. Only the researcher and supervisors will have access to the recording. The data collected will be transcribed, analysed and form part of the Thesis.

The results obtained in this study may be published in academic journals and presented at academic events. The data collected will be stored securely and kept until the research has been completed and results published. At the end of this period, all electronic records will remain property of Griffith University.

This research has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at Griffith University. The approval number is NSC/08/15/HREC.

If you wish to receive results of the research, please put your contact details at the end of the consent form to receive project updates. You can also contact the researcher through ambrozio.queirozneto@griffithuni.edu.au.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask by contacting me or my research supervisors, and we will be happy to answer any questions.

**Researcher:**
Ambrozio Queiroz Neto  
School of Natural Sciences  
Griffith University  
**Phone:** +61 448 688 035  
**Email:** ambrozio.queirozneto@griffithuni.edu.au

**Supervisors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A/Prof Gui Lohmann</th>
<th>Professor Noel Scott</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School of Natural Sciences</td>
<td>Griffith Business School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:g.lohmann@griffith.edu.au">g.lohmann@griffith.edu.au</a></td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:noel.scott@griffith.edu.au">noel.scott@griffith.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Any concerns about the ethical conduct of this research or the researchers, should be directed to:
Research Ethics Committee  
Griffith University  
**Phone:** +61 3735 4375  
**Email:** research-ethics@griffith.edu.au
Queiroz Neto, A. – Investigating competitiveness through customer value in SCUBA diving tourism

| Title: Investigating destination competitiveness through customer value in scuba diving tourism |
| Name of researcher: Ambrozio Queiroz Neto |

Please tick the box that applies, sign and date the form.

| I agree to take part in the Griffith University research project specified above. | Yes ☐ No ☐ |
| I understand the information about my participation in the research project, which has been provided to me by the researchers. | Yes ☐ No ☐ |
| I agree to participate to the interview asking me about customer value in scuba diving tourism. | Yes ☐ No ☐ |
| I understand that my participation is voluntary and I understand that I can cease participation at any time. | Yes ☐ No ☐ |
| I understand my participation in this research will be treated anonymously. | Yes ☐ No ☐ |
| I understand that no identifying information will be disclosed or published. | Yes ☐ No ☐ |
| I understand that all information gathered in this research will be kept confidentially for 7 years at the University. | Yes ☐ No ☐ |
| I am aware I can contact the researcher at any time with any queries. Their contact details are provided to me. | Yes ☐ No ☐ |
| I understand this research project has been approved by the Griffith University Human Research Ethics Committee | Yes ☐ No ☐ |

Date: ___________________________ Signature: ___________________________

☐ Please tick the box and provide your email or mail address below to receive feedback about the research.

Participant name: __________________________________________________________

Email/Address: __________________________________________________________
Appendix 7 – Guidelines and Handout for stage one

Hi! My name is Ambrozio Queiroz and, as part of my PhD at Griffith University, I am conducting interviews with SCUBA divers. I would like to ask you some questions about your experience and thoughts in regards to SCUBA diving destinations.

1) First, I would like to hear about your diving experience. How experienced are you as a SCUBA diver: (1) lower experienced, (2) medium experienced or (3) highly experienced?
1a) What are the characteristics that lead you to describe yourself as ___________ diving experienced?

2) Let’s talk about your travel experience to SCUBA diving destinations. How experienced are you as a SCUBA diving destination’s traveller: (1) inexperience, (2) domestic experienced and (3) international experienced?
2a) What are the characteristics that lead you to describe yourself as __________ travel experienced?

3) Now, let’s talk about the relation between your diving activity and your travel decision-making. How is your diving activity important to your travel decision-making? (1) not important, (2) not that important (3) important (4) Highly important.

4) Now, I am going to give you a handout to be filled in. Could you think about the two most successful SCUBA diving destinations that you’ve visited in the past? Could you please list the attributes that make these destinations successful?

5) Now, turn the page and you will see a list of destination attributes organized by groups. Think about the most successful SCUBA diving destination that you know. Could you please delete if you believe the attribute is not relevant or add new attributes if necessary?

6) Now I would like to understand why these particular destination attributes are important to you. Could you please explain the reasons that these destination attributes are important to you?
6a) Why these destination attributes are not important to you?

Thank you so much for your collaboration. I really appreciate your support.
Think about two of the most successful SCUBA diving destinations that you’ve visited in the past. Could you please list the attributes that make these destinations successful?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attributes</th>
<th>Attributes</th>
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<tr>
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</table>
Queiroz Neto, A. – Investigating competitiveness through customer value in SCUBA diving tourism

Think about the **most successful SCUBA diving destination** that you know. Could you please delete if you believe the attribute is not relevant or add new attributes if necessary?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination Attributes</th>
<th>SCUBA diving features</th>
<th>Tourism features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environmental attributes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cleanliness and hygiene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good underwater visibility</td>
<td>Food on boat</td>
<td>Landscape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety of marine life</td>
<td>Information by dive master</td>
<td>Peaceful and quietness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpolluted dive sites</td>
<td>Good dive master</td>
<td>Accommodation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undamaged dive sites</td>
<td>General service quality</td>
<td>Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy dive conditions</td>
<td>Additional activities</td>
<td>Historic sites or places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn about marine environment</td>
<td>Rental equipment available</td>
<td>Cultural activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Short distance to dive sites</td>
<td>Local cuisine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Local lifestyle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Facilities for children and/or elderly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marketing</th>
<th>Infrastructure</th>
<th>Costs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Easy access to information about the destination</td>
<td>Quality of medical system</td>
<td>Feasible price in terms of budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word of mouth</td>
<td>Transport access to the destination (e.g. airport)</td>
<td>Most inexpensive destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transport within the destination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Easy access</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situational conditions</th>
<th>Entrance policy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political stability</td>
<td>No visa required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of terrorism threat</td>
<td>Cost of visa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of disease outbreaks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 8 – Interview transcriptions.

FILE DETAILS
Audio Length: 13 minutes
Audio Quality: ☑ High ☒ Average ☐ Low
Number of Facilitators: One
Number of Interviewees: One
Difficult Interviewee Accents: ☑ Yes ☐ No
Other Comments: Respondent 001

START OF TRANSCRIPT
Facilitator: My name is Ambrozio Queiroz, and as part of my PhD I am conducting interviews with divers. So, I have some questions about your experience and thoughts in regards to SCUBA diving destinations. The first thing is about your diving experience. So, how experienced are you as a diver? I have three options; lower experience; medium; or highly experienced?
Interviewee: [laughs]. I have around a hundred dives. So, I would put myself in the highly experienced.
Facilitator: Fantastic. Let me ask you about your travel experience to SCUBA diving destinations. How experienced are you as a traveller to SCUBA diving destinations? I have options again; inexperienced; domestic experienced; or international experienced?
Interviewee: How experienced in travelling to SCUBA diving destinations?
Facilitator: Yes.
Interviewee: I would say I would be all around good; both domestic and internationally.
Facilitator: Yes, if you were international, it's also considering domestic. What are the characteristics that lead you to describe yourself as international experienced?
Interviewee: Because I've been diving in three parts of the world now. So I will put that as experienced because it is more than most people that I meet. Does that answer your question?
Facilitator: Yeah. Let's talk about the relation between your diving activity and travel decision making.
Interviewee: Okay.
Facilitator: How important is your diving activity to your travel decision making? I have options again; not important; not that important; important; or highly important.
Interviewee: Highly important these days.
Facilitator: Okay, fantastic. Now I have a handout here, and I would like to ask you to think of two of the most successful SCUBA diving destinations that you have visited in the past. I'd like you to compare them and list the attributes from this place.
Interviewee: Okay.
Facilitator: Place and country.
Interviewee: Which I would say was a successful one?
Facilitator: The most successful. Two.
Interviewee: That would be Bali for me, number one.
Facilitator: Where in Bali?
Interviewee: I don't remember; east part of Bali.
Facilitator: Okay. Was it Tulamben or no?
Interviewee: Sorry?
Facilitator: Is it Tulamben?
Interviewee: Tulamben?
Facilitator: Where is the shipwreck?
Interviewee: Yeah, it was part of the time where the shipwreck was.
Facilitator: What are the attributes that you can highlight from this destination?
Interviewee: Good variety of the wildlife. That would be the most important one.
Facilitator: Right, so marine life.
Interviewee: The visibility of the water as well.
Facilitator: What else?
Interviewee: Is there anything else that was important for me? Maybe, meeting nice people while I was there.
Facilitator: You mean?
Interviewee: Other divers. Something that I did not know beforehand of course.
Facilitator: Okay. Do you want to add any other?
Interviewee: [Unclear].
Facilitator: About the whole destination.
Interviewee: No, that's all I have.
Facilitator: Okay, fantastic. Second one?
Interviewee: Was in Thailand. That one I really liked.
Facilitator: Where in Thailand?
Interviewee: I went to all around, but one I would say that stands out is the [Samosan] Islands. Isn't that what they call them?
Facilitator: Silo...
Interviewee: We can change around; we can say Koh Phi Phi.
Facilitator: Koh Phi Phi. What are the attributes that you can highlight from Koh Phi Phi?
Interviewee: I remember again, with the wildlife and clarity of the water I liked. There I would say, quality of the dive shop was a big factor. The amount of dives that I did. I got 20 when I was there.
Facilitator: What do you mean, the number of dives, or number of different dive sites?
Interviewee: No, just number of dives that I did.
Facilitator: Okay.
Interviewee: [Laughs]. I guess that has nothing to do with location.
Facilitator: Okay. Any other?
Interviewee: No, that's about it.
Facilitator: Okay, so, now let's move from the real world to the most successful SCUBA diving destination.
Interviewee: Okay.
Facilitator: In your opinion.
Interviewee: My opinion, okay.
Facilitator: I have a handout here, with a list of attributes they are organised per groups. I'd like to ask you to tick if confirming or deleting, just crossing.
Interviewee: Okay.
Facilitator: You can add more attributes that you think that are relevant.
Interviewee: So, this is the ideal world?
Facilitator: Yes.
Interviewee: I see you have a lot of things here that are related to a specific dive shop?
Facilitator: Yes. Because it's related to environmental attributes, related to dive shop tourism as a whole and other attributes.
Interviewee: Right, so tick or strike through. Physical, price, in terms of budgets? I guess that one is highly relative between people.
Facilitator: Yeah. Do you want...
Interviewee: I want it to be physical.
Facilitator: Okay.
Interviewee: Within my budget. Does not have to be the cheapest. Situational conditions. Is that perceived ones, or real ones? I take that as perceived ones.
Facilitator: [Laughs].
Interviewee: That's all fair. Alright, I have this complete.
Facilitator: Fantastic. Let me ask you now, information by the dive master, it's not important?
Interviewee: No. Not anymore. Maybe was when I was less experienced.
Facilitator: Alright, let me ask you now, what are the consequence of having these attributes for you? How do you feel?
Interviewee: In terms of having a more rewarding dive perhaps?
Facilitator: Yes, something like this.
Interviewee: Yeah. I have a feeling maybe sometimes the dive shops is kind of like a race to the top. If you've been with a really good one, the other one is bad by comparison. So, once you know and realise certain attributes; like good food on a boat, that
very fast becomes the new standard for what you want out of your dive, because that's what you expect beforehand.
So to answer your question, I think the best thing you get out of having those attributes is, you get what you expect.
Facilitator: Why do you dive? To fulfil what?
Interviewee: That's a good question. I think mostly I like it for improving technique underwater.
Facilitator: Okay, pushing yourself?
Interviewee: So, I do it to be better at it, yeah.
Facilitator: What else?
Interviewee: Yeah, it's more like I said. It's seeing the variety in wildlife that you don't see on the surface. That's definitely a big factor.
Facilitator: Different kinds of species, or new experiences?
Interviewee: Or just lots of them. Both in volume, and in variety.
Facilitator: Fantastic. Do you want to add any other attribute?
Interviewee: No. Yeah, maybe, specifically seeing new things. I think this very rewarding one. Going back to the dive sites that I've been to before, that also makes them good, that I saw something new.
Facilitator: Okay. New things underwater?
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: Can be?
Interviewee: New types of species, kind of thing.
Facilitator: Okay. Fantastic, that's it mate.
Interviewee: We're done, alright.
END OF TRANSCRIPT
Facilitator: Okay. Like what?
Interviewee: Like Thailand or Malaysia, Palau. Just three countries.
Facilitator: Oh nice. Good. Good. So now let's talk about the relation between your diving activity and your travel decision making. So how is your diving activity important to your travel decision making? Is it not important, not that important, important or highly important?
Interviewee: What do you mean? Does it mean how I choose my destination?
Facilitator: Sorry?
Interviewee: What does this question mean?
Facilitator: Well I'm trying to understand how important is your diving activity to your travel decision making. So for example if your diving activity influences your choice to travel.
Interviewee: I think it’s very important because before I'm going to somewhere I always want to do some purist, like a pure diving holiday, so that is my primary purpose for this travel.
Facilitator: So it's your primary motivation?
Interviewee: Yeah, yeah.
Facilitator: So it's highly important?
Interviewee: So it's highly important. Otherwise I wouldn't bother to go to this place, such as Phuket. If no diving site I wouldn't bother to go here. Yeah.
Facilitator: I understand.
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: [Laughs]. Wonderful. Well now I'm going to give you a handout.
Interviewee: Okay.
Facilitator: Yeah. So what I'm asking now is to think about the two most successful SCUBA diving destinations that you have visited in the past.
Interviewee: Yeah, alright, I have my idea.
Facilitator: In your mind [laughs]. And after that so I would like to ask you to list the attributes that have made this place fantastic. Or in fact…
Interviewee: Is that site name or just a place name?
Facilitator: Yeah, you can put the name of the dive site and the country or the destination. You can choose a destination.
Interviewee: Okay, I'll put the dive site name.
Facilitator: Mm-hm. What is that?
Interviewee: Blue Corner in Palau.
Facilitator: Okay. My destination is Sipadan.
Interviewee: My destination is Sipadan. Okay, what are the attributes that made this place successful?
Facilitator: I think the rare variety of the species underwater. I mean the species.
Interviewee: Okay. Let me…
Facilitator: I don't know how to write it down. I'm not good at writing.
Interviewee: You can give it to me. Variety of dive sites.
Facilitator: Okay. Underwater.
Facilitator: Yeah, that's what I mean. And the dive site sort of geology. I mean the underwater geology is quite different, quite unique.
Interviewee: Okay.
Facilitator: Because it's the water…
Interviewee: It's the underwater scenery, right?
Facilitator: Yeah, the scenery. Underwater scenery, you can write [unclear].
Interviewee: Oh yeah, okay. No, no, take yours. Yours is fine. What else?
Facilitator: What else? I can't think of anything else. I can't think of what else I could write. Good visibility.
Interviewee: Good visibility.
Facilitator: Hopefully but it's not all the time. Very good diver operation.
Interviewee: Good diver operation. What do you mean? Do you want to…
Queiroz Neto, A. – Investigating competitiveness through customer value in SCUBA diving tourism

Interviewee: Like there's a good dive shop running the dive.
Facilitator: Good dive shop.
Interviewee: Very very organised. Very organised dive shop.
Facilitator: Organised.
Interviewee: They focus on the customer service or something.
Facilitator: Level of customer service?
Interviewee: Yeah. Good customer service and the good service [ecologies] they provide over the customer makes them satisfied.
Facilitator: Okay.
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: Overall quality of what was that?
Interviewee: Good quality service, customer service.
Facilitator: Okay, now I know the word. It was already here. Do you want to add any other?
Interviewee: Let me think about it.
Facilitator: Thinking about the trip.
Interviewee: The trip - I think the prices are good.
Facilitator: Okay.
Interviewee: It's over. And it's easy to reach there. It's not a...
Facilitator: Okay, easy to reach.
Interviewee: Yeah, it's easy to reach that place. So I wouldn't say the hotel choice is not really wide. That's the problem. There's not so many choice, variety of choice in terms of accommodation.
Facilitator: Okay, let me just write that down.
Interviewee: So I mean it's quite a narrow choice. Not a wide range of choice in terms of hotels.
Facilitator: Narrow choice.
Interviewee: And the catering and the food.
Facilitator: They're not good?
Interviewee: No good.
Facilitator: I think [unclear] that's all.
Interviewee: Wonderful. And about Blue Corner in Palau.
Facilitator: Similar.
Interviewee: Where you can see a lot of more different species under the water.
Facilitator: Okay.
Interviewee: Such a lot of big stuff like sharks and turtles are very common to see manta ray or something.
Facilitator: Sharks, manta ray.
Interviewee: Yeah and the very good visibility and very good coral, lots of coral. Very good I think environmental conservation to have that around that higher end. So it's a [unclear] conserving job I think. So very focused on the environmental protection the local authorities. And the prices are quite high. The diving prices. But actually it's a good point in terms of they try to restrict the number of tourists to visit that site. So it's kind of like a restricted amount of tourists. It's not that busy I mean.
Facilitator: Yeah so let me just try to understand. Do you think that the higher price...
Interviewee: The higher price is not good for the tourist, but essential maybe for the local people.
Facilitator: In your case what is your opinion?
Interviewee: In my case I think the holiday is not enough. I don't like the high price. I prefer the cheap price.
Facilitator: Okay. [laughs].
Interviewee: Yeah because the diving price of holidays are twice that of the other place. Twice or three times higher.
Facilitator: Okay, but you understand that this is good for the conservation, right?
Interviewee: Yeah. Yes, I understand that it's good for the locals but it's not good for attracting more tourists for coming.
Facilitator: Okay, that's good. Wonderful. Do you want to add anything?
Interviewee: I think probably basic things are it's not really a good season so it was quite choppy the surface, the sea surface was quite choppy and the light was not very good.
Facilitator: Which one is the best one?
Interviewee: Probably [unclear] Sipadan.
Facilitator: Why?
Interviewee: Because...
Facilitator: What did you find here that you didn't find here?
Interviewee: That's hard to say.
Facilitator: What did you find in Sipadan that you didn't find in Blue Corner? It's just to record.
Interviewee: Yeah, yeah.
Facilitator: In Sipadan I found...
Interviewee: Probably because we did a dive [unclear] in Sipadan. But in Pallal we only do two dives there a day because the dive site the distance from the dive shop to the dive site is quite far so it costs some travel. So either we're sitting on the speed boat to the dive site it's quite a long distance. [Unclear] stay together. We have found sometimes after the first dive we need to travel further out to the second dive site and from the second dive site you need to travel further out to the third dive site. So that's why I say I only can do the two dives a day. But in Sipadan all of the dive sites are very close to each other so there is not this problem.
Facilitator: Okay, close dive sites.
Interviewee: Yeah, yeah.
Facilitator: Why is that important?
Interviewee: It's important because it's [unclear] experience of the divers for the tourist. They don't need to - because of it's quite bumpy when you sit on the speed boat [unclear] you know you drive too much while sitting on the speedboat to the dive. Yeah, I prefer a short journey rather than a long journey.
Facilitator: Yeah. No, wonderful. Wonderful. I would say that a short journey is better.
Interviewee: Yeah probably because personally I'm not really patient to sit on the boat for a long time.
Facilitator: Uh-huh.
Interviewee: But it depends. Maybe some people enjoy sitting on the boat for a long time so they can take a photo while the boat is running. But some people they don't like that.
Facilitator: No, okay. Wonderful.
Interviewee: That's all, that's all.
Facilitator: No, there's a second part.
Interviewee: Okay.
Facilitator: Here in the handout. This one I'll give you. So well now we are transferring from a real world okay that you have visited to the most successful diving destination. So it's the perfect place. So that's the idea. You are going to ask me look Ambrozio, what is successful - you are going to say what is successful for you in a SCUBA diving destination. So I would like to ask you to delete if you believe these attributes are not relevant and add new attributes if necessary.
Interviewee: So I can cross out the attribute if I think they are not relevant?
Facilitator: Yeah if you just...
Interviewee: Cross it.
Facilitator: ...cross, that's right.
Interviewee: That's all very important I think.
Facilitator: No worries.
Interviewee: What do you mean the additional activities?
Facilitator: Such as?
Interviewee: In the boat I mean. The service in the SCUBA diving service.
Facilitator: Such as maybe they can offer like snorkelling or something else.
Interviewee: Yeah, or a game or whatever.
Interviewee: Oh yeah, sure, sure. Of these two dive sites, that's what I have measured.
Facilitator: [Laughs]. Okay. Feel free to add whatever you think.
Interviewee: Offer a free nature talk.
Facilitator: Okay.
Interviewee: [Unclear] on the website.
Facilitator: Okay, wonderful. Let me ask you good underwater visibility, a variety of marine life, unpolluted dive sites, undamaged dive sites, easy dive conditions and learn about marine environment. Why are these things important to you?
Interviewee: [Unclear] is the most important attribute for a dive site. So I will personally consider a lot of these before I go in to make a [unclear]. I will see whether there are lots of - I will see some information on the website about this dive site firstly and to decide whether to go or not. [Unclear] why would I bother to go there?
Facilitator: Okay. Why are these things important to you? Seeing marine life or diving.
Interviewee: You know it's just a purpose, the main purpose of my travel to see the marine life. To see something I haven't seen before and so if visibility is very bad there is no point in diving there.
Facilitator: Okay.
Interviewee: Also if reefs have been polluted there's no point.
Facilitator: What are you looking for when you are diving?
Interviewee: I would like to see some big stuff like something I haven't seen like sharks or hammerhead or something.
Facilitator: Okay, why this thing is important?
Interviewee: Because...
Facilitator: In your life I mean. Why do you do this?
Interviewee: Probably just to satisfy my curiosity or maybe I can take a photo and to show off to my friends obviously yeah.
Facilitator: Yeah okay. Do you feel better? How do you feel diving?
Interviewee: What do you mean better?
Facilitator: Do you feel better with yourself after a dive?
Interviewee: Yeah, after I feel better in that...
Facilitator: Better in your...
Interviewee: You mean the feeling after?
Facilitator: Yeah that's right.
Interviewee: You feel maybe - it's a new experience.
Facilitator: After a new experience.
Interviewee: Yeah. So it just feels like I haven't experienced that before so I want to experience it. And after the diving so it gives you a kind of feeling you have of conquered the ocean.
Facilitator: Uh-huh.
Interviewee: Yeah. I feel good, yeah.
Facilitator: Okay, wonderful. Good. I can see that you have deleted historic sites or places, cultural activities, local cuisine, local lifestyles and facilities for children and the elderly.
Interviewee: It's not really relevant for me because I only focus on the stuff that's under the water, not on the land.
Facilitator: Okay. So it doesn't matter what you have outside of the water at the end of the day?
Interviewee: Yeah I don't really mind about the food or stuff.
Facilitator: Okay.
Interviewee: Especially after [unclear] I feel very tired and so most of the time you spend your time in the hotel so you don't have time to care about local cultures or something else.
Facilitator: Okay. Well you have add in marketing good review on websites like TripAdvisor.
Interviewee: Yeah, yeah. I will see this firstly before I decide to choose a destination.
Facilitator: So you go into TripAdvisor and…
Interviewee: And if I see that this [unclear] got a lot of very good comments, I will choose that place. Otherwise I wouldn't.
Facilitator: Okay.
Interviewee: I'm saying that's very important. Because most of the tourists that are there feel the same way.
Facilitator: Yeah. About the infrastructure - quality of medical system, transport access to the destination, transport within the destination and easy access. So they are all important?
Interviewee: Yeah, yeah. All very important for me.
Facilitator: Okay. And about the situational conditions like political stability.
Interviewee: Yeah, those are important.
Facilitator: Yeah. Why?
Interviewee: You know I wouldn't bother to go to somewhere where there's a massive - I don't want to take a risk of losing my life or I might die there.
Facilitator: Yeah, okay. I totally understand. But I just want to go further to get that. And now about the entrance policy like no visa required.
Interviewee: Yeah, that's quite important because the passport I'm holding it's not very hand for lots of places I need to get a visa. That's why I prefer to go somewhere not requiring a visa. It's easier for me to get there.
Facilitator: So it's really important.
Interviewee: I'd say it's very important for Chinese tourists to look at, yeah.
Facilitator: Okay. That's good. Do you want to add anything else?
Interviewee: I think that's all.
Facilitator: That's all?
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: That's it. Have a look.
Interviewee: Entrance policy, infrastructure. Maybe very good social security.
Facilitator: Very good social…
Interviewee: Security, I mean the low criminal rate.
Facilitator: Oh okay.
Interviewee: Maybe a similar meaning like political.
Facilitator: No.
Interviewee: Low criminal rates, you don't want to feel I mean lots of robbers are around you in that situation.
Facilitator: How do you check that?
Interviewee: Also it's based on I think just check the reputation of that destination. Check some reviews on a website.
Facilitator: Like what?
Interviewee: Such as [unclear] is not very good.
Facilitator: Ah-ha. No, no, no, I understand.
Interviewee: A forum, some forum.
Facilitator: Ah some forum. What forum?
Interviewee: You just Google them.
Facilitator: Google. Just Google?
Interviewee: Just Google and…
Facilitator: Check Google.
Interviewee: Normally it's showing you some forum so some people always ask what's going on in that destination, whether there are lots of robbers or [unclear] by the local people.
Interviewee: Okay.
Facilitator: Thank you.
Interviewee: You're welcome.
Facilitator: Well, my name is Ambrozio and as part of my PhD, I'm conducting interviews with divers. I'd like to ask you some questions about your experience and thoughts in regards to your SCUBA diving destination. First I would like to hear about your diving experience. How experienced are you as a diver? Low, medium, or highly experienced? And the characteristics that lead you to describe yourself as highly experienced.

Interviewee: I'm a PADI course director and I've done in excess of 3000 dives in the area.

Facilitator: Wonderful. What about your travel experience to SCUBA diving destinations? How experienced are you?

Interviewee: Very limited with my experience. Outside of Thailand, I've dived in a couple of dives of Australia and two trips to Bali. That's the extent of my travel.

Facilitator: So I can say that you are kind of domestic to international experienced then?

Interviewee: Yes. I have not done much international SCUBA diving travel.

Facilitator: What about your diving activity? What is the relation between your diving activity and your travel decision making? How is your diving activity important to your travel decision making? So is that not important? Not that important? Important? Or highly important?

Interviewee: Not important.

Facilitator: Well, now I'm going to show you a handout. So I would like to ask you to think about the two most successful SCUBA diving destinations that you have visited in the past. Could you please list the attributes that make these destinations successful? So we have destination A and B. I can write for you.

Interviewee: Well, in fairness, the travel that I've done, I have not judged the place where I've been. So I've been - I've done a total of five dives in Australia at two different destinations and maybe six or seven dives in Bali with the [Friends] Scuba Diving Centre. So my thoughts on successful diving places outside of here, I don't have any. [Laughs].

Interviewee: No.

Facilitator: No, well I haven't been anywhere else to make an informed decision on their diving.

Interviewee: Outside of Thailand?

Facilitator: Yes. Well, in every place. I'm talking about the best one that you've - the most successful trip that you had in the past to a SCUBA diving destination. It can be anywhere.

Interviewee: I mean it's a difficult one for me to answer because I've only been on one overseas SCUBA diving holiday. So that was successful because it's what I've done. But I've done in excess of 3000 dives in the area here to pretty much the same destinations all the time. So to pick a favourite dive or favourite destination is - I'm probably not the right person to answer that.

Facilitator: [Laughs]. No worries. No worries.

Interviewee: My main thing since I've started has been teaching. So the fun diving side of it has never really been my greatest concern. I've always been a teacher rather than an experience of - I've done - my diving has been a lot more focused on other people rather than focused on my own pleasure.

Facilitator: I understand. [Laughs]. Okay. Let me ask you now, let me get your opinion about the most successful diving destination. So amazing or perfect place.

Interviewee: To dive? In Thailand?

Facilitator: No, no, no, it's the most successful diving destination that could be...
Interviewee: Success based on what?
Facilitator: In your opinion. So I...
Interviewee: I did a dive one day with three deaf people. I mean is that successful? You need to give me a little bit of a guideline on what...
Facilitator: No, no. There's a list of attributes here. What I want - I just want you to think about this perfect place, this most successful SCUBA diving destination. I have a list of destination attributes. I would like to delete if you believe that this attribute is not relevant and add attributes if you think that they're necessary.
Interviewee: I mean my most pleasurable dive site would be Koh Bida Nok in Phi Phi. Purely based on the amount of marine life there. So if you're basing success on a dive site that I enjoyed the most, then it would need to be Koh Bida Nok.
Facilitator: So in this list, what do you want to delete and what do you want to add? Can you please?
Interviewee: So really that one there is based purely on the variety of the marine life.
Facilitator: Okay, and about the service in the SCUBA diving product. This is related to the SCUBA diving here [unclear].
Interviewee: I mean this is different because I've always been in a position where I have been in charge of it. So to say performed by a dive master with that, I'm the one providing those conditions. Do you understand?
Facilitator: Yes, I do.
Interviewee: So I'm in a different position to - so I can't comment on the dive master. I can't - service quality, yeah okay. I mean...
Facilitator: So don't you think that these things are important? To the most successful?
Interviewee: It's the important to the person paying to go on the boat.
Facilitator: Yeah.
Interviewee: It's not important to the person who is on the boat. See, if you're saying you want me to be a good dive master or a good instructor, then yeah, that is important. But you're asking me what I experienced on that dive site. So I can't experience a good dive master because I am the dive master.
Facilitator: Okay.
Interviewee: See what I mean? So you're asking questions about an experience with a trip. I can't give you experience of a dive master if I was the diver master. I really - the number of times that I've been diving just for fun for my own purposes is less than 10.
Facilitator: I understand.
Interviewee: So I'm not a really good person for - I'm providing the experience, I'm not taking the experience.
Facilitator: Yeah. So from your perspective, you can go, it's wonderful. Here for example, tourism future is...
Interviewee: All right. Landscape is good. Peaceful and quietness. Safety is good here in Thailand. Local [unclear] is good and local lifestyle is good.
Facilitator: [Unclear] coach or activities? Or related?
Interviewee: Not for Phuket I don't think. Bangkok maybe but I mean culturally, we don't spend much time with them doing - I mean we live in a - it's a pretty western society here as what you've seen. So I wouldn't say we get involved in cultural activities.
Facilitator: Again, what about these other attributes, what do you think about them?
Interviewee: In relation to our business?
Facilitator: In relation to the most successful SCUBA diving destination. It's the ideal place. It's the perfect place.
Interviewee: Well the internet would be most likely. If you're looking at our business, that would be the most likely form of marketing for ours. Political stability, that's important. Anything. Anything like tourism threats or [unclear] has a direct impact on Phuket and numbers will decline if something goes wrong. So any form of bad publicity will definitely have an impact on our tourism here.
Facilitator: Do you know for example, how - what is the weight of this? Can you give me an example?
Interviewee: I mean we don't have direct figures. I mean obviously when the last coup happened, that had a visible effect on the amount of people that were here. I
mean we struggled to get figures out of the Thai government so we can only really go by what our business is doing. Our business has been improving since day one, so we don't have a constant or a measurable marker that we can say it went down or went up. But definitely there was less people where during the last coup. We get emails during those periods that question the stability of the country. As do we when there's any medical outbreaks or concerns. You can see - it reflects back in the amount of enquiries we have for diving as well. Or the nature of the enquiries. You know, and then you'll get enquiries that say this is happening in Phuket. Should we go? Shouldn't we go? The other thing too is that we have 30 per cent of our customers who are from Australia. Phuket is a similar cost and distance as is Bali and as is Fiji. If you're sitting at home and you want to book a holiday, and there's problems happening in Thailand, it's just as easy for you to go somewhere else. Generally, there may not be a direct fear of what's going on here and all the nice talk or calming saying everything is okay, people at the end of the day will take the easier option to go somewhere else.

I think that's - our feedback in relation to the coup was that we didn't have many people and people that were working and living in Bali, were complaining on the amount of Australians that were there during that period. So there was obviously a vast increase in trips to Bali as opposed to Phuket at that stage.

Facilitator: Do you think that [unclear] is like not requesting or requiring a visa. Is that important? The cost of the visa?
Interviewee: The cost of - no. It's a free visa to this country.
Facilitator: No, I mean in the more successful destination.
Interviewee: I mean again, I can only comment - I went to Bali. It cost $25 for a visa. So it wasn't relevant in my thinking about going diving.
Facilitator: So should we delete that?
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: The cost as well?
Interviewee: Yeah. But I mean that would depend on where you were travelling.
Facilitator: About the cost; feasible price in terms of budget or more successful - sorry more [expensive] destination?
Interviewee: I guess overall costs would have a factor. I mean I would love to go to the Galapagos Islands. The sheer cost from getting here to - getting there from here and Phuket is what I consider prohibitive. So yeah, costs would have a big impact on it. I think the cost is relevant but you would possibly budget in relation to what you thought you were going to see or what you wanted to see.
Facilitator: So it's more like this rather than the most expensive place.
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: Should we delete that?
Interviewee: No.
Facilitator: Do you want to add any other attributes?
Interviewee: I think if I was to plan an overseas trip, it would be maybe to see something specific. Obviously when you've done a lot of dives in the same area, you've got to see a lot of the similar creatures. So any diving that I'd do in the future would be geared towards seeing a specific item. I went - I was in an Australia a couple of months ago and I did a cold water dive in Melbourne. I only did it for one reason; because I wanted to see a weedy sea dragon. That was my goal and I went down and I did that. I achieved what I want. There's certain creatures that I would like to see in the future and I would assume that my trips would be planned around seeing them.

At the moment, just the act of diving is not what I would travel for. When I even consider diving in another country now, first and foremost when I get on the website is I just look at their gallery of creatures that they have in there and if they're similar to what we see every day, and there's nothing that's different to what I see, my thoughts of diving there would be probably nil. I need to leave the country in a couple of weeks for a visa run and I'll probably go to the Philippines and a couple of places where I'm thinking of going, the quality of diving I may or may not see there is not much different to here.
So as an experienced diver and travelling, I probably won't go SCUBA diving based that it's very similar to what I see anyway. So my thoughts now would be gearing towards specific creatures and the obvious cost of doing that as well. It's the same, I'd love to dive with whales. There's a good chance of diving with whales in Mexico but I'm not going to jump on a plane and fly halfway around the world to do that either.

Facilitator: Why?
Interviewee: Because I own a business in Thailand and not a business in Australia.
Facilitator: What do you mean?
Interviewee: We have small profit margins here compared to the western world. But if we want to fly somewhere, we've got to pay the same price as someone in a western country. So unfortunately, although we have a fantastic job and we live in Thailand, we do have limited budgets and limited expenditures we can play with.

Facilitator: Let me ask you one thing about what diving brings to your life and the act of diving. What do you want when you are diving? Do you understand? Like why do you do that? Decide...
Interviewee: I think I've always been in a teaching role for a lot of my life. I've taught other sports. Like a lot of people, I fell in love with diving. I think teaching SCUBA diving is different to anything that I've taught before because the experience is a lot different for the beginners. It's not something that - SCUBA diving is a total new experience for most people. So, the - how do I say it? The thrill of doing it is a lot higher and they can't ever really partially experience it. You're either going to experience it fully or not. If you talk about something like golf, you can practice golf in the backyard or you can go down to the driving range and you can actually play golf.

But with SCUBA diving, there's no sort of part way of doing it when you do it. I think the elation and the experience for beginner divers is something that's quite unique and quite special as far as the teaching world goes. To this day, I still say that my favourite courses are both the discover SCUBA diving and the open water course because you get a better - you get more pleasure out of teaching beginners, and a better feedback or a better experience with it. Rather than teaching experienced divers. I think the higher you go up, the less of a thrill it is. But it's still great fun to take brand new divers into the water and let them experience it.

There's not enough people in the world that do it. I feel that the more people we can get to do it, the more pleasure everyone will get out of SCUBA diving.

Facilitator: So are they looking for pleasure? What are they looking for?
Interviewee: I think they're looking for a brand new experience. They're looking for something that's different. Totally different to what they've done ever before. I don't think there's anything that really compares to SCUBA diving. You can hit a golf ball but you can hit a ball with a cricket bat or you can hit a ball with a tennis racquet. Yeah, it can be a fantastic game. It's not a brand new experience as such and there's not too many things that bring you that thrill of something new or something different. I think also is the mystique of SCUBA diving and the fact that anything can turn up at any time will always - I don't know, it provides some excitement because you don't know what's going to happen whether - you don't know if a manta ray is going to come out from nowhere or a whale shark. You know, you could see some rare creature doing whatever. I think it's a completely different type of activity. The only thing [unclear] you can do in the world.

Facilitator: Don't you think there is something related to the environmental world? I mean the new laws of physics that we have in the water?
Interviewee: I suppose if you could look at it that way, you're challenging people to do something that they couldn't do normally as well. So there's maybe a - there's two parts to that; some marine life and the experience, plus the challenge. I mean different nationalities will see that differently. You get an Indian culture where they don't have a culture of swimming and water activities. Being able to SCUBA dive is - just the act of SCUBA diving is a big achievement for them. You get someone who is an Australian that's been able to swim since they were four
years old. Jumping in the water and swimming under the water is not as big of an achievement for them. So the pleasure of being underwater and seeing marine creatures is different. So really, it really does depend on maybe the nationality but also the individual to what level - what achievement level they get just from the SCUBA diving. It does vary from people but it does vary a lot from nationalities as well.

Facilitator: That's good. That's it.
Interviewee: Very good.

END OF TRANSCRIPT
Facilitator: So today is 17 September, 2:30. It is important because I will give you that. Just take my card like that. Leave it for a while, okay? I am Ambrozio, and I am doing a PhD. It is part of my PhD candidature and I am doing some interviews with SCUBA divers. First I would like to hear about your diving experience. How experienced are you as a diver? Lower, medium or highly experienced?

Interviewee: I'd say low to medium experience; I've dived about 40 times. I guess is that medium or low? I don't feel 100 per cent confident in the water so I'd say low to medium.

Facilitator: Wonderful, so you already described the reasons that you are thinking about it?

Interviewee: Yeah.

Facilitator: Do you want to add anything else?

Interviewee: Yeah, prior to diving - I'm a very poor swimmer and very afraid of the water - so when I started diving it was a challenge for me to overcome a fear. So I'm still working through that even 40 dives later. I still try; not as confident as I'd like to be.

Facilitator: Yeah, I totally understand you. Maybe that was the reason that I started to dive. So let's talk about your travel experience. How experienced are you as a SCUBA diving destinations traveller? So, I'm talking about specific to this kind of destination where you could do some SCUBA diving. Are you inexperienced, domestic experienced or international experienced?

Interviewee: International, yeah.

Facilitator: [That also comprehends] domestic?

Interviewee: Yes, international and domestic.

Facilitator: Wonderful. What are the characteristics that lead you to describe yourself as international experienced?

Interviewee: The characteristics that lead me to describe myself as what?

Facilitator: As international experienced.

Interviewee: I have travelled to over 50 countries, a lot of - specifically just for diving to some of those countries. A lot of my trips, vacations or holidays that I plan are around diving as well.

Facilitator: That's good so the relation between your diving activity and your travel decision-making, how important is your diving career or your diving activity to your travel destination?

Interviewee: Very little, it's a minor element of my decision-making for travel. It's a bonus. If there's diving I will, but it's not the main driving force for me.

Facilitator: So, is it not important or not that important?

Interviewee: Not important.

Facilitator: Okay, wonderful. So as you can see you have a handout. In this handout here I would like to ask you to think about the two of the most successful trips to a SCUBA diving destination that you have had in the past?

Interviewee: Okay.

Facilitator: So I want to do a comparison between them and also I would like to see what are the attributes, or destination attributes that this place they have?

Interviewee: Okay.

Facilitator: Can you fill this for me, or if you want I can fill to you?

Interviewee: No, the one that comes to mind was the Red Sea in Egypt, E-G-Y-P-T.

Facilitator: No worries, okay.

Interviewee: Here, so Phuket, Thailand.
Facilitator: Where did you dive in Phuket?
Interviewee: Lots of dives. I learned to dive with [Darren] - where I met you at his shop - about 10 years ago he taught me. So we've been, I've been to Phuket several times and dove here several times.

Facilitator: Wonderful let's do it. What are the attributes of the Red Sea?
Interviewee: The Red Sea was the fact that is was easily accessible offshore diving. So I was able to go - in other words walk from the shore; didn't necessarily have to have a boat. Unspoilt, one of the things - is this what you want me to do, stuff like this?

Facilitator: Yeah.
Interviewee: So, unspoilt environment less tourists and a different - some of the things that - so, again the question is I'm looking at what attractive me to diving there or why I wanted to dive there? Is that what you want?

Facilitator: Yeah, well in fact the destination attributes that made that place successful, made your trip successful? So the...
Interviewee: Like cost and stuff or - okay. You don't want to put words in my mouth, so, yeah.
Facilitator: At this time.
Interviewee: So, the things that were appealing too to that destination were the history in the area I thought it was interesting. The history, the culture, the cost of the diving was important, I think, or a factor. The area what attracted me.

Facilitator: Was that cheap or expensive?
Interviewee: Very low, very well, very cheap, inexpensive.
Facilitator: Inexpensive.
Interviewee: Compared to other places in the world. Then just the beauty of the Red Sea. I had heard so many, it was just the beauty. I'd seen advertisements in magazines and so really the beauty of the diving area, I guess, is what I want to say.

Facilitator: But, yeah what do you mean about this? What are the attributes there, the features?
Interviewee: There is no current in the - okay so there is no current.
Facilitator: You can talk as well.
Interviewee: So, clear water, very clear water, no current, warm water those are things that - lots of fish. I think those are the things that come to mind, nothing unusual. But one of the things that appealed to me about that destination was again, there wasn't a lot of silt going around in the ocean, clear because no current. Unspoiled, like I said it wasn't a site - there's not a lot of dive activity in that area. Plus, tourism, at least when I went because of the political unrest there so it was a little bit - that has nothing to do with it - but that was appealing to me at the time because I'd wanted to go someplace where there weren't a lot of people.

Facilitator: This is common, no worries; common with divers anyway. It's a common attribute.
Interviewee: So it's for the moment, unpolluted - I don't know. Just warm, warm clear water lots of interesting species of fish. Okay, that's what I got.
Facilitator: Phuket?
Interviewee: So the first visit to Phuket or why I keep coming back to Phuket? I guess probably why I come back to Phuket is what I would want to lean on. What appeals to Phuket is the attributes of the diving there are a bond, I think first and foremost a bond with my dive company.

Facilitator: What do you mean by bond?
Interviewee: A bond means I've established a relationship with Darren who taught me how to dive. When I come I have this - I want to come back and learn from him more and dive with him and have return business; give him my business. So, I have established a friendship, a bond with him and I want to go - so that's one of the reasons I choose this as a destination. I think one of the things is the variety of dive sites here, variety of sites, shipwrecks. Actually, I would even say that the shipwrecking in the Red Sea were something that appealed to me as well, now that I think about it.

Facilitator: So the variety of dive sites it's also what you feature here and the Red Sea?
Interviewee: No, I didn't have that as a feature in the Red Sea.
Facilitator: Okay.
Interviewee: No I wasn't thinking - the reason I was thinking the Red Sea - at least where I went I didn't feel like I had a big variety of where I could go. At least that's what I am thinking now. Here, maybe it's just the familiarity with that because I feel like I am familiar and comfortable with Phuket. There is soft coral, there is the hard coral there is different - liveaboards was very appealing. I haven't done one but I want to. So that destination having the liveaboard experience is an opportunity to go to the - further away but still have a central place.

Facilitator: Why?
Interviewee: Why is that important?
Facilitator: Yeah.
Interviewee: I think because again for the experience of bonding with other divers. Just having that, being able to get up each morning and dive.

Facilitator: That immersion situation?
Interviewee: Immersion or...
Facilitator: Yes.
Interviewee: Yeah, but you're living and breathing diving for that 24 hours on that boat, yeah with other people; sharing experiences.

Facilitator: Sharing experience, yeah.
Interviewee: I'm not sure if I'm giving you the right kind of answers?
Facilitator: No, no keep going, no worries.
Interviewee: I am just thinking of these at the top of my head. Again, this one is appealing, Phuket is very appealing to me because of the cost, again inexpensive. That's a high value to me, value for my money. I've been to several other places where it has cost a lot more to dive than Phuket. So value for the money.

Facilitator: You know what, and another thing is - no I was going to say, I wanted to say - well it's just the whole, well it's the destination that really appeals to me and I'm not sure if that's beyond diving if the destination is super important and it wasn't in Egypt. I didn't care about the destination.

This first one I said I was more interested in the diving, this one I'm more interested. I mean I'm interested in the diving as well as the destination. So, again the destination has a lot of culture, the same as the other one.

I guess I don't know enough. I mean I - to me to be honest I've been in the Caribbean; I've been in Mexico. I've been diving. I've been in Thailand; I've been in Egypt. Diving to me is the same - I don't distinguish between the - I am trying to think of what makes each site different. It doesn't. I mean I wouldn't really know I was diving in the Red Sea versus Phuket sometimes. I mean it's - to me it's just me. It's more of a personal - I do like the shipwreck - I've dived in Hawaii. I enjoy underwater shipwrecks and that's something that's offered here in Phuket, so that's an important attribute.

Facilitator: Let me ask you now, which one is the best place?
Interviewee: Best place for diving or just best place?
Facilitator: Well the idea of the most successful SCUBA diving destination?
Interviewee: Phuket.
Facilitator: Okay what makes Phuket better?
Interviewee: Again it's the whole package. Because the diving has a variety of diving. You could offshore dive, I mean onshore diving, boat diving a variety of dive sites around Phuket on the east side or the west side of the island there's different dive sites easily accessible. But beyond that if you're just doing the dive for a few hours a day it's the whole immersion with the Thai culture. It's the activities to do with the destination, it's the inexpensive destinations. It's - coming from a Western culture having the Asian culture, so the destination is appealing because it's different.

We can easily, I can easily go to Mexico. I can easily go to the Caribbean. Those experiences don't - again I think what I'm alluding to is that the diving is the same to me whether I'm in the Caribbean or if I'm in - I mean the actual underwater experience is the same. But one of the reasons that I keep to choose diving in Phuket and flying all the way around the world not because the water is any more beautiful or there's more fish but because the diving is a secondary. It's all part of the package to me.
So to me I make an effort to come and I have to say as many times as I have been to Phuket diving has centred around that. That has - I said originally it wasn't a concern or a factor, but I have specifically travelled here because of the diving, so it's made the difference.

Facilitator: Wonderful, well let's turn the page. I have a different handout here. Now I would like to ask you to think about the most successful SCUBA diving destination? So what I am trying to - turning the page it means we were in the real world, right now we are talking about the most successful SCUBA diving destination; so, the perfect trip.

I have a list here of destination attributes and I would like to ask you to add new attributes if you think that is necessary. Or you can just delete it the ones that you think they are not relevant. Okay?

Interviewee: Okay.

Facilitator: Then I will ask you, we can talk once you do this.

Interviewee: If I agree with it do I check it or just

Facilitator: Just check, yeah. It depends on you.

Interviewee: Okay.

Facilitator: It's your call.

Interviewee: Okay yeah look I'm going to check if I agree and if I want to eliminate it I'll cross it off, okay. Yes, so easy - these are some of the things that I've said. That one is not important to me. Yes, food. Let me think, what do you mean by additional activities is that this…

Facilitator: Well it's in the boat, I mean.

Interviewee: So, important.

Facilitator: This is specifically related to SCUBA diving features.

Interviewee: I don't think any of this is important. Okay.

Facilitator: Do you want to add?

Interviewee: No, a lot of these things are what I've said. I don't think from looking back at my notes I don't think I - I said a lot of things; clear water, marine life, low cost, culture and environment. This has got me thinking about a few other things that didn't come to mind right away which I agree with. I can't think of anything I've said that I would want to add to this. So, well we talked about the dive shop itself. So you have information about the dive master so I would say there's nothing on here about the dive shop, so I would have to say the dive shop or instructors.

Because sometimes if you're just learning a new skill or something like that I think the dive shop or instruction is important.

Facilitator: What do you mean, the quality, what do you mean?

Interviewee: I guess - yeah the quality of the dive shop. The quality of equipment, you have rental equipment available. I think just beyond rental equipment I've been to some dive shops that pretty scary rental equipment that I was afraid to put on. I think if we're looking at service beyond a good dive master I'd want a good dive shop, a good instruction. If I wanted to get instruction on nitric certification, for example, I'd want to make sure that dive shop had qualified people to teach me. That it was clean. The equipment looked fairly new and well taken care of, so that's important to me.

Facilitator: Okay, wonderful - let me have a look here and I will ask you on other things. For example, well some of them are clear, but I want to go further. For example, good underwater, underwater visibility, variety of marine life, unpolluted dive sites, undamaged diving sites and these dive conditions. So these are relevant, these are important to a successful destination. Why these things are important?

Interviewee: Why, those are the main reasons you do dive. You want to see fish. You want to experience the environment that you're not experiencing on the surface. The best dives that I've ever had is when the water has been still and I can say way out in the distance. I can see the water is very clear. I don't care necessarily how cold the water is, because I can have a wetsuit on.

But to me the number one - I've had miserable experiences where the current has been churning so much and there's so much silt and you can't even see your hand in front of you and I've had to have a flashlight; miserable experience. That's - I'd just rather not even dive than to be in a situation like that.
Then I've been to the Red Sea which was one of the two destinations I said that had amazing visibility, probably the best visibility I've experienced it. Because there wasn't - because it's an isolated inlet and there's not a lot of current going back and forth. So that was - so, yeah that's the main reason I go underwater. To see fish, to see - I don't like to see Coke cans or destroyed - it bothered me the other day when I went and saw all the bleached coral. The coral was all dead because they had a bleaching incident in Thailand. So I think those are all important attributes to me because that's when it comes to mind you see the brochures, the marketing brochures and you see all the colourful fishes. It's beautiful pictures; I want that experience when I go under water. I want to be able see that and experience that like I'm a clear fish aquarium, I don't want that to be obstructed.

Facilitator: What does the experience bring to you?
Interviewee: What does the experience bring to me? More experience with diving you mean?
Facilitator: No, I mean the diving.
Interviewee: Oh what does the dive experience - well as I mentioned prior, to me every dive is - I'm overcoming my fear of the water. My fear of the unknown. I'm a very adventurous person, travel quite a bit, a lot of countries. Diving to me is an adventure, it's an experience, it's a challenge. It's less and less of a challenge but it - it gives me confidence and skills that I'd never thought I would have to be able to feel confident in the water. If you could have seen me before I started diving I just - the more I do it the more comfortable I become with it. It just gives me a sense of peace; confidence that I accomplish something. So, that's just my personal - again coming from a background where I don't take swimming for granted or had a fear of the water. So to be able to do that that's helped me. That's what I get out of it, that's the experience I'm talking to.

Facilitator: I really understand what you are talking. Does your diving experience or activity - these things that you are telling me - does it change your life in a sense?
Interviewee: Yeah I think it did. It gives me - it gave me confidence and it did change my life. It changed my - ever since I've done that it encouraged me to seek out, immediately, when I did get my certifications I was seeking other dive destinations or I wanted to more. I went from open water to advanced, to nitric certification. So there was always something else to obtain or to try. So, I think next I want the night diving. That's the fear of going in the water in the dark, which is unfounded. But I'd like to try that, so, I think, it has changed my life. It's changed my...

Facilitator: Perception?
Interviewee: ...perception, yeah.
Facilitator: Well, okay, wonderful. You have deleted - learn about marine environment and do you want to talk a little bit about this?
Interviewee: I don't know. I don't know why I deleted - I do want to learn but I don't want to be schooled. [Laughter]
Facilitator: You are on a holiday, right?
Interviewee: Yeah I think to me is, I guess I probably took that too seriously that statement, when it says learn I kind of associated that with the classroom. Yeah, of course, I mean it's not like you can really talk about it. But, yeah I'm interested what caused that coral bleaching and why are the fish dying. Why do we see lionfish over in the Caribbean that we never had before? What can we do to - so, I guess in a very casual sense, not a formal sense? I don't really - I am curious I don't have a lot of questions but I don't, I really don't want to read a book about it. I want to learn, maybe just casual conversation. So that's why I crossed it off.

Facilitator: Yeah, okay I will consider you - okay. Well you have deleted landscape and why is that?
Interviewee: I think it's not important to me. I grew up, I live in a very beautiful place with mountains and every place has its own beauty. I think. It's not - the landscape is not as important to me as the destination. Yeah, I do appreciate that but I think the destination being more secluded or private or away from the - I'd rather
probably be out here in the back of Phuket than perhaps the landscape on the beach - being out there on the beach.

Just to me it's - I can go there if I want to but it's not important to me.

Facilitator: Okay, no worries. Talking about marketing attributes. Easy access to information about the destination and the word-of-mouth you have deleted.

Interviewee: Not important to me. I'm a - I investigate regardless of what's presented to me, any marketing material. I am still going to do my own research and check out the destination. So, easy access about the destination. The Internet provides easy access to anything. So I was looking at it.

Facilitator: How do you use the internet?

Interviewee: I use it for everything. I mean I'm a computer scientist so I use it...

Facilitator: No, I mean from how do you use the internet to get access or to get information? What are the tools?

Interviewee: I use, of course, Google. That's the primary source of information and then from there whatever hits I get from Google I'll branch out from there. But primarily just a regular search engine will get me started. Then, usually, if the web, if the dive shop or the tourism board has done their job correctly those would be marketed appropriately as one of the number top 10 hits. Then usually that will lead me in the direction of where I am going. But not important to me because I know it's all marketing. So I'm still going to do my own research.

Facilitator: So, can, do you want to add, for example, Google here other tools.

Interviewee: Sure, and that's probably a good thing, because that's what I did say. So not so much the ease of access is important to me or other people telling me. But it's my own initiative using Google or search engines.

Facilitator: Do you want to add another - or a different?

Interviewee: No.

Facilitator: No, wonderful. Well let's talk about situation or conditions. You have deleted political stability, lack of terrorism threat and lack of disease outbreaks. Why these things are not important.

Interviewee: I'm probably naive. I went to Egypt and I had the experience in Egypt is I had to be escorted by - we had a van of 12 people and when we left the city, because we had to drive an hour to the dive site outside the city. We passed a police barricade and there were police vehicles following us all the way to the dive site. My dive master said do you know why that police vehicle is following us? I said, no. Because you're American. Everyone else on the bus was Canadian. We had to have an escort. So it was a lot of political unrest a few year ago in Egypt. I'm just - I'm aware of it but I travel to places like Africa and there's yellow fever and I don't get the shot and I'm supposed to. So I guess I'm a risk-taker because it's not - I know, maybe that's - to me I'd rather okay this is - Ebola is breaking out maybe I'll go there because that's - tickets will be cheap.

So, actually for me it's actually an incentive to go to the place. So, I know that sounds crazy. I find I go to these destinations because, we flew on 11 September because the tickets were cheaper. I don't tend to - it's a consideration but it's not important to me and naively so. It's just it's not. So that's why I answered, that's why I just marked it off. Most people it probably would be.

Facilitator: I'll tell you, no.

Interviewee: No, okay, interesting, I always think I'm weird.

Facilitator: Look, so this impacts on...

Interviewee: On costs. I think I'm - the reason I'm able to go to 50 countries, I make fairly good money but I pay cash for everything, so I don't live beyond my means. I'm a university professor. I have a lot of time off and that helps. But really to me the more I can save some money and be economical, that's the number one thing for me. Although I do have high standards and taste, I think balancing reasonable costs - I don't want to pay more for something I don't feel is value for my money. I'm not going to stay in an expensive hotel for example if I'm only sleeping there for a few hours each night. So, I'm not going to pay a dive shop just for oxygen tanks if the whole experience, because you know oxygen free, we're actually paying for.

Male: Sorry so are you a SCUBA? Scuba, yeah? I speak to you later.
Facilitator: Wonderful.
Male: Master diver.
Facilitator: Wonderful.
Interviewee: Good.
Facilitator: Good.
Interviewee: My friend [wants to do a water] course?
Facilitator: Okay.
Male: Right, give me your card, your card, number?
Facilitator: Just a second - oh in fact I'm not working as a SCUBA diver here. But I can put you in contact.
Male: If you could - fantastic.
Facilitator: Yes, I will; in five minutes.
Male: Yeah, okay, thank you.
Facilitator: Or in 10, thank you.
Interviewee: That's good.
Facilitator: Put in contact with Darren.
Interviewee: Good.
Facilitator: Well, okay let's try to get back. So the quality of the medical system is not an attribute that you consider as...
Interviewee: The what, I'm sorry?
Facilitator: The quality of medical?
Interviewee: No, it isn't. I've been to Roatán, Honduras for diving. In fact, oh my gosh, now just thinking about it, that's probably my favourite dive site; so Roatán. Yeah, I really, really love Roatán and I should put that. But the point is when I was in Roatán - and the reason I love Roatán is for the same reasons. Cheap, walk off the shore, easy access to the sites, clear water, it's all the same thing. But medical care on that island there's no hospital. There's one clinic. I don't know if you've been there.
That's - so I always think about maybe if I get injured or where we're - but I think about that but it's not a concern. I don't - in fact I know where the hospital is here in Phuket if I need to get to it in Patong Beach, but I probably should think more before I travel.
I guess again just risk-taker and just go out there and do it.
Facilitator: No, wonderful, do you want to add any other attribute here?
Interviewee: No just like I said about the dive shop and instruction. I think that's important to me when I choose...
Facilitator: Do you want to highlight?
Interviewee: Do I want to what?
Facilitator: Highlight it?
Interviewee: Yeah, I think that's something I do want to highlight. I think the people at the dive shop make all the difference. There's a lot of competition out there for people's business and you know what - the price, in the end is important to me, but not as important as the - if somebody wins me over because I feel confident in their ability for my safety and taking care of me, five or ten dollars more is not a big deal. So, I'm not going to compromise my - well here I'm talking about talking to go to terrorist countries, but then I say I'm not going to compromise my life.
But I'm not going to - I won't over five dollars. I mean I would go - so if I - I do check out the equipment. The equipment is - if I'm ever in a situation - I have my own equipment. But if I'm going to rent equipment I look at the conditions of the dive shop and the people working there. Because if they don't take care of themselves they're not going to probably take care of the equipment or me when I'm underwater.
Facilitator: Yeah, so, I will get back to this point here. You are not looking for the most inexpensive?
Interviewee: No.
Facilitator: Are you looking for value for money, wasn't it?
Interviewee: Yes, value for money is exactly what I mean.
Facilitator: Could I...
Interviewee: Yes, that's what I - exactly what I mean. I'm looking for - no and then I just said that I don't - I wouldn't - I don't always go for the cheapest. I look for the cheap but then from there you've got to weigh a lot of other factors to get value for your money.

Facilitator: Yeah, I know, wonderful. Well it's basically this, that's it.

Interviewee: Okay, good, I hope it helps you some.

Facilitator: Yes, you did.

[Laughter]

Interviewee: I don't know if I answered your questions right.

Facilitator: No, of course you did.

END OF TRANSCRIPT
Hi, my name is Ambrozio Queiroz and as part of my PhD candidature I'm conducting some interviews with divers. I would like to ask you some questions about your experience and thoughts in regards to SCUBA diving destinations.

First I would like to hear about your diving experience. How are you experienced as a diver? Lower, medium or highly experienced?

Oh medium.

What are the characteristics that made you describe yourself as medium experience?

A certified rescue diver, I'm on about 80, 85 dives. I think that's pretty - it's not high end but it's certainly not low end either.

Let's talk about your travel experience too. Your SCUBA diving destinations.

Inexperienced, this is my first SCUBA diving trip.

So how experienced are you as a SCUBA diving destination traveller?

Inexperienced, this is my first SCUBA diving trip.

Well you already told me the characteristics. So let's talk about the relation of your diving activity to your travel decision making.

So how is your diving activity important to your travel decision making? Is it not important, not that important?

Oh no, very important. We chose this location so I could go and do two days diving. Specifically this location, yeah.

So in your next trips do you plan to do SCUBA diving again?

Yes, yeah, always. I think my next overseas trip will be Bali - do a [unclear]. I'm just moving to WA and then I'll be doing lots of weekend trips up the west coast.

Well now it's time for the handout. Well this time I would like to ask you to think about the most successful SCUBA diving destination that you have visited in the past.

I'm trying to compare... These two place and the attributes that they - that made this destination successful.

Okay.

I will give you - can you please fill it to me?

I'm trying to think. You got Port Campbell which is where I live on the Great Ocean Road. It's on the Shipwreck Coast and that's - the main attributes to that is the shipwrecks and stuff. I live there so it's dead easy to get to, yeah.

How far from your place?

The beach? A two minute walk.

[Laughs]

So they have shipwrecks. What do you think that...

Yeah, no the shipwrecks, I love it. The shipwrecks, getting in and exploring and seeing what should be up there isn't and it's down here then with all the marine life living there and using it, it's good.

So the marine life is also...

Important, yes.
Facilitator: …relevant, yeah, okay.
Interviewee: My spelling's terrible - just awful.
Facilitator: No don't worry so you can…
Interviewee: Yeah. Yeah so…
Facilitator: Accessibility.
Interviewee: Accessible - yeah, must - easily accessible. I'm just trying to think of another - a good one which would be - oh [unclear] - which is the [unclear].
Facilitator: What is that?
Interviewee: Sorry, my writing - so great marine life. Which they both have…
Facilitator: Do you do any sleepover?
Interviewee: I haven't yet, no. Mine have all be in one day. Three dives a day sort of thing.
Facilitator: It's a kind of day trip.
Interviewee: I camp over - yeah because I go camping. Spend a couple of nights camping and stuff.
Facilitator: Camping and diving.
Interviewee: Pretty much, yeah. Though when I get back to Australia we're driving straight to Perth. I'm hoping to get to Port Lincoln to do the cage diving. Yeah, so. Pretty much here really, great marine life, local to home. Shipwrecks and stuff. Cool.
Facilitator: Well now we are going to move from the real world…
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: …to the perfect world.
Interviewee: Okay.
Facilitator: So I would like to ask you to think about the most successful SCUBA diving destination.
Interviewee: Where the best SCUBA diving is?
Facilitator: It's in your mind.
Interviewee: Okay, well for me it's on my bucket list. My dream dive is in South Africa - is to swim with Great White Shark outside the cage. So no cage just me, the shark, the ocean. That would be my most successful dive.
Facilitator: Okay, I will give you a list…
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: …of attributes. This list is organised by groups of…
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: …attributes. I would like to add attributes if you want…
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: …and delete the ones that you think that are not relevant.
Interviewee: Yeah, okay.
Facilitator: So base it in your idea of most successful SCUBA diving destination.
Interviewee: Okay, the one that I've done or would like to do.
Facilitator: No, it's…
Interviewee: The one I would like to do - yeah in the…
Facilitator: In the - well we are talking…
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: …about the perfect place to dive.
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: So what are the attributes that this destination must have?
Interviewee: Yeah, okay, yeah.
Facilitator: You can tick or you…
Interviewee: Okay.
Facilitator: For example you were talking about sharks. So don't you want to add this attribute as an environmental…
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: …attribute?
Interviewee: Not just sharks just marine life in general, a vast marine life is always good. Nice to see things when you're down there. Yeah, the medical's got to be good for diving.
Facilitator: But are you talking about a specific - like [hyperbaric]…
Interviewee: Yeah, if you're going to dive in a country you've got to have good medical back up. Because obviously the risks involved - you don't want to dive somewhere
where if something minor can go wrong, there's nobody there to help you. Because it will make a minor thing a major thing. Come back to the one and go [unclear]. ... Again the cost again is down to personally it's good to have a low budget - a low cost. But you don't want to be too low that safety is compromised.

Facilitator: So you're looking for value for money?
Interviewee: Value for money, yeah...

[Over speaking]
Facilitator: So you can cut inexpensive and add value for money.
Interviewee: Yeah. Yeah, I don't mind paying a bit extra to get the - the value I guess is with the small comforts in life.

Facilitator: Yeah, I understand you.
Interviewee: Again with the [visa], if I have to pay for a visa then if I want to dive there then it's just a cost I have to pay. I won't not dive somewhere just because I have to buy a visa to go there, does that make sense?

Facilitator: So you just cut it.
Interviewee: Cut that one out.
Facilitator: Yeah, that's right.
Interviewee: Cool. Yeah.
Facilitator: Well let me try to understand some of these attributes.
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: Well you told me about environmental attributes and you have add vast marine life - well it's quite similar to variety of marine life but…
Interviewee: Oh yeah, I didn't see this, yeah it is.
Facilitator: Yeah, no, no worries.
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: Why these things are important to you?
Interviewee: Because that's why we dive to see the - a completely different world.
Facilitator: Why?
Interviewee: Why?
Facilitator: Why do you dive? What are you looking for - I mean not…
Interviewee: Yeah, I understand why…
Facilitator: Your feelings or...
Interviewee: ...yeah, it's a - I personally have trouble explaining to people why I dive, I just love it so much. It's - when I get in - under the water, whatever the stresses of life are, they're irrelevant. Yeah, it's hard to explain I just - yeah, it's just - I love it.

Facilitator: Why do you do that? Do you just love it?
Interviewee: I just love it, yeah. It's - diving's very important to me because of how much I enjoy it.

Facilitator: So when you don't have, for example, an easy dive condition or when you have tough conditions and damaged dive sites. What this thing can bring to you?
Interviewee: I've had a few tough dive conditions, which are great. That has a whole new dimension to it. The damage, I'm guessing you're on about pollution and stuff.
Facilitator: Yes or…
Interviewee: Yeah, that's heartbreaking to see the pollution stuff when you're underneath. I used to be an avid fish - line fisherman. When I started diving I got rid of all my fishing gear because I see the damage underneath and it's heartbreaking, yeah.

Facilitator: Yeah, I can understand you.
Interviewee: You do - I think as a SCUBA diver you do become more aware of little things that make - you wouldn't even think of above the water - that make such a big impact under the water.

Facilitator: Does your - did your diving - first diving activity impact your life?
Interviewee: Yeah, absolutely it opened me up. Yeah, it did. Like I say I got rid of all my fishing gear straight away and it just makes you more aware. I have this - I personally I have a policy now when I go diving or even if we go to the beach is take three. So wherever I dive or wherever I'm walking I take three bits of rubbish and take it away with me and to put in the bin. Rather than just say oh look at that idiot that's put rubbish down.
Taking these three bits with you - especially when you're diving, whether it's hooks or fishing line or lures - or even a beer can, a beer bottle. Just pick up at least three bits every dive and it helps a little bit. If more - if everybody did that it would help massively. That's just a personal thing me and a few of my dive friends do.

Facilitator: Yeah, well I understand you perfectly. Additional activities are not important to you?
Interviewee: No, it's the diving that's important.
Facilitator: So yeah, in a boat it's just the dive.
Interviewee: It's just the diving, yeah. If there's food and water then that's good. But it's - I'm not going there to do sunbaking or anything. I'm going there to get in the water and dive.
Facilitator: Well you have add web search and good websites.
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: How do you use your tools and why is it important?
Interviewee: Why do I use the websites is that? Yeah because you need to get local information on sites as well. If - a lot of it is word of mouth but through the web search and you can look at the different websites and you can pick up different bits of information. Get a feel for the companies a little bit by the way they present themselves.
Facilitator: What are the tools that you use? Google - or - yeah.
Interviewee: Oh yeah, Google, yeah Google, email and just - yeah, Google's the main one I guess, yeah.
Facilitator: Any other?
Interviewee: No, just generally Google on my phone, yeah.
Facilitator: So you have deleted most inexpensive destination...
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: ...and added value for money.
Interviewee: Yeah, it's like I said to you I don't want to go cheap but I don't want to - if I have to pay a bit more to get a better experience then I'm happy to do so.
Facilitator: Let me ask you about situation or conditions. How does this impact on your decision making?
Interviewee: It's more so for this particular trip. Obviously there's a little bit of [instability] but we researched it and it's up in the borders so - which is why we came particularly to Phuket rather than another part of Thailand. To stay away from - to minimise the risk of that sort of thing. Because obviously I just want to get there, we want to enjoy having a good time. Enjoy the diving and not have to worry about a political uprising I guess or anything else.
Facilitator: Do you want to add any other?
Interviewee: None I can think of. Unless you can think of some that maybe that I can't - yeah.
Facilitator: No that's it, that's it. Oh you have deleted short distance to dive site as well.
Interviewee: Yeah, again it's nice to have a short distance. But if I have to travel on a boat for two hours to get to a real good dive site, I'm happy to do it. So to have a short distance isn't important. It's nice but it's not important. I've been on a plane - it's taken us 24 hours to get here now. So I'm quite happy to travel for a few days. I'm happy even to trek through jungles for two days, three days or whatever it is to get to a real good, pristine, awesome dive site if I have to. Just for that one hour dive I'll quite happily go trekking for a week or two [laughs].
Facilitator: So for example - well there is an attribute here, easy access.
Interviewee: Yeah, I wouldn't - it's - again it's nice to have that but it's not my high priority.
Facilitator: Should I delete it?
Interviewee: Yeah, delete it, yeah. It's not a high priority. I'm happy to go the hard yards to get to a good place.
Facilitator: Well basically it's there.
Interviewee: How?
Facilitator: No basically it's there.
Interviewee: Oh okay, yeah, cool.
Facilitator: Do you - or do you want to add...
Interviewee: No, no it's cool yeah.
Facilitator: Yeah, that's it.
Interviewee: Yeah, cool.

END OF TRANSCRIPT
Facilitator: 19 September, [Cotal]. My name is Ambrozio Queiroz and has part of my PhD candidature at Griffith University I am conducting interviews with SCUBA divers. First I would like to hear about your diving experience. How experienced are you as a diver? Lower experienced, median experienced or highly experienced?

Interviewee: Lower experienced.

Facilitator: What are the characteristics that lead you to describe yourself as lower experienced?

Interviewee: Because I just started diving last year, that’s the main reason. I only did I guess 10 divings, so it’s not much.

Facilitator: Wonderful. Let’s talk about your travel experience…

Interviewee: Yeah.

Facilitator: …too in SCUBA diving destinations. How experienced are you as a traveller to SCUBA diving destinations? Inexperienced, domestic experienced or international experienced?

Interviewee: Yeah, I’m not sure - I mean, now I’m from Germany so I’m international experienced I would say.

Facilitator: So what are the characteristics that lead you to describe yourself as…

Interviewee: International experienced.

Facilitator: Yes.

Interviewee: Yeah, that you can’t SCUBA dive in Germany, so I need to go travel apart [laughs].

Facilitator: So let’s talk about the relation between your diving activity and your travel decision making. How is your diving activity important to your travel decision making? Not important, not that important, important, or highly important?

Interviewee: Mm, I would say it’s important. So I would say it’s between two and three.

Facilitator: So now I’m going to give you a handout…

Interviewee: Yeah.

Facilitator: …so I will ask you to think about the two most successful SCUBA diving destinations that you have visited I the past. I will also ask you to list the attributes that made this destination successful.

Interviewee: Okay.

Facilitator: If you want, what I’ll do now - well, let me ask you now, you have deleted additional activities and short distance to dive site. Why these two attributes are not important to you?

Interviewee: Short distance is not important for me because sometimes I also like to travel a little bit by boat to reach the spots. This makes the place a little bit more remote and maybe also less crowded. Additional activities, if I want to go diving I go just for diving. If I want to do additional activities I will do them further on - later on - not at a specific dive. Usually I don’t make just a 100 per cent pure dive holiday. So that’s the reason.

Facilitator: Well, do you - you add whale shark…

Interviewee: Yeah.

Facilitator: …as environmental attributes and of course you’re considering good underwater visibility, variety of marine life…

Interviewee: Yeah.

Facilitator: …unpolluted dive sites, undamaged dive sites, [unclear] dive conditions and learn about marine environments. Why these things are important to you?

Interviewee: I like the undestroyed, nice landscape - especially underwater. Yeah, especially if it’s not polluted. I don’t know, it’s just to see the nature or the life, how this - that’s the main reason.
Facilitator: Why do you dive?
Interviewee: I like water. I don’t know, I like to see maybe also things that are different perspective. I also like the feeling of no...
Facilitator: Weightlessness.
Interviewee: Yeah, weightlessness, exactly. It is kind of nice feeling if you look upside and there’s 20 metres of water above you. Which I don’t know, just nice if you dive and see and can watch or [abide] or the nature - see the nature.
Facilitator: I understand you.
Interviewee: Okay.
Facilitator: So why - what does this diving activity bring to you? At the end of the day, what are you waiting - or wanting - by diving? I mean, what having a different experience, what is bringing to you?
Interviewee: I don’t know, it’s just something you can’t do in your normal life. I mean, diving you must prepare for, you must go there. You don’t see - at least I don’t see it, I just see it only once a year or twice a year for one or two weeks. So that is my thing and it’s completely different. I mean I can relax from the normal - let’s say - all day life. Like I said, I just like watching the nature, just relaxing. For me it’s kind of relaxing.
Facilitator: You have deleted political stability, a lack of tourism [unclear] and lack of disease outbreaks.
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: Why these things are not important?
Interviewee: I don’t know, I’m just - I’m travelling for long time - or more or less long time - and also not so stable regions let’s say, I guess usually it’s all a little bit exaggerated. In the end, if you visit the place it’s not as bad as you think it will be. So if you just - my English sucks, sorry.
Facilitator: No worries, take your time.
Interviewee: If you have the right attitude by travelling and looking for safety by yourself a little bit, I guess you can travel most of the destinations in the world. Especially Asia I guess is really safe. There are countries which I won’t go for diving - Somalia for example or [Eritrea] - but...
Facilitator: Why not?
Interviewee: Because I guess there it’s really dangerous. Yeah, and you also don’t have any infrastructure at all. It’s really dangerous there, that’s what I would say. There I could get killed. This feeling, I don’t have here. I mean I also could get killed here, but I also could get killed in Germany. There is not - the risk level is not so much higher I would say. That is my point of view.
Facilitator: Well that’s it. Do you want to add any other thing?
Interviewee: No.
END OF TRANSCRIPT
Wonderful, that's on. So it's 20 September - what time is it now, nine…
Interviewee: 9:15.
Facilitator: …9:15. Well, my name is Ambrozio and I'm... Interviewee: But I can call you the...
Facilitator: You can call me [Ozzy] and as part of my PhD I'm interviewing divers. So the first thing that I would like to ask you is about your diving experience. How are you experienced as a diver; inexperienced, medium experience or highly experienced?
Interviewee: What? Can...
Facilitator: Inexperienced...
Interviewee: I'm inexperienced diving, this is the first time I was diving ever. I was very nervous before I dived. I didn't know what to expect, but I had really good fun.
Facilitator: Wonderful. Let me ask you now about your travel experience to SCUBA diving destinations.
Interviewee: Okay.
Facilitator: How are you experienced while you're undertaking trips to SCUBA diving destinations?
Interviewee: Okay. First of all, I can dive in my country, I can dive in Israel, a little bit more expensive than Thailand. The reason I decided to dive here, first of all it's very cheap here, a very good place to dive - it's very flat water, very good [unclear] and when you're on vacation you want to experience new things, new stuff, so diving sounds like a great new experience to do.
Facilitator: So how many times did you dive? Sorry, how many times did you travel...
Interviewee: This is the first time...
Facilitator: …to a SCUBA diving destination?
Interviewee: This is the first time...
Facilitator: Okay.
Interviewee: ...I have travelled to a SCUBA diving destination.
Facilitator: Fantastic. So let me ask you about your diving activity, the relation between your diving activity and your travel decision making.
Interviewee: Okay.
Facilitator: How important, in your opinion, is your diving activity to your travel decision making? Is that not important, not that important, important or highly important?
Interviewee: Okay, before I came here I didn't [solitary] dive. I met new travellers and they told me it's just amazing to dive and it's a great experience. Before - we can start - we can continue like that...
Facilitator: Yeah. Yeah, let's...
Interviewee: You want to move there?
Facilitator: Yeah.
Interviewee: So, for me, at the beginning, it was not important. I didn't think that I want to dive in my trip and like I was just saying, met a lot of travellers that recommended me to dive. So I can say it was not important for me, but after doing this experience it's become more important.
Facilitator: Okay, wonderful. So, well, now I'm going to give you a handout. The handout is here. I would like to understand the attributes that you value in a SCUBA diving destination. In your case, as you said, it is your first trip, so let's talk about Koh Tao. What are the attributes that make Koh Tao successful? I can [unclear] to you, I can [fill]?
Interviewee: You can fill and I can talk.
Facilitator: Yeah, let's do it from the list. So...
Interviewee: Okay, first of all, the weather and I came for that for diving. I think it's one of the best places in the world for dive, for beginners, because it's very calm and this is the way I see it. It's very calm, it's very easy to start dive here and first - and the second most important thing is the place. It doesn't cost a lot and from the place I come from, diving it's much more expensive, maybe two times more expensive. So the cost and the [climate].

Facilitator: Okay, inexpensive. About the whole destination, do you think about this or just in the aspects related to the diving activity?

Interviewee: If it had been like shitty place I wouldn't dive here, but it's a beautiful place. This is beautiful and a lot of fish, so no reason not to dive here. It doesn't cost money - it doesn't cost a lot of money...

Facilitator: Okay.

Interviewee: ...a very beautiful place and actually, the guides they were very good.

Facilitator: So you are talking about a beautiful place, what is this talking about the landscape or...

Interviewee: Both, the landscape and the inside water.

Facilitator: The landscape and what?

Interviewee: The ocean itself.

Facilitator: Oh, the underwater world.

Interviewee: The underwater world.

Facilitator: Okay, landscape.

Interviewee: But I don't have experience, so I can't tell if it's good or not...

Facilitator: Okay, so this is...

Interviewee: ...first time I see the - under water.

Facilitator: Okay and while you are here, do you - can you pick one attribute?

Interviewee: To diving?

Facilitator: To the whole destination.

Interviewee: Why I am in Thailand?

Facilitator: Yeah, here, in Koh Tao?

Interviewee: I am in Koh Tao especially for diving.

Facilitator: Okay. I actually have been here before. I was travelling with a friend, he didn't want to dive and I came back especially to dive here.

Facilitator: Okay, wonderful. Okay, fantastic. Look, now I'm going to turn the page and this is a list about the most successful SCUBA diving destinations. So we are moving from the real world...

Interviewee: What is cuisine?

Facilitator: Cuisine, local food.

Interviewee: Local food?

Facilitator: Yes.

Interviewee: What do you mean by word of mouth?
Facilitator: If someone told you that it was good.
Facilitator: Do you want to add any other?
Interviewee: I'm good.
Facilitator: Yeah?
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: Okay.
[Over speaking]
Facilitator: You think that good under water visibility, a variety of marine life, unpolluted dive sites, undamaged dive sites, easy dive conditions are important attributes?
Interviewee: Of course.
Facilitator: Why?
Interviewee: The reason I dive is because I want to see the underwater world and if I can't see it I'm just diving in the darkness, so I wouldn't enjoy it as much as good visibility. I don't want to dive in polluted water. It's just obvious; it just damages the whole experience if these things are not good.
Facilitator: Okay. You have deleted learn about marine environment.
Interviewee: I have deleted this because I feel like I can do it by myself.
Facilitator: Okay.
Interviewee: I don't need someone explaining. I can go and Google, I can see myself for - if everything is good and you have good visibility it's fine for me.
Facilitator: Wonderful. Look, you told me that you dive to see things, right?
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: Why? Okay, you want to see different things, why do you want to see different things? What are you looking after that?
Interviewee: The way I feel, it's like being in a dream, you're open to another world. You're open to another - it's part of the whole experience, to see new stuff, to expect to see fish, to see all the - under water. It's part of the experience, it's very important for me.
Facilitator: Yeah, but, I just...
Interviewee: If...
Facilitator: Keep going.
Interviewee: If I can't see anything, I just go inside the machines that make me feel that I am under water and that's it, I wouldn't need to go to the ocean. You can build a machine that - filled with water, play with the compression inside the machine and give you the same experience, you don't need to go to the ocean for that. You want to go to the ocean to feel like you're living in another world.
Facilitator: What does living in another world bring to you?
Interviewee: Actually, it makes me feel very relaxed.
Facilitator: Okay, relaxed.
Interviewee: I feel quiet, peaceful, that's it.
Facilitator: Okay, fantastic.
Interviewee: I think, if it's been all damaged, like I said before, I can ask someone to build the machine in my country, just go inside and get this feeling. I'm not doing it only just for the feeling of being under water, I'm doing it to see everything.
Facilitator: So if it's damaged, what is your feeling?
Interviewee: If it's damaged?
Facilitator: Yeah.
Interviewee: It's not good. I don't want to experience that sight.
Facilitator: Fantastic. Wonderful. You have deleted - well, about service features in SCUBA diving, you have deleted food on boat, additional activities and a short distance to dive site. Why these things are not important?
Interviewee: Because it doesn't damage the experience. The experience is not eating, not that it's short to the water, the experience is diving.
Facilitator: Okay, diving in...
Interviewee: In - under water.
Facilitator: Okay.
Interviewee: I don't care about if I get bad food on the boat or it takes time to go to the site.
Facilitator: So what do you care?
Interviewee: I care about the things I said before. About this stuff, about the services, first time it's very important to me, I feel like I need to feel that it's safe. The way for me to feel like it's safe is to get the good information by my master, to feel that I can count on him, that I can - I'm going under the water, I need to feel that it's safe before I'm doing it. If I can't count on my master or can't count on my dive, I wouldn't do it.

Facilitator: Okay, wonderful. Fantastic.

Interviewee: So because of that, this stuff is important to me.

Facilitator: Yeah.

Interviewee: I wouldn't do it otherwise.

Facilitator: Okay. Let's talk about tourism features. You have deleted cleanliness and hygiene, accommodation, historic sites or place, cultural activities, local cuisine and facilities for children and elderly. Facilities for children and the elderly...

Interviewee: [You forget, I don't have children].

Facilitator: ...I understand, yeah. But why these things are not important?

Interviewee: Because I come to dive.

Facilitator: Mm-hm.

Interviewee: I come to dive and not come and like...

Facilitator: So it doesn't matter if the quality of this...

Interviewee: It makes it more good, but if I'd been in Thailand and there was some place that all the things will not exist but there is a good price, a good place to swim, undamaged under water, I would go for it.

Facilitator: Okay. Okay, wonderful. Marketing - that's fine - easy access to information about the destination, word of mouth, is it - how do you get access to details about the destination?

Interviewee: Actually, I didn't - when I came to Thailand I didn't think about diving, I just met a lot of people and that's why I was talking about it.

Facilitator: So, in fact, do you want to add that your previous knowledge about the destination was important?

Interviewee: Yeah.

Facilitator: Because...

Interviewee: Because it's made my decision for coming diving.

Facilitator: Okay, previous knowledge. Okay. About the infrastructure, you have deleted all the items that are here; quality of medical system, transport access to destination, transport within the destination and easy access. They are - the infrastructure, it's not important to you?

Interviewee: No, maybe only quality of medical system.

Facilitator: But did you check this before?

Interviewee: No.

Facilitator: Okay.

Interviewee: But this looks like a decent place. Like, you see this place, it looks like it has a nice quality medicine system.

Facilitator: Okay.

Interviewee: They had [a review of] [unclear] before, this place got really good reviews.

Facilitator: So what kind of reviews are you talking about?

Interviewee: I searched on Google...

Facilitator: Google.

Interviewee: ...place to dive in Koh Tao...

Facilitator: Okay.

Interviewee: ...and this actually was the first place that came up and everyone gave it [dive points].

Facilitator: Oh, you mean - you're talking about the - here, the dive operator?

Interviewee: Yeah.

Facilitator: Okay, I got it. Costs, you agree that a feasible price in terms of budget and most - but this is a little bit different, feasible price in terms of budget and most inexpensive destination.

Interviewee: Inexpensive like, doesn't cost much.

Facilitator: Yeah, but it's the cheapest.

Interviewee: This is one of the cheapest.
Facilitator: Yes.
Interviewee: It's important for me.
Facilitator: Okay, wonderful.
Interviewee: It's important because I didn't do it before and I don't want to spend a lot of money on something I didn't do before.
Facilitator: Oh, okay.
Interviewee: I don't care...
Facilitator: I understand.
Interviewee: ...because it's cheaper I don't care to try it. If it was super-expensive, if it was $1000, I wouldn't do it.
Facilitator: Okay.
Interviewee: I tell you for sure, because it's only $200, I do it; if it was more I wouldn't do it.
Facilitator: Okay. Wonderful. Well, you agree that political stability, lack of terrorism threat, lack of disease outbreaks are important?
Interviewee: I wouldn't go to a place that is not safe.
Facilitator: Yeah. Do you think that Thailand is safe?
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: Okay.
Interviewee: I think tourism is one of the most important place for Thailand and because of that, it's very safe here because a lot of places [build by tourists]. If it wasn't safe tourists wouldn't come here. Do you feel it's safe?
Facilitator: Yes, I do. But my perspective, it's a little bit different. I really don't mind.
Interviewee: Yeah. Okay, I mind.
Facilitator: Because - yeah, okay.
Interviewee: Okay, you come from Brazil.
Facilitator: Yeah. Yeah, maybe because of that [laughs]. Entrance policy, so if no visa - it doesn't count, the visa policy, in your opinion?
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: Okay, that's it. Do you want to add any other?
Interviewee: No, I'm good.
Facilitator: Okay. Fantastic, that's it.
Interviewee: That's it?
Facilitator: That's it, [unclear].
Facilitator: 21 September, 10:30. Well hi, my name is Ambrozio and I'm interview diving, asking some questions about their experience and thoughts in regards to SCUBA diving destinations. So first I would like to ask you about your diving experience. How experienced are you as a diver? Experienced - sorry, low experienced, medium experienced or highly experienced.

Interviewee: I'm not sure what you define lower and medium?
Facilitator: It's you.
Interviewee: I think I'm lower. I had like 22 dives, that's it. I have - I'm an advanced open water diver but I have only like 22, 23 dives. I would say it's lower but I don't know what your level is.
Facilitator: It's your perspective.
Interviewee: Okay, so I would say lower, yeah.
Facilitator: Okay, so I would say lower, yeah.
Interviewer: Wonderful. Let's talk about your travel experience to SCUBA diving destinations.
Interviewee: I have international experience.
Facilitator: Oh nice.
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: So what did you do? Where did you travel?
Interviewee: I had my introductory dive in the Galapagos Islands about six years ago. I had my open water and advanced open water two years ago in Utila, Honduras, and now I'm about to dive here in Koh Tao, Thailand, and I'm from Israel so I dived at the Red Sea in Eilat in the south of Israel which is really, really good, and in the Mediterranean Sea which is nothing really to see there but I like the feeling of diving so I did it.
Facilitator: Yeah fantastic. So how is your diving activity important to your travel decision making? For example, do you think that your diving activity is not important, not that important, important or highly important?
Interviewee: I think it's important because for example if I wouldn't - if I had never dived or I didn't have my certification I think I would never come to Thailand, not this time.
Facilitator: Okay.
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: Yeah I know. I understand. So now I have a handout here that I would like to fill. I can fill to you and I would like to ask you to think about two of the most successful destinations.
Interviewee: Two of the what, sorry?
Facilitator: Successful SCUBA diving destinations that you have visited in the past. So thinking about these two places, I would like to understand the attributes from these places that you think made that particular destination successful.
Interviewee: Okay.
Facilitator: So which one? Destination A?
Interviewee: You mean which was the best one?
Facilitator: No. Yeah, two of them.
Interviewee: Two of the best ones.
Facilitator: Yeah.
Interviewee: Okay. I have never dived here in Koh Tao yet. Today is my first dive. So it's going to be Utila, Honduras and Galapagos Islands, Ecuador.
Facilitator: Utila, Honduras. Okay. What now, you had Galapagos?
Interviewee: Galapagos Islands, Ecuador.
So what are the attributes of Honduras, of Utila?

Actually, the way I see it, I enjoy - let me rephrase it. I think it’s - for me it’s more important who you’re with than what you do.

So the places I was in Utila were amazing. It’s kind of like here but I think maybe a little bit better. So I had so many nice people that travelled alone and we went together for a dive, which was amazing. I know Utila is not the best place to dive in terms of what you see underwater. It’s not like the most beautiful place in the world but it’s like maybe the most fun place in the world.

Okay. Can you tell me more, maybe physical attributes of the place?

You have a really nice boat that takes you to the place and so on.

There was nothing special in the boat itself.

And about the service in the boat? Do you want to pick or to highlight?

Yeah really nice boats, like I think the boats here are maybe smaller, so like bigger boats and it’s really nice. So it’s really convenient to go to the place, come back, get out of the boat.

The general service.

I’d say that because of - this is one of the most famous places in the world to do your diving course or your DM course as such so there are so many people who are DMTs over there so you can always have introductory dive, a refreshment dive or a fun dive with a DMT. It’s so easy; you don’t have to wait. That’s really, really nice.

The variety and rare things you can find there. So it was really amazing. So there it was on introductory only me and a guide so it wasn’t a group. So maybe the social activity was not as good as Utila but the dive itself was even better. I saw on one introductory dive in Galapagos more than I’ve seen in open water, advanced open water and fun dives in Utila.

Okay. So which one is the best?

So you’re talking about the variety of...

Okay, So the social relation, it’s very important to you?

I’d say Utila because of what I told you before. It’s better who you’re doing the thing with than what you actually do. That’s my opinion.

Yeah. It’s also - I will add something to Honduras. Utila, it’s a small island, smaller than Koh Tao, and like the main populated place on the island is really smaller than the one in Koh Tao. I think 90 per cent of the people who go there go to dive. So everybody around you dives. So it’s - you feel like you are in a
place where everybody is doing the same as you and it's nicer. It's nicer. You can share your feelings, you can share your experiences and you have lots of people to share it with.

Facilitator: Okay. Why do you think sharing things is good? What does it bring to you? It's a hard question.
Interviewee: It's a hard question. You said there wasn't any hard questions.
Facilitator: No I just wanted to go deeply on that.
Interviewee: Yeah no problem. I'm the one - I'm the kind of person that can be alone but doesn't always like to be alone. So I like to be with people and talk to people. I don't like to be inside of my head all the time. So I think if you do something together and you share...

Facilitator: You feel better.
Interviewee: I enjoy it more. I just enjoy it.
Facilitator: I totally understand.
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: Okay fantastic. Do you want to add anything?
Interviewee: Just go dive wherever you can.
Facilitator: Okay fantastic. Now I'm going to move from a real place to the most successful SCUBA diving destination. So now I'm going to - I'm asking you...

Interviewee: Like in theory?
Facilitator: That's right, that's it. So I have a list of destination attributes, they are divided into groups, different groups, and I'd like to ask to delete or add the attributes that you think are relevant or not.
Interviewee: Okay.
Facilitator: It's a list here I will give you so you can...
Interviewee: Okay. Environment attributes. Do you want to stop [unclear].
Facilitator: Yeah no we can - no worries.
Interviewee: Environment attributes...

[Over speaking]
Interviewee: The water visibility, it's really important. Variety of marine life, it's okay, it's not that important because - as I told you before.
Facilitator: Just - yeah just to highlight, yeah fantastic. Thank you.
Interviewee: Okay, unpolluted dive sites, yeah it's really important and [unclear] important, international [issues] are important, learn about marine environment is important to me.
Facilitator: Okay. Do you want to add any environment attributes?
Interviewee: Environment attributes. Convenient transportation to the - you know it's only the nature, the service. Yeah that's it. I would say...

Facilitator: We can come back later.
Interviewee: Yeah I would say hot places. Cold places are not that good.
Facilitator: Or warm?
Interviewee: Warm places.
Facilitator: Are you talking about warm water or...
Interviewee: Both.
Facilitator: Okay. No worries.
Interviewee: Warm locations.
Facilitator: Or tropical?
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: Tropical weather.
Interviewee: Like in Israel I dove - I dived, dove?
Facilitator: Yeah dived.
Interviewee: Dived in the winter and it was - you put all of your like thick suit and I didn't like it.
Facilitator: I use these in Australia.
Interviewee: No, I didn't like it. Food on the boat, yeah maybe it's good for after the dive. It's nice to have it. Information by dive master, yeah really important. Good [unclear] really important. General service quality, yeah. Additional activities, I would add water too. Water on the boat, like drinking water.

Facilitator: Okay wonderful.
Facilitator: Why do you think this is important?
Interviewee: Because you want to feel safe when you do a dive. It's a dangerous activity and you have to feel safe, you have to be safe.
Facilitator: Why be safe is important?
Interviewee: You go to have fun, to travel, to dive, to have fun. You don't want to think what's going to happen if my equipment is not good. It's not fun.
Facilitator: It's not fun, okay.
Interviewee: And you can injure yourself which is - it's nothing you want to do.
Facilitator: Interviewee: [Unclear], cleanliness and hygiene, yes of course. Landscape, yes. Peaceful and quietness, I wouldn't say peaceful and quietness because if you like to party - yeah.
Facilitator: No worries.
Interviewee: Accommodation, yeah it's important. Safety is really important. Historical site of places, not for me. Cultural activities not for me. Cuisine doesn't matter. Facilities for children and/or elderly. I think if you…
Facilitator: It's your perspective.
Interviewee: Yeah it's okay. Marketing, is it to access to information about destination, yeah. Word of mouth, yeah. Easy website.
Facilitator: Okay.
Interviewee: You're talking about the company or the…
Facilitator: Whatever. So are you talking about easy - sorry easy website…
Interviewee: I'm talking about the diving shop.
Facilitator: The diving shop, yeah.
Interviewee: Like you can see how many comments…
Facilitator: So you use Google?
Interviewee: Yeah I use Google.
Facilitator: What else?
Interviewee: Use Google, use TripAdvisor or all the other…
Facilitator: Do you check that?
Interviewee: Yeah I check that, yeah. I want to see other travellers' recommendation and see how it was, if it was good, how did they find it. Yeah. Okay. Quality of medical system, it's also really important, although I've no idea what's going on up here. Transport to destination, yeah it's important. Transport within destination is also important. Easy access, yeah. Costs. Favourable price, yeah. Most inexpensive destination.
Facilitator: Do you think that easy access - you have easy access to Koh Tao for example?
Interviewee: Yes it's really easy, yeah. You land in Koh Samui and you take the ferry. It's really easy.
Facilitator: Okay. Did you fly from Tel Aviv?
Interviewee: I flew from Tel Aviv to Bangkok, Bangkok to Koh Samui.
Facilitator: Okay.
Interviewee: Situation or conditions, political stability, it's important, lack of terrorist threat important, lack of [unclear] important. Yep. Entrance policy no visa required, it doesn't matter. Cost of visa, yeah it's important. It's really high. I think that's about it.
Facilitator: Okay. Let me ask you now about why - of course these things are important. I just want to understand what do you aim when you are diving?
Interviewee: I aim to…
Facilitator: What is behind this?
Interviewee: To have some activity that I can't do on a normal basis. To see nature, but then again it's not that important but it is important, and to have fun.
Facilitator: To have fun, yeah. Yeah basically it's that. Do you want to add any other?
Interviewee: No I think we went through all of them. Yeah. It's also really important that the attitude of the guys that work in the dive shop.
Facilitator: Okay.
Interviewee: Yeah and most of them wherever I went was really good.
Facilitator: What do you mean about attitude?
Interviewee: You don't want to feel like a number, like you go to a place that sells some service, like you go to a car wash and they say okay, stand here and we'll wash your car in a second, we don't care about you, just give us the money and go off.
Facilitator: Okay.
Interviewee: But most of the places I've been to it's really nice, people are really friendly, people want to talk to you, want to explain, want to engage with you and they really have good attributes.
Facilitator: Do you want to add friendly staff?
Interviewee: Yes. Really, really important. Friendly staff.
Facilitator: Yeah.
Interviewee: Really important.
Interviewee: That's it?
Facilitator: That's it.
Interviewee: Okay.

END OF TRANSCRIPT
Facilitator: Let's go?
Interviewee: Yep.
Facilitator: Today is 21 September, 5:50 in the afternoon. My name is Ambrozio Queiroz and I would like to ask you some questions about your experience and thoughts in regard to your SCUBA diving destination. First I would like to hear about your diving experience. How experienced are you as a diver?
Interviewee: Um...
Facilitator: Lower experienced, medium or highly experienced?
Interviewee: Low experience. I have 91 logged dives. I'm in my dive master trainee program at the minute. I will be going to my instructor's course in two or three months, but that's it.
Facilitator: What about your travel experience to SCUBA diving destinations? How experienced are you? I have three options: inexperienced, domestic experience or international experience. That is also comprehends domestic.
Interviewee: That's travelling to...
Facilitator: To the schools, to Koh Tao and stuff like that?
Interviewee: To the schools, to Koh Tao and stuff like that?
Facilitator: Yeah.
Interviewee: Yeah, for example.
Facilitator: Well, I've travelled quite a lot in the past. For me, to come from England to Koh Tao was quite easy, a very easy destination to come to. Fly in. Get a bus and boat down. It was quite easy and a simple journey.
Facilitator: Yeah, but I mean how experienced are you in terms of number of trips?
Interviewee: To SCUBA diving school?
Facilitator: Yeah.
Interviewee: I've only actually ever been at Big Blue. So this is the only dive school that I've ever come to.
Facilitator: Let me ask you about your - the relation between your diving activity and your travel decision making. How important is your diving activity to your travel decision making? Do you think it is not important, important - sorry, not important, not that important, important or highly important?
Interviewee: It's definitely important to find the right destination for what you obviously want to do in part of the diving. For myself, for me, it was more learning and studying the science of diving so, for me, it's - I had to do a lot of research into the schools and the places I wanted to be. Koh Tao fitted the criteria of what I wanted and what I needed.
Facilitator: I would like to thinking about the two most successful SCUBA diving destinations that you have visited in the past. So thinking about these two places, I would like to understand the attributes that made these destinations successful. Well, I have a handout and I will fill -destination A...
Interviewee: Koh Tao.
Facilitator: Koh Tao. My other option, other than Koh Tao, was Honduras.
Facilitator: Yeah. Utilia, which is a small island in the Caribbean, Central America.
Facilitator: What are the attributes of Koh Tao, for example, that you think that makes Koh Tao most successful?
Interviewee: For me, where I travelled round south-east Asia before, and also being with Big Blue, I know how the school works. I know how they run. The information on their website is very clear and very good.
Facilitator: So you're talking specifically about the diving school?
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: Is information?
Interviewee: Obviously, when I was comparing the two, the package that Big Blue puts together is very good value for money. They had a bigger package offer that they do here other to their Honduras - the company there. More again for experience because I've been here in the past.
Facilitator: Oh, so previous experience counts.
Interviewee: Definitely.
Facilitator: What else? We are in Koh Tao, so...
Interviewee: I've never been to Honduras. I don't know what it's like. Obviously, I know what Koh Tao has to offer, which is obviously this - amazing views and dive sites.
Facilitator: So are we talking about landscape?
Interviewee: Yeah. Definitely. It's a big part.
Facilitator: What about what? What kind of...
[Over speaking]
Interviewee: They have, obviously, such a vast - from open water dive sites to very more technical dive sites. For me, that broad range of diving is what I like.
Facilitator: So you're talking about the offer of...
Interviewee: Of different dive sites. One may offer open water, and then another site could be more wreck or deep...
Facilitator: Okay, let me just rephrase. So you're talking about the diversity of...
Interviewee: Of the site itself.
Facilitator: What else? Do you want to add anything about the underwater world?
Interviewee: For this type of school I know that they're only one of the schools who have their own tech boat, which is very good. There's only a few schools in the world that offer tech diving with their own specific boat designed to that tech side.
Facilitator: I mean for the whole - not only related to the school, but they've...
Interviewee: For the island itself.
Facilitator: Yeah, that's right. What else?
Interviewee: You've got a lot of trails, like viewpoints and stuff like that.
Facilitator: That's it?
Interviewee: Nice secluded beaches. Obviously, it's not just about diving. You can snorkel here.
Facilitator: Other activities related to dive.
Interviewee: Snorkelling. Also have Muay Thai training sessions here.
Facilitator: What about Honduras? You say that you have never been there.
Interviewee: No.
Facilitator: What do you think that you will find there?
Interviewee: For me, I reckon it can be similar to Koh Tao in quite a lot of ways, as in the offer of the dive school itself. They have - it's very orientated around teaching SCUBA diving.
Facilitator: What do you think - well, I can assume that Koh Tao is better from your perspective.
Interviewee: At the minute, yep.
Facilitator: Why?
Interviewee: Because I've only ever been to Koh Tao, so I don't know what Honduras is like because I've never been.
Facilitator: Yeah, but from your mind what...
Interviewee: For me, what's stopped me from going?
Facilitator: Yeah.
Interviewee: Because it was going to cost me more in the long run, and the cost of living. Travel costs was higher, was a lot more, nearly double the cost of travelling. They don't offer the packages as - the package I bought, they don't offer that package as one package.
Facilitator: Okay, fantastic. Do you want to add anything?
Interviewee: No. When I spoke to two - both this school and the school in Honduras they were - when I emailed them they were both on the point. As soon as I emailed them, within a couple of hours I had a reply back, which was pretty good.
Facilitator: So good response in both.
Interviewee: A good response in both schools, yeah.
Facilitator: Now we're going to move from the real world to the most successful SCUBA diving destination. So thinking about the most successful SCUBA diving destination what are the attributes that are important in the SCUBA diving destination? I have a list here...
Interviewee: Marine life.
Facilitator: Yeah, that's it. You can delete if you believe that is not important. You can just make a line. Or you can just tick and say that it's important, and you can add more attributes. Can you please fill it? So this is - it's organised for a group, so SCUBA diving features, environmental attributes and service attributes.
Interviewee: So with the - the good underwater visibility, yes, that is important, but there's no way that we can change or make the visibility any better because it's natural, it's nature and stuff like that. It is important, yeah, if you want to have a fun dive and be able to see stuff, but...
Facilitator: It's your perspective, so feel free. So if you think that good visibility is not important...
[Over speaking]
Interviewee: Just a tick?
Facilitator: Yeah, if you agree.
Interviewee: It is important, yeah. Some people I spoke to here, they like that challenge of being in pea soup, as you say. So, really, no good visibility. They like to be in that, challenging themselves.
Facilitator: It's your case, remember that [laughs].
Interviewee: Ticking it, yeah.
Facilitator: If you agree, just tick. Variety of marine life.
Interviewee: That's definitely important.
Facilitator: Why unpolluted dive sites very important?
Interviewee: It's obviously not good for the fish and the marine life, and it's not good for coral. It doesn't look good when you've got a bottle of Chang lying on the floor next to some coral or anything like that.
Facilitator: Yeah, but what are you looking for?
Interviewee: In what respect?
Facilitator: While diving.
Interviewee: Marine life, different coral features. It's not good to have old engines and stuff like that lying around.
Facilitator: Yeah, I understand that, but let me try to go further into that. So why this thing is important at the end? How do you feel while diving? When you see, for example...
Interviewee: If I see a lot of rubbish it does annoy me because it's obviously human made.
Facilitator: So what's the opposite of having this variety of dive sites and...
Interviewee: How do you mean?
Facilitator: How do you feel when you find these things?
Interviewee: Unpolluted dive sites?
Facilitator: I just want to understand how these things - or how dive is important. What is your aim while diving, your desired end?
Interviewee: My aim?
Facilitator: Yeah.
Interviewee: While diving is to try and become a better diver.
Facilitator: So try to push yourself?
Interviewee: Yeah, try and push the boundaries a little bit more every time I dive, try and understand what's going on while I'm diving, as I'm diving. So all the stuff, like the nitrogen and stuff like that.
Facilitator: So self-knowledge?
Interviewee: Yeah. Undamaged dive sites, easy dive conditions.
Facilitator: Do you want to add any environmental attributes?
Interviewee: I'll have a think.
Facilitator: Okay [laughs].
Interviewee: Service features, food on boat. Not so much me.
Facilitator: Just tick. Just make a line.

Interviewee: If you're paying for a live aboard and the food was no good - like I - when I was in the Whitsunday Islands I spent three days on a live aboard and the food was amazing. You don’t want to be served something that the dog won’t eat. Potentially, if you - yeah, it does - on a live aboard, but out on a day boat, maybe not so much.

Facilitator: Okay. Yeah, let's consider this.

Interviewee: Information by Dive Master. Mm. See, that's your perspective now. See, information by Dive Master, would you not need to answer that question? So the information that I've provided to you, or them?

Facilitator: Well in my opinion...

Interviewee: In my previous diving, the dive...

Facilitator: No, no, no. For example, thinking about travelling to a place...

Interviewee: And speaking to the Dive Master.

Facilitator: Yeah. You're going to dive there so - it's your first dive. Well, you are travelling to the place, so...

Interviewee: Yeah, I suppose. Good dive master, definitely. General service quality. It should be good. Additional activities. No.

Facilitator: Why not?

Interviewee: Why?

Facilitator: Yeah.

Interviewee: Because you're SCUBA diving. You paid for a SCUBA dive trip. Is there anything you should be doing while your SCUBA diving other than SCUBA diving?

Facilitator: No. I agree with you.

Interviewee: Yeah?

Facilitator: Yeah, sure.

Interviewee: You can - after, [unclear] you can snorkel and stuff, but you paid for a day trip of going out SCUBA diving. So any other additions is not really - you've not really paid for that. [Unclear] available. That will always be available here and as part of what you pay. Short distances. Not so much. It depends what you're getting out of the dive. You don't want to be going to a shallow dive site and it's going to take you two hours to get there. If it was going to take me two hours I'd want to be able to dive in a wreck or dive in deep dives.

Facilitator: So at the end is not important?

Interviewee: Convenience is, to maybe get as many people going through to dive in, especially for open water students. They don't want to be two hours that way just to go and do two dives.

Facilitator: No. Forget about this. I'm asking about you. What do you want? It's your perspective now [laughs]. Don't try to thinking about your students [laughs]. It's [wishful] thinking.

Interviewee: It depends what it is.

Facilitator: For example?

Interviewee: I said you don't want to go for two hours out of the way for a shallow dive site.

Facilitator: But it's a fantastic dive site, it's...

Interviewee: Well, yeah, if it's good, like we've got the wreck just there. It's really close. You could pretty much dive it off the long tail. Not so much important, but I'll give it a tick. Tourism features. That should be clean and hygiene. Landscape, not so much because you can't really help that. Peaceful and quietness. It depends again what holiday you're looking for. Accommodation. You want to have a nice comfy bed. Safety. Yes, it's a top priority. Historic sites or places. Could that be translated as dive sites, wrecks or...

Facilitator: No.

Interviewee: Does this just have to be on that land and stuff like that?

Facilitator: Yeah. If you want, you can add here. Or, if you want - we are talking about here. It's what is outside of the water, above the surface [laughs].

Interviewee: See, I have no children or elderly, so that's a no for me. Easy access to information about the destination. If I found it easy to find out, research? Is that what you're asking?
Facilitator: Yeah, if it's easy access. So if you go and can find details about it in the internet - I don't know.
Interviewee: So here, Koh Tao?
Facilitator: Yeah, for example.
Interviewee: You want to research where you're going. Word by mouth is always - always good to hear other people's stories, what they did.
Facilitator: Let me just back a little bit. You're talking about wrecks and all of this. Do you want to add a variety of dive sites, because it's a little bit different from variety of marine life; because you just said that...
Interviewee: Are you talking about the medical system here?
Facilitator: Yeah, medical system.
Interviewee: Medical system here? In Thailand or Koh Tao?
Facilitator: No, no, no. In the most successful destination.
Interviewee: It should be good really.
Facilitator: Because here it's more general, so it's the overall perspective of the medical service.
Interviewee: Most inexpensive destination. Well, this is the cheapest place in the world, most inexpensive. Situational conditions. Political stability. Political stability, so you're saying if there's a coup for like wars and stuff like that?
Facilitator: Yeah.
Interviewee: No-one really wants to go anywhere that's...
Facilitator: There is a war.
Interviewee: ...trouble.
Facilitator: So, for example, would you go to Egypt to dive now?
Interviewee: Yeah definitely, if there wasn't any trouble. If there wasn't a state of alert or anything like that.
Facilitator: Do you check any...
Interviewee: News.
Facilitator: Yeah. No?
Interviewee: I haven't for a long time.
[Laughter]
Facilitator: [Unclear] [laughs].
Interviewee: Well, it is important. Obviously, I would normally check. I wouldn't go anywhere - I wouldn't go to Iraq, let's put it that way, or Afghan, so yeah. Lack of terrorism threat. So you're saying is it important that there's not threats?
Facilitator: Yeah.
Interviewee: Well, they've just had two here.
Facilitator: [Do you live here]? [Laughs]
Interviewee: So when I said that wouldn't put me off, that'd be like - if it happened just before I come here I would still travel.
Facilitator: Do you want my opinion?
Interviewee: Go on.
Facilitator: You don't care about it.
Interviewee: No.
Facilitator: So it's not important.
Interviewee: So you're saying cross it out?
Facilitator: Yeah. So do I [laughs].
Interviewee: Lack of disease. See, when you say lack of disease...
Facilitator: Yeah, well, if it's a place - well, I'm not talking about Ebola or something like this, but it's a place that...
Interviewee: When you say lack of a disease, that means - to me, that would be there's not much disease.
Facilitator: I know it's the opposite. So it's possible to be affected by disease.
Interviewee: So I don't think you would use lack. Say if I was saying to someone that they haven't got enough of this, I'd say you lack confidence...
Facilitator: Yeah, I understand.
Interviewee: ...you haven't got enough confidence. So you're saying that you're lacking disease outbreaks, so you haven't got much disease outbreak.
Facilitator: Yeah, okay, I got it.
Interviewee: Is that how you mean to come across?
Facilitator: Yeah.
Interviewee: It is?
Facilitator: Yeah.
Interviewee: Of course I don’t want to go anywhere that’s got, like you say, Ebola or - HIV’s just spreading across the country. Entrance policy. No visa required. It would be nice if every country was no visa required. To me, I don’t - a world without borders is - I don’t believe we should have borders on the…
Facilitator: So would you go to a place - would it be important in - why you’re comparing two place - for example, destination A requires a visa. B doesn’t. So would you change your mind?
Interviewee: Just because of a visa?
Facilitator: Yeah.
Interviewee: No.
Facilitator: That’s it.
Interviewee: Yeah. So that’s not important. Cost of visa.
Facilitator: Use the same idea.
Interviewee: Yeah. I don’t really want to pay a fortune out, but if it’s a place that I want to really visit, then yeah, I’m going to want to do it. So, again, it’s not going to really be…
Facilitator: Do you want to add any other attributes?
[Pause]
Interviewee: No, I can’t think of anything.
Facilitator: Sure?
Interviewee: That’s pretty much it, mate.
Facilitator: That’s it.
Interviewee: All done?
Facilitator: All done.

END OF TRANSCRIPT
Facilitator: [Unclear] fantastic. Well 22 September. My name is Ambrozio and as part of my PhD I would like to ask you some questions about your experience and thoughts in regards to SCUBA diving destinations.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Facilitator: First I would like to ask you about your diving experience, so how experienced are you as a diver?

Interviewee: I went diving once, but then I went for two straight weeks. So I have my advanced card and a couple of [fun] dives after that, but I'm not really experienced.

Facilitator: Okay, so do you think you are low experienced, medium experienced?

Interviewee: Low.

Facilitator: Okay. How many dives you have logged?

Interviewee: That's the thing, I don't know exactly because my log book was lost in a fire - I had a fire in my house.

Facilitator: Oh really, so...

Interviewee: So I don't know. Like it's somewhere between 12 and 15.

Facilitator: Fantastic, that's good. That's it, that's fantastic. So let me ask you about your travel experience. How experienced are you as a traveller to a SCUBA diving place?

Interviewee: Well I only went once so no, not much, no.

Facilitator: Okay and where was it?

Interviewee: Here.

Facilitator: Oh, in [Koh Tao, Thailand].

Interviewee: Yes, that's right.

Facilitator: Okay and different kinds of travel, how experienced are you?

Interviewee: I'm reasonably experienced. I haven't travelled that much for the last few years, but I used to travel a lot.

Facilitator: Internationally?

Interviewee: Yeah.

Facilitator: Fantastic. So let me ask you about your diving activity and your travel decision making. How important is your diving activity to your travel decision making? Do you think it's not important, not that important, important or highly important?

Interviewee: Well this time definitely highly important, because I went here to go diving. Like I'll spend in total - I spent two days in Bangkok first and I'll probably spend one more day there, but the rest is here to go diving. So yeah, very important, yes.

Facilitator: Do you think that in the future you're going undertake new driving trips?

Interviewee: Yes, for sure.

Facilitator: Good, so now I have a hand out here. I will fill that with your assistance. So you told me that you have visit - you just visit Koh Tao, right, as a SCUBA diving destination?

Interviewee: Yeah.

Facilitator: Okay, can you please tell me the attributes that make Koh Tao - do you think Koh Tao is successful as a SCUBA diving destination?

Interviewee: Yes.

Facilitator: So what are the attributes that you think that make this place successful?

Interviewee: There are many. First of all of course the environment is very nice, otherwise diving would be no fun. Personally I really like the hot water, because I had some difficulty with wearing a wetsuit last time.

Facilitator: Why?

Interviewee: The fit was wrong. It came too tight and I couldn't find one that I could wear. So in the end I had to...
Interviewee: ...yeah, I had to dive without a wetsuit. You can't do that if the water is too cold.
Facilitator: Okay, fantastic.
Interviewee: But here you can, so for me that's very nice.
Facilitator: Yeah, fantastic. What do you mean about...
Interviewee: I probably should buy one at some point that it fits, instead of rent one. But for me that was one thing, but also the expense. It's just cheap here.
Facilitator: So you think that is an inexpensive place?
Interviewee: Yeah, that is - for me it was very important because I just graduate, so my first job so - yeah.
Facilitator: Yeah. What do you mean about the environment is nice?
Interviewee: So there is a lot to see underwater and there is a lot of variety. There are very many different spots here.
Facilitator: So are you talking about the variety of the species, or variety of dive sites?
Interviewee: I think of dive sites, but I think they're going hand in hand because the different structured areas and different life, so they look very different.
Facilitator: What do you mean about - I'm just trying to understand this. So it's the number of different dive sites, for example like a wreck and a cave or whatever?
Interviewee: Yeah, they're also different depths and different...
Facilitator: Okay, a variety of the geography of...
Interviewee: Yes, that's what [I mean].
Facilitator: Okay. Does it impact in the variety of marine [species]?
Interviewee: I don't know if I - I don't know...
Facilitator: Oh, you don't want to do that, okay.
Interviewee: ...so it's - yeah, because I don't know how to [translate].
Facilitator: No, no worries. What else?
Interviewee: I haven't been diving like with a [booklet and things].
Facilitator: [Just important].
Interviewee: Yeah, what else is important? I mean what can you highlight?
Facilitator: I think this is also a very friendly place, but I knew that because I was here so it's...
Interviewee: So well we have a lot of things here, so...
Facilitator: Yeah, so it's the...
Interviewee: ...your previous...
Facilitator: ...thing is I picked this time because I was a bit [out of words] and it was just nice to go to a place I'd been before and didn't have to think about anything.
Interviewee: So previous knowledge?
Facilitator: So that's also - yes, previous knowledge and know that I wouldn't be seeing so much twice because there are so many dive sites here, yeah.
Interviewee: Okay, so you talked about...
Interviewee: Basically a combination of stuff.
Facilitator: Huh?
Interviewee: A combination of stuff, yeah.
Facilitator: You've talked about friendly here. What do you mean?
Interviewee: Yeah, so I mean the instructors are nice. It's easy to talk to people, so the atmosphere here that's a better word.
Facilitator: So friendly staff...
Interviewee: Yeah, but it's also cultivating - I think it has to do with the staff as well and the environment you create as a diving school, that creates a friendly atmosphere along with divers themselves as well. So not just the staff but yeah, but it's something you do as a business [tool].
Facilitator: Yeah, I agree with you. I totally understand. Do you want to add any other attribute from the other [time]?
Interviewee: [Unclear].
Facilitator: Fantastic, so...
Interviewee: Yeah. Let's move now and this time I will give you the handout. Let's move from the real world to the most successful SCUBA diving destination. So here I have
a list of destination attributes and [you're organising] a tour group and I would like to ask you to delete if you believe that this attribute is not important in your opinion of what is ideal place. You can add new attributes if necessary.

Interviewee: Okay.
Facilitator: Okay, so could you please...
Interviewee: Just whether I find them important or not, or do I have to grade them?
Facilitator: No, you don't need to grade.
Interviewee: Okay, because these things tend to always be important, that's the problem with this type of thing.
Facilitator: No worries, fantastic.
Interviewee: Yeah, because underwater visibility is one of the most important things. If you don't have that then it's rather pointless to go diving at all. A variety of good marine life - maybe not so much. If there is one type of marine life you really want to see, then it doesn't have to be much variety and just go for that single animal.

Facilitator: So can you give an example?
Interviewee: Well I've been wanting to see turtles for a very long time and I missed them twice last time I was here. So yeah, I might go to some dive site where I knew there were turtles, even if there was nothing else. So this is not for me absolutely necessary, as long as that what is there is very interesting.

Facilitator: Why it's important to see for example, to see what you want to see like turtle? How do you feel by diving with a turtle?
Interviewee: I don't know, I never saw one but - no, but that would be really I would be elated, yeah. I'd be really happy. I love turtles, but Paris has a small one.

Facilitator: Oh really?
Interviewee: Yeah and I think - and polluted dive sites: yeah, I think that seeing pollution...

[Interruption] [Aside discussion]

Facilitator: Okay, so you spoke about good underwater visibility [unclear], unpolluted dive sites, undamaged dive sites. So basically why these things, these environmental attributes that you have highlighted, why are they important?
Interviewee: Okay, so good underwater visibility is important because I mean you do want to see things. That's why you're diving in the first place, so if you don't see anything you'd just as well stay above water.

Facilitator: Okay, so if you see how do you feel?
Interviewee: I don't know. Somehow it's a bit wondrous with all the water around you and the movement of the sea animals. The entire environment is it looks a little bit like an alien planet, so to me it's yeah, a sense of wonder is I think the right word.

Facilitator: So what counts: experience?
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: Can you give me the consequence of diving?
Interviewee: The consequence?
Facilitator: Yeah. Is that a hard question?
Interviewee: Yes, it is. I think yeah, I think it's important to always keep a sense of wonder about the world and putting yourself into an environment that's entirely different from your usual environment to do that. So to me I think that's the consequence if I can keep wonder in my life.

Facilitator: Yeah, so when you do this, when you have this experience, this wonder, how do you feel? What brings to you: peace, relax, [destress], adventure?
Interviewee: No stress. No, a bit of adventure and also yeah, it is also [awfully] peaceful underwater, that's true. Yeah, peace I think, yeah.

Facilitator: Yeah, peace.
Interviewee: Not really relax because you have to keep a bit of focus on how you breathe and all sorts of - and on what you're doing and on - and maybe that gets better if you dive more, but...

Facilitator: Sure. No, I understand, fantastic. So because we have talked about this a little bit previously, so information by the dive master, good dive master, general service quality, rental equipment available: they are important, just as friendly staff and the atmosphere. How these things are important in your opinion? If you want to pick one...
Queiroz Neto, A. – Investigating competitiveness through customer value in SCUBA diving tourism

Interviewee: Because I tend to travel alone I feel it's important to meet people if you travel alone, you have to make friends and a good is not particular to a diving school, but a good place, a good tourist place - whether it's a hostel, a hotel, a diving school or anything else, that creates an atmosphere where that's conducive to having a good time and to grab a beer with someone and to meet people. For me that is maybe even the most important factor in travel.

Facilitator: Oh yeah, okay...

Interviewee: So I...

Facilitator: ...meet people, it's a consequence a well.

Interviewee: Yeah, this is also a goal for me.

Facilitator: Fantastic, yeah.

Interviewee: So it's one of the reasons...

Facilitator: It's a desire, yeah.

Interviewee: ... I like to travel, is because I like to meet lots of new people.

Facilitator: Why, what do you gain by doing this, meeting people?

Interviewee: It's people pull you out of your environment. People have different ideas about the world [unclear]. They have different ideas about the world. They - yeah, because you - particularly in the field of work that I am in - I'm in technical work. I mean the types of people you meet are generally the same type of people, as me also. So it's nice to meet lots of people, people with totally different educations and different outlooks on life.

Facilitator: Yeah, fantastic.

Interviewee: Yeah, at home I don't do that so much, so when I travel yeah, that's a goal for me to [hear] other people and it's the same thing as with diving. As I said, it gives me a sense of [wonder] to find someone who has an entirely different opinion about the world from me, that's may be very interesting.

Facilitator: Fantastic. So let's talk about the tourism futures. You have [deleted] cleanliness and hygiene, landscape...

Interviewee: Yeah, that's up to a minimum standard, it is important, yes. The landscape of surroundings, yes. If you go for a diving trip then the most important thing is the diving trip. I mean the rest doesn't matter that much. Yeah, I mean the surroundings should be conducive to what I said, like meeting people and talking to people and having a good time. But basically I'm not on this island to look at just the beaches and the palm trees: I'm here to dive.

Facilitator: Fantastical. Well there are some...

Interviewee: Peaceful and quietness, yeah.

Facilitator: Yeah, they are really understandable and I am just picking the ones that I don't have much information about it.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Facilitator: For example, we were talking about marketing. You agreed that easy access to information about the destination...

Interviewee: Yeah.

Facilitator: ...is important...

Interviewee: Yeah and that's...

Facilitator: ...and word of mouth as well.

Interviewee: ...connected to the [coasting at it as well].

Facilitator: Yeah, so blogs and reviews online, so you think that blogs...

Interviewee: Yeah, I think that there's a review or a blog that someone wrote who was there is infinitely better information than whatever any place will provide themselves, because it will always be tainted positively because they want to sell. While someone who's been there, he just wants to tell people what it was like, so he has a different agenda. So I find that online reviews are my key information, doesn't matter how good the deal is. If the people who actually did the deal didn't have a good time it's not a good deal, even if it was free or nearly free right. Then it would be a waste of time, so I like that. I usually base most of my travel decisions on...

Facilitator: Blogs and reviews.

Interviewee: ...blogs and reviews...

Facilitator: Online.
Interviewee: ...and particular reviews.
Facilitator: Okay, trip advisor and personal blogs, tourism blogs?
Interviewee: Yeah, sometimes, yes, but mostly a trip advisor and several other similar sites that I can't think of right now, but there are at least five of that type of sites that I look regularly on. There's an independent travel Wiki that I use - I don't even know what it's called, but if you search for travel wiki you'll find it. It has information on everywhere in the world and it's also managed like Wikipedia, so the information is also not tainted.
Facilitator: Okay, wonderful. About the infrastructure, you added internet access.
Interviewee: Yeah, internet access is now important. I use it for a number of things and not in the least place for my money management, because I like to use - I have several bank accounts and I'd like to use an empty one for travel. So I transfer money into this account, then use my card. That way I can never get skimmed, so that's one fact. I also like to keep in touch with people at home, so that's why I like to have internet access [on location].
Facilitator: Okay, fantastic. So about the course, you have add costs are clear prior to arrival, so...
Interviewee: Yeah, so you don't arrive at some place and you don't know how much it's going to cost you to stay there. That is for me a critical factor. I will not go anywhere where I do not know beforehand how much - in general. I mean it doesn't have to be exact, but in general how much I'm going to spend.
Facilitator: Okay, have you had any experience, bad experience like this?
Interviewee: No, but - yeah, usually it's like scamming if it happens, so that's bad and I find it in reviews also. It's also linked to that, so yeah, because there are so many reviews of everything it hardly happens nowadays. But it does happen that they don't include taxes in their prices in some places. Like in the US tends to do that, yeah, so to in your head add prices before and I find that to me that feels like you're being scammed right. So you're quoted the price and then when you have to actually pay you have to pay more and to me that's... Annoying?
Facilitator: Or not, yeah.
Interviewee: ...so much, yeah so...
Facilitator: Or not.
Interviewee: Or not, yeah, but I...
Facilitator: Yeah, but included...
Interviewee: ...need to know before I go someplace, because I usually - well now I have a job but I didn't have one before, so I was student. So I usually have a very tight budget, so for me it's important to know if I go there I will pay about this much a day: so I can stay there for 10 days and then with 20 per cent or 10 per cent factor I have enough money.
Facilitator: Yeah, I know, I understand, yeah, perfectly. Talk to me about situational conditions. You have add lack of disease outbreaks [unclear]. Doesn't have to be big letters, but it has to say taxes will be included in this or this...
Interviewee: Yeah, because I [can] hear about stuff like malaria. I will just take pills and other stuff that is preventable, I don't care.
Facilitator: Like yellow fever?
Interviewee: Yeah - is yellow fever preventable these days?
Facilitator: Yes.
Interviewee: Oh, I thought it was no vaccine for it.
Facilitator: Yeah.
Interviewee: So no, that I have no real issue with, but if something like haemorrhagic fever starts in some place then I will probably not go. That's just the really nasty diseases, but it has to be a real outbreak. I mean...
Facilitator: A real, yeah, sure.
Interviewee: ...if it's just yes, this area is a...
Facilitator: ...yellow fever, malaria...
Interviewee: ...an area where haemorrhagic fever happens, but it didn't happen ever almost, then I won't care. But if it's a real outbreak, that's for me a reason to go someplace else.

Facilitator: Yeah, like H1N1, the chicken 'flu.

Interviewee: Yes, personally bird 'flu is one of those things that I find severely overrated. I'd say basically to anyone who's just healthy it will just be a 'flu but yeah, I was really thinking about haemorrhagic fever and Ebola and that sort of diseases.

Facilitator: Yeah, no, I got it.

Interviewee: [Lots of - yeah].

Facilitator: Okay, so you have added manageable levels of crime.

Interviewee: Yeah, so I will go to...

Facilitator: How do you deal with this?

Interviewee: ...a place where I can put my things in a lock box and it'll be fine. So you have to do that because there is some thefts. That's for me not a reason not to go there, but when crime might put you in physical danger and it happens on a regular basis, then that is for me a reason to change destinations, because the sensation of not feeling safe - even if the chances of something happening to you are very small - it will damage the experience. So it's not even just the physical safety that's the cause of it: it's the psychological effects that has. I don't want to be stuck indoors after 9:00, after the sun goes down.

Facilitator: Okay, fantastic. Well the entrance policy, you think that no visa required is not important?

Interviewee: No, I said I don't mind getting a visa.

Facilitator: Okay, so the problem is...

[Over speaking]

Interviewee: Some embassies are very, very unfriendly.

Facilitator: Huh?

Interviewee: Some embassies are very unfriendly. I also think [Russia] [unclear].

Facilitator: How was that?

Interviewee: Well to get the visa it was like really big line and this totally disinterested woman working very slowly and then she twisted her hands to look at her watch, just it's 11:00 and it's bang, closed, closed the gate. I will never forget the expression of the next guy in line. He was just standing there. They already - he was reaching out...

Facilitator: Yeah, handling the passport...

Interviewee: ...all his papers almost got slammed in between the closing of the desk.

Facilitator: You go there anyway?

Interviewee: Yeah, then I got a [unclear] to do it for me because I didn't want to do that again. I had to get there like three hours before the visa thing closed and then wait in line for two hours just to talk to an unfriendly woman [I think it is].

Facilitator: Okay, so the problem is an expensive cost of visa?

Interviewee: Yeah, exactly. So I mean if it's up to say €100 I don't mind. If it's a really nice destination that's slightly more than that, I also don't mind. But if it goes up into the hundreds of Euros which it sometimes does, I don't want it.

Facilitator: I got it.

Interviewee: So there's a limit to the cost.

Facilitator: Okay, fantastic. About travel time to this nation, how this thing is important?

Interviewee: Depending on how long you are travelling for - I don't want to travel too long. Also I don't want the time zone difference to be too big and so...

Facilitator: So why?

Interviewee: Because it eats up the time that you have, both in actual travel time and in jet lag. So now I'm going for two weeks and the time difference is what, six hours, so jet lag is manageable. To me that is manageable, but this is really on the edge of how long I would go. I think maybe next time for this short a time I might not fly this far, because it just takes it out of you in time, yeah.

Facilitator: Yeah, let me just understand further into this question. Yeah, but why is that? Is that because of your time constraint? I mean you have to work - where...

Interviewee: Well to me it's all about functional days that you can do fun stuff and the amount of energy you have left at the end of the holiday, because you want to - I mean
the point of a holiday is to get back more energetic than when you left [unclear]. So if you go for a week and after that week there is three days of intense travelling you're going to be broken, tired at the end of it.

Facilitator: Yeah, so you want to be...
Interviewee: So I want to have a good balance between how much time I'm travelling and how much relaxation I get. So now I have two and a half weeks about and I have had two nights travels now and I have to get two nights travels back, so that is significant. So yeah, I have two weeks left basically in between, aside from when I'm travelling itself and that's enough time for me to compensate for the extra stress and for the loss of energy...

Facilitator: [Unclear]...
Interviewee: ...from the...
Facilitator: ...[under way]. Okay, that's...
Interviewee: ...so if I were to fly to Australia for example where the flight's 20 hours and then the time zone difference is 12, then it takes days before your jet lag's gone and maybe even one or two extra days to [get 28:06] the tiredness from the trip gone. Then if you go for two weeks half your holiday is gone and you also have to take some time when you get back to compensate for the jet lag the other way round.

Facilitator: Yeah, sure. Yeah, I understand.
Interviewee: So there's a limitation to that and I think this was already actually for me a little too far for these two weeks.

Facilitator: Okay. That's it. Do you want to add any other?
Interviewee: No, I think that's it.
Facilitator: That's really...
Interviewee: Good.
Facilitator: ...fantastic, that's it.
Interviewee: I hope it was helpful.
Facilitator: Oh...

END OF TRANSCRIPT
Facilitator: Let's go; 22 September. Well my name is Ambrozio Queiroz and I would like to ask you some questions about your experience and thoughts in regards to SCUBA diving destinations.

Interviewee: Okay.

Facilitator: First, I would like to ask about your diving experience. How experienced are you as a diver?

Interviewee: Not that much. I dove once on like a real shallow diving day in Turkey and then I got my open water licence [these] couple of days. So that's my experience with diving.

Facilitator: Okay, fantastic. So in about your travel experience to SCUBA diving destinations. So how experienced are you as a traveller to this kind of place? I mean, inexperienced, domestic experienced or international experienced?

Interviewee: No, I come from Holland. So diving, there's not much to dive in Holland, not many cool places even. So not that experienced. This is my first backpack trip and Turkey [unclear] so yeah, I haven't been looking for diving locations. But I'm going to.

Facilitator: Oh yeah, that's the third question.

Interviewee: Yes, I am going to.

Facilitator: So what is the relation between your diving activity and your travel decision-making? Is that not important, not that important, important or highly important?

Interviewee: Well I think it would be in the - no it's important. Because I went especially to [Koh Tao] to get this diving licence and afterwards, for my next travels, I think it would be important because I want to do one location where it's possible to dive, a cool place. So yeah, important from now on.

Facilitator: Okay, fantastic. So now I would like to ask you about two of the most successful trips that you've had in the past two SCUBA diving destinations. So Turkey?

Interviewee: Yeah.

Facilitator: And here in Koh Tao. So do you know - do you remember where in Turkey?

Interviewee: No.

Facilitator: Okay, even the coast or something that I could [direct unclear]?

Interviewee: No, I'm not sure of that.

Facilitator: Okay, no worries. Let's go. What are the attributes that made Turkey successful in your opinion?

Interviewee: When you considered the dive?

Facilitator: Well the whole destination.

Interviewee: Well the destination, it was just a coincidence that we saw the option that we could dive there for a day. So we took it because I always wanted to dive. So that's about it. There wasn't much to it.

Facilitator: And what about the dive by itself?

Interviewee: It was cool but it was really touristic. Everybody was saying - everything was set up as it were. We didn't get much of an instruction. It's just here, you breathe through this and we didn't go very deep. I think we went six maybe eight metres and that's about it. Then we went through like a - it seemed like sort of a course. You followed this guide, the dive instructor and it was really simple and they had these bags with food there and they shook it or they opened it and the fish came. So it was really set up in advance. It's not like here in Koh Tao where you actually see the natural habitat as it is. It's not set up.

Facilitator: Okay so in Turkey it looks like it was a kind of simulation or something like this? Well not really a simulation. I mean there were actual fish but it was more of a really quick fun dive just for tourists who didn't have any experience with diving,
didn't need to get experience. You couldn't get your licence or anything. It was just - you could do that or you could go to a market or you could go sailing and diving was one of the options. So it's a really simple set up.

Facilitator: Simple attraction.
Interviewee: It was an attraction, yeah, you could say that.
Facilitator: So what about Thailand? What about Koh Tao, what are the attributes?
Interviewee: Koh Tao is really cool. The whole island of Koh Tao is set up for diving. I knew this so I really wanted to go there.
Facilitator: Or here. [Laughter]
Interviewee: Here, yeah, yeah. I wanted to go here to get my licence and to just see and it was far better than I imagined. It was far more elaborate than I imagined. It took like three and a half days with academics, watching videos and stuff so you could actually get the licence and then I got enthusiastic so I'm going to do the advance course myself. So it means that they've done a good job because they got me interested.
Facilitator: Yeah, but what are the attributes? I mean the physical - what...
Interviewee: It's beautiful.
Facilitator: What is beautiful?
Interviewee: Well the whole scenery. It's like a dream beach.
Facilitator: The landscape or the water?
Interviewee: The landscape and in the water. The whole thing. Like I said you see the natural habitat and it's far more diverse than let's say the Turkey thing. I [saw] three different kinds of fish and that was it and here you can - it's luck. Like they had a whale shark. That's just a coincidence that that happened. Not that I saw it of course but the fact that it's an option. It's cool, the people are really enthusiastic divers. That's another attribute that I would think that. Like the instructors really - they come here for - I don't know how long, [all those things].
Facilitator: Okay so the staff, enthusiastic.
Interviewee: Yeah because they really want to dive themselves.
Facilitator: What about the underwater features? Can you highlight some...
Interviewee: Diverse.
Facilitator: Diverse of what?
Interviewee: Diverse of fish, coral and just through the - I don't know if that's the word but the style because some of them were really much coral or rocky and other places were just like sandy beaches but on the water.
Facilitator: Okay so let's think about two options, two ideas, diversity of marine life and diversity of dive sites?
Interviewee: Yeah I think I've only been to three different dive sites. Of the four dives I had one was a duplicate. Even though we went to another part of that place. So I think it's really diverse but I'm not experienced enough to really tell how diverse it can be. I'm assuming if you actually go to the Caribbean or something, that would be totally different as well. But as a first dive site I think it's awesome. It was good visibility. That's also really important. Even though my mask fogged up but that was my mistake.
Facilitator: Oh it happens. Good visibility, what else?
Interviewee: Just the ease with which it goes. Like the instructions...
Facilitator: Easy conditions?
Interviewee: It's easy conditions. You feel like you are able to do this even though you may not be sure in the beginning. I didn't hesitate but some of the other people were like, I don't know if this is for me but they did it anyway. They got enthusiastic as well and I think the whole atmosphere here attributes to that.
Facilitator: Atmosphere?
Interviewee: Yeah, the atmosphere is like the vibe. Everyone comes here to dive and it's a funny thing because the dives start early mostly and normally if you go to like a party island no one thinks about going to bed at 10, but here it's a viable option because you've got to get up at six o'clock, so yeah.
Facilitator: Do you want to add any other attribute here?
Interviewee: I wouldn't know what to say now.
Facilitator: Okay fantastic. Now we're going to move from the real world to the most successful destination. So I have here a list of attributes that I'm going to give you. So I would like you to think about the idea of the most successful destination.

Interviewee: Like the dream destination.

Facilitator: Yeah, it's the perfect place.

Interviewee: The perfect destination.

Facilitator: So we have the attribute here, organised by groups. So I would like to ask you to check if you agree that it's a relevant attribute and you can delete if you don't think that it's important.

Interviewee: Is there a maximum number of them I can choose?

Facilitator: No, no.

Interviewee: Because otherwise I would just go select everything right?

Facilitator: Yeah, no worries.

Interviewee: Good underwater visibility is a must. Variety of marine like, yeah that's also - unpolluted dive sites, I haven't seen a polluted dive site yet but I can imagine that kind of sucks. Undamaged dive sites, yeah sure. Easy dive conditions, yeah it's the fact that you can just take a boat here and everything's going easy, so yeah. Learn about marine environment, I would say it's nice but it doesn't have to have that.

Facilitator: It's your opinion.

Interviewee: Okay service features.

Facilitator: Just cross a line.

Interviewee: I mean I could check everything but that would be of no use. So I'll kind of prioritised.

Facilitator: Do you want to add any other attributes? Because this is related...

Interviewee: Comfortable.

Facilitator: Comfortable, like what?

Interviewee: Like stuff like temperature.

Facilitator: So warm water?

Interviewee: Yeah, warm water or just yeah...

Facilitator: What else?

Interviewee: As a starter, as a newb, a diving newb, I'd like the warm water just so you don't have to - that's one less thing to think about. So yeah, warm water. Warm water, yeah, I think that would be a good one. Service features, food on the boat; I don't care about that. It's nice that they have it but I could also always bring my own stuff. Information by dive master, yeah that's always nice. Where are you, what do you want to know? Good dive master, yeah, der. General service quality, that's so broad I'm going to do that.

Additional activities, I wouldn't - no, I don't think I need additional activities. I come to dive. It's the same difference between when you go snowboarding, you can go snowboarding in a [Apres ski, [Apres ski school, but if it wasn't there I wouldn't mind. I've come to snowboard.

Rental equipment available, yeah because I don't have my own stuff. Short distance to dive sites, no, don't really matter. If you have a lot of cool people on the boat, a trip of two hours is no problem. A trip of two days however is a different story.

Tourism features, cleanliness and hygiene, yeah. Landscape, it's always cool. Peaceful and quietness, it doesn't have to be. No, peaceful, it could also be like everybody's enjoying themselves laughing. It's not peaceful and quiet so no. Accommodation, you've got to sleep somewhere and you don't want to do it between bed bugs, so yeah. Safety of course. Historical sites or places, no, not really. If I go for that, I go to other places. It's as simple that. You're a traveller. So you go to this place because it's the best diving place. You go to that place for the cultural things and so on and so on. Every place doesn't have to have it all.

Cultural activities, the same goes. The tourism features, I like cultural activities but they don't have to be on my dive site. Local cuisine, that's always good. Food is awesome. Local lifestyle, love that. Even though Koh Tao is not local at all. It's just aimed at tourists.
Facilitator: Yeah. Would I like facilities for children and/or elderly, it's always nice to have but as I'm neither or have neither...

Interviewee: That's it, it's your perspective.

Interviewee: Right. Marketing, easy access to information about the destination, yeah that would be awesome. Word of mouth, yeah that's the best thing. If someone says that's the reason I came to Big Blue Diving...

Facilitator: Yeah, why?

Interviewee: Because a lot of people said, you've got to go there. I could check on Google which place is the best and reviews and stuff like that but yeah, if three people I met say that's a cool place, why not try it. I'm here for a couple of days. If in the first day I was like, this sucks, I can leave, go somewhere else. Word of mouth yeah.

Other than marketing, I don't need new marketing but it has to be clear and obvious what the options are. So I'd like a booklet or something that you can see here what are the options. Now we've got a [unclear] it's all good, but that can be a bit better.

Infrastructure, quality of medical system, yeah stuff can happen, you want that. Transport access to the destination, airport, yeah.

Facilitator: Yeah what?

Interviewee: Well yeah you've got to get there. So that's - yeah you don't want to go by horse and carriage or something. Transport within the destination, no, depends. No you can always - of course you have to have transport but it doesn't have to be super easy or anything. Easy access, no. It doesn't have to be easy access.

Facilitator: Why?

Interviewee: If it's really cool I'm willing to do it the not easy way to put some effort into it. If I'm here for - I have three days, okay I want easy access I want to get there fast, but most people here are at least travelling a month. Most people are in Koh Tao at least a week. If it takes one and a half, two days to get here it's okay. It doesn't have to be easy access. It's not like any of us are really in a hurry.

Gosh, feasible price in terms of budget, yeah. For me it's not such a big issue. I'm doing fine but it doesn't mean you have to pay exuberant prices but here in Koh Tao it's awesome. It's cheap and I don't have any relevance to it, I don't know what normally an open water costs. I have no idea. I just heard it's cheap to do it here in Koh Tao. It's awesome to do it in, it's beautiful. Sure I'm in Thailand, let's do this. So yeah, I would say yes.

Most inexpensive destination, no. If it's cool I'm willing to pay for it. But if you are looking for more value for money, you always look for value for money. If it's too expensive for what you get, it sucks but I don't have to be scraping the barrel money wise if something is cool and it costs a bit more, sure why not I'll pay but then it has to be good. It shouldn't be crap.

Facilitator: It has to be good attending [these] attributes?

Interviewee: If I would say it has to be good. I would say that the quality of the dive site has to be good and the accommodation has to be good. Like when I pay a lot I don't want to sleep in a dorm, stuff like that. I want to have my own place but maybe I'm a bit older than the average back packer, it's all good.

Facilitator: Totally understand it.

Interviewee: So I have a bit of money to spend so no worries there. Situational conditions. Political stability, it's a - I get why it's there but no. Lack of terrorism, look I always want a lack of terrorism threat, lack of disease outbreaks, that's always cool but the thing is if it has it, if it's in the news depending on what it is, like there was a bomb in Bangkok, yeah that doesn't mean I'm not going to Thailand. If like the whole country is at all-out war, I'm not going. But there is a difference. These things...

Facilitator: It's different.

Interviewee: It's different.

Facilitator: Yeah, it is, definitely.

Interviewee: So as of now it doesn't pay - if there is an all-out war or an Ebola outbreak, stuff like that, no big worries.
Facilitator: Yeah, okay.
Interviewee: Entrance policy, no visa required, no. You can get a visa and a visa isn't like massive amounts of money. If it would take like four days in some kind of small house where you have to discuss with four military guys to discuss why you have to enter the country that's a bit different. But if it's just a thing like you fill in this form, you pay $45 and you get your visa, like Vietnam, no worries.
Facilitator: Let me ask you, do you want to add any other?
Interviewee: I wouldn't know - these situational conditions, entrance policy is not important. When I go somewhere, really to dive, it has to do with the diving. So the dive site, cleanliness, hygienic, affordable accommodation and stuff and of course safety. If you come here and like the cylinders are rusty, I'm not trusting that. But other than that, if it's a racketey boat that makes a lot of noise, yeah it sucks. I would rather have [unclear] quite a bit. If it does, I don't really care so much.
Facilitator: Let me try to understand what are the consequences when you have a good trip. For example, why do you dive?
Interviewee: I wouldn't know these situational conditions, entrance policy is not important. When I go somewhere, really to dive, it has to do with the diving. So the dive site, cleanliness, hygienic, affordable accommodation and stuff and of course safety. If you come here and like the cylinders are rusty, I'm not trusting that. But other than that, if it's a racketey boat that makes a lot of noise, yeah it sucks. I would rather have [unclear] quite a bit. If it does, I don't really care so much.
Facilitator: Let me try to understand what are the consequences when you have a good trip. For example, why do you dive?
Interviewee: I dive because it's new for me.
Facilitator: So it's for experience?
Interviewee: It's for experience, it's life experience and because I like to do new stuff. The life experience thing again and because it's different in the way that you're not used to it. Like marine life and all. We all know fish, we know what a fish is, but if you're actually swimming with them and I don't mean only the small fish but if you see a - like I've never seen a fish a metre big up close, today I have. And I mean up close, not like you go into an aquarium but actually swim them not through them but among them.
Facilitator: Let me try to understand what this brings to you beside experience? Happiness?
Interviewee: Yeah, yeah, happiness.
Facilitator: [Is for] what else, what?
Interviewee: I think it also has to do with the fact that you understand the world better. There is so much more than we tend to think about...
Facilitator: Understand the world?
Interviewee: Normally I'm at home or at work. I have my friends, I go out and do stuff. But diving 30 metres below sea level, swim between fishes, it's not something I do often. So it broadens the world. It widens the world. It makes the world a bigger place and that way you think about there is so much more, what else is there. So it could be like a sort of air quotes, a gateway drug to new experiences. I think that's the - so it makes me happy and it also makes me happy the fact that I'm able to do it. Not everyone is able to do it.
Facilitator: Let me try to understand what this brings to you beside experience? Happiness?
Interviewee: Yeah, yeah, happiness.
Facilitator: So you are talking about pushing yourself?
Interviewee: Yeah, but not only that. I mean actually the ability to go to another part of the world. I live in Holland. This is the other side of the world and I come here to dive and that I have that option. That I'm in my means, financially, time wise, physical ability, mental ability, who knows what, that I can do this. That means that...
Facilitator: You can do this.
Interviewee: Yeah and that makes me enjoy it more because I would love for everyone to be able to enjoy this but because I know there's some people can't enjoy this I have the feeling that I have to enjoy for them. It sounds so fucking corny when I say this but I just mean that we have to respect the fact that...
Facilitator: It becomes a kind of ambassador.
Interviewee: Ambassador, yeah, but the fact that - I think you have to value what you have. You don't know - you don't value your legs until you can't use them anymore. If you're in a wheelchair, stuck for six months or the rest of your life, then suddenly whoa, walking is awesome. But you don't understand that unless you've seen the other side. That's what I mean by doing stuff like this but I also meant - for me it's like a winner's [unclear], same thing. Not everyone is able to ski or snowboard and when I am there I'm so aware, that's the word maybe, aware of the fact that I'm lucky to be able to do this.
Facilitator: Okay, that's interesting.
Interviewee: I don't know if I can translate this well enough in English but I think that's important that we should be aware of the fact that this is…
Facilitator: It's special.
Interviewee: It's special what we do and if it is…
Facilitator: Do you think you are special to have access?
Interviewee: No, I'm not special. I was born in the western world. I am a white male in 2015, that's - I don't have any issues with a lot of stuff that some people have and I'm aware of that fact. So I think I am lucky. I didn't have to do anything to be born this way. To do other stuff. To be financially in succeeding in that way, yeah, that's just me. I'm a hard worker. But besides that, hard work can only get you so far. You have to do the, what are you going to do next and this is my way of doing stuff. I'd like to bring other people with me. This is my first dive, actual dive.
Facilitator: You are hooked.
Interviewee: Yes I'm hooked but see I can imagine that I'd bring a friend of mine along which maybe isn't financially that successful [that you say], it's on me, come, this is cool, let's do this. So yeah, I like to broaden my horizon and broaden other people's horizon and I think I'm lucky that I'm able to do so.
Facilitator: Okay, fantastic. Well, do you want to add…
Interviewee: That was a long story, sorry.
Facilitator: No, fantastic. Do you want to add any other?
Interviewee: No, I think I've covered all the bases.
Facilitator: That's it.
Interviewee: Awesome.
Facilitator: Awesome.

END OF TRANSCRIPT
Hi, my name is Ambrozio Queiroz and as part of my PhD at Griffith University I would like to ask you some questions about your experience and thoughts in regards to SCUBA diving destinations. First I would like to hear about your diving experience. How experienced are you as a diver, lower, middle, or highly experienced?

Hum..Is it based on what? Years of diving or my perception?

Your perception.

Low, then

Wonderful, why? What are the characteristics that make yourself describe yourself as a low experienced diver?

Obviously, I just told you my certification and what I have held for ten years now, I only have around 25 logged dives and I don’t think that is a lot. Some of my friends have 300 dives. So, I am low.

Fantastic. Let’s talk about your travel experience to SCUBA diving destinations. How experienced are you as a traveller to SCUBA diving destination? Are you inexperienced, domestic or international experienced?

It is very hard to say because I am from Germany and I came to Australia. So, would you count this as International or Domestic? Because now I am a permanent resident and I am diving from Cairns. So, for me that is domestic. You know? I haven’t really dived anywhere else except for like Cairns and Port Douglas areas.

So, the Great Barrier Reef Area

Yeah.

So, let’s consider domestic experienced.

No international... like of course I’ve to Thailand but I know... that wasn’t a long dive but you know.

So, let me ask you about the relation between your diving activity and your travel decision making. How important is your diving activity to your travel decision making? Do you think that is not important, not that important, important or highly important?

Important.

Ok! Wonderful! Fantastic.

Well, Now I’m going to give you a handout and I would like to ask you think about two of the most successful trips to SCUBA diving destinations. I would like to tell me destination A and B and list the attributes that made this trips successful.
Interviewee: All right, cool... cool. So place, Cairns – Australia.

Facilitator: So, do you want to point a particular place in Cairns or a particular...?

Interviewee: Actually, I am going to right down the dive operator. So, one is Pro dive and if you go their website you’re going to see where they dive: Flynn reef, Milln Reef and Saxon reef, I think. It is out of Cairns. And this one is also Australia but that is Quicksilver. If you hop on their website you will see where they go... Agincourt Ribbon Reef is fantastic. You put your head underwater even just snorkeling it is like you are on a different planet.

Facilitator: What is the name of the place?

Interviewee: It is Port Douglas, just North of Cairns. But because of the Agincourt Ribbon Reef, you know... like where the continental shelf starts, the clearly of the water is like insane, 100% of visibility, the amount of fish was just like.. I should probably been righting this.

Facilitator: Yeah! Sure... Go

Interviewee: Ahm... Yeah, so... that was only a day trip and that was actually a liveaboard. Do you want me to make a distinction here as well?

Facilitator: If you want.

Interviewee: I don’t know... it might be ... a day trip and this was a 3 days, 2 nights live aboard. I don’t know it might help you, you know.

Facilitator: Aham... Great visibility?! Ok...

Interviewee: Yeah! Hum... like, just the marine life, just ‘what colours’... I can’t even... when I tell people about it... you know, It is just insane. Last time I went for a walk, I met two people from Victoria and they’re like: ‘Well, we are not gonna go out to the Great Barrier Reef because we heard, you know, it is very low quality’ and all like... they have been shit through the media. That’s obviously...you should probably turn this off

Facilitator: No worries, keep going.

Interviewee: You know, through the media, you know, they say that ‘you gonna loose your world heritage status and it is really bad quality’ but it’s not. If you go to Port Douglas, it is just insane. That is because it’s less people.

Facilitator: So, ahm..so, the colours of the corals... you said also Marine Life

Interviewee: Yeah! The....ahm.. What is?...The abundance, like, you know, the number, the variety and the abundance... the number of fish down there, like you know, yellow, blue, shiny and silver, you know... it is everywhere... it’s just different... so, I am going to say abundance and like you said, variety.

Facilitator: And you also said less people. Is that important?

Interviewee: Because they go out of on the pontoon... It's actually on the Pontoon, it might be a lot of people... but it’s less crowded in term of marine operators that go to a site, you know. In Cairns, sometimes you have three or four boats all sitting on the same coral and it just a little bit crowded... you know, where about... it’s their reef, the Pontoon is there reef, their license. Yeah, so, I think less crowded.

Facilitator: Do you think anything what of the water?

Interviewee: I was just thinking... there is a huge boa... like a it’s a fast trip, fast trip to the reef. It means that your time at the reef is maximized. Because, they are so fast...
it means more time on the reef. A very comfy boat too, comfy boat. Here there is also a social side... because obviously if you are going for three days/two nights, I like the people on board. Obviously, it is all divers... it’s your kind of people... you know, what do we call it, sociability?

Facilitator: you can say that, you can use that.

Interviewee: Hanging with other divers.
Facilitator: Do you know them previously?

Interviewee: No. I met them on board. I went there as a single traveller and I came back after three days, they were all friends. Some of them I am still in touch with them.

Facilitator: What about the crew?

Interviewee: The crew was really cool, too. Because this operator is smaller in terms of numbers, they’re focus more on divers. It’s a liveabord vessel for divers. And the other guys in Cairns they take everything: they take snorkelers, they take introductory divers and I think that there was only around three certified divers on the day. Which is great... a small number but can be overwhelming with all the other people on board. Chineses too.

Facilitator: Funny crew

Interviewee: You want to experience the underwater world. That is why we learn to SCUBA dive. Not because you want food on board.

Facilitator: So, why do you dive?

Interviewee: Again, it is for new experience. Like, I like water sports, don’t get me wrong... I like to swimming, snorkelling but learning to SCUBA dive was... like I was scared of it. So it was something to challenge myself too. To get comfortable in the water breathing through the strange thing in your mouth. So, it was something to face my fears. Well, in my first night dive, Like I said that, I remember that and when you look back and it is all black behind you all. And then you go quickly and pick up. You know, I enjoy myself underwater. I still do other like, marine based activities like snorkel, I started paddle board. I like to

Facilitator: How you fell while SCUBA diving?

Interviewee: How I feel when I am SCUBA diving? Pushing myself, facing my fears, just seeing new stuff, just being in that underwater world. Because, we are not supposed to be there as humans. It is not really our environment. Otherwise we would have aqualungs.

Facilitator: Do you want to add any other attribute?

Interviewee: No. It is pretty comprehensive. Just gathering together. I guess, sociability. Just getting divers together... I enjoy talking with other people about their diving experience. SO, I don’t know... Just the dynamic of the people coming together on board. Which is something that the dive operator couldn’t control... the dynamic of people coming together. Sometimes you just have people on the group and they are not what you are looking for. But if you have a good group of people, it is going to make it really worthy trip... a trip that you will remember. Cleanliness you have, dive master, yeah... so helpfulness. Crowds... You’ve got the number of people... where would you put that? But it will be a service feature?

Facilitator: No, maybe here. Why these places

Interviewee: I am looking after small number. Anything to 30 people. Other than...
Interviewee: Yeah, probably. Like Bali? Sometimes you see all these boats coming and they take 50 people out and it's just so crowded. And you know you're not going to get any good and it's probably trumped to death anyway. But you know, probably less people. And I don't mean 6 or 7 people. I mean anything below 35 and this better refers to what you just said, controlled access. And it needs to be someone that pays attention like caring capacity …. That it's not only...

Facilitator: So, why controlled access is important?

Interviewee: Less people. Just in terms of getting to a site and if you have a lot of people, you probably have to have: your group will go 10 o'clock, your group can go 11 and straight away you have got limit time to spend in a particular spot. It is also like… I don't like fighting with people over a Bomy. I want the Bomy to be mine. And it is also .. a lot of people, you know. There great studies. They hit the reef with their elbows, their fins.. it just looks trumped to death.

Facilitator: Do you thing that less people is important to prevent damage to the corals?

Interviewee: Yeah, in my mind anyway. Controlled access.

Facilitator: Would you pay more if you have a small group?

Interviewee: Yeah.

END OF TRANSCRIPT
Facilitator: Well my name is Ambrozio Queiroz and as part of my PhD I would like to ask you some questions about your experience and thoughts in regards to SCUBA diving destination. So first I would like to hear about your diving experience. So how experienced are you as a diver?

Interviewee: Well I started my diving career in 2001 in New Zealand as an open water diver and now I'm an instructor.

Facilitator: Lower, medium or highly experienced?

Interviewee: Highly experienced.

Facilitator: Okay, wonderful. So let me ask you now about your travel experience to SCUBA diving destinations.

Interviewee: Sure.

Facilitator: So how experienced are you as a traveller to this place? So inexperienced, domestic experienced or international experienced?

Interviewee: International. Yeah, international I would say. I've dived New Zealand; I've dived Bali; I have dived at Mauritius and I've travelled up the East Coast in Australia diving a few dive sites around here as well, and Thailand as well.

Facilitator: Fantastic. That's it. So let me ask you now about the relation between your diving activity and your travel decision-making. So how important is your diving activity to your travel decision-making?

Interviewee: In the beginning it wasn't but more so in the last probably five years my holidays have been planned around my diving. So I will choose a place to go, a place for diving first, and then obviously...

Facilitator: So to give a grade, do you think it's important or highly important?

Interviewee: For myself it's highly important.

Facilitator: Highly important.

Interviewee: Yeah. People have bucket lists; my bucket lists are diving places around the world.

Facilitator: I totally understand. Fantastic. Now I'm going to give you a handout and we're going to fill this together. So I would like to ask you to think about two of the most successful SCUBA diving destinations that you have visited in the past. So I

Interviewee: Mauritius and the Great Barrier Reef.

Facilitator: Okay. Where in Mauritius?

Interviewee: I dived all over Mauritius: west coast, north coast, more so west coast, west of Mauritius. So do you want the name of the towns?

Facilitator: If you - can you pick one particular?

Interviewee: Flic en Flac.

Facilitator: Flic? Can you spell that?

Interviewee: F-i-c, new word, e-n and f-i-a-c.

Facilitator: Okay. I'll have a look there. Great Barrier Reef. Aussie land.

Interviewee: Aussie land.

Facilitator: Okay. So what are the attributes?

Interviewee: Of Mauritius?

Facilitator: Of Mauritius, yeah.

Interviewee: Ten, 15 minutes from land to the closest reef.

Facilitator: So short distance to the dive site?

Interviewee: Correct.

Facilitator: Okay. What else?

Interviewee: Variety of dive sites within a short distance: caves, wreck diving, all these different reefs, and the marine life.
Facilitator: Variety, abundance?
Interviewee: Abundance and variety than anywhere I've been.
Facilitator: Okay. Oh really?
Interviewee: Yep.
Facilitator: Of marine life. Okay, what else? For the whole destination?
Interviewee: Weather.
Facilitator: What do you mean by weather?
Interviewee: The weather was perfect all year round. Visibility - we hardly had days with bad visibility. The price.
Facilitator: Price?
Interviewee: Dead cheap, dead cheap, very, very cheap.
Facilitator: The weather, do you mean also warm water?
Interviewee: Yeah definitely, warm water, sunshine and visibility, all of these.
Facilitator: Okay. What else?
Interviewee: People.
Facilitator: People. Like what for example? Crew, staff?
Interviewee: Crew and the safety, their…
Facilitator: Professionalism.
Interviewee: Yeah their professionalism on safety compared to other places in the world I've been where safety is not very important.
Facilitator: Dive staff.
Interviewee: Yeah. That's about it.
Facilitator: Okay. What about Great Barrier Reef?
Interviewee: Great Barrier Reef. Well, the fact that it's the world's biggest reef, and it interests me a lot because I've studied marine biology as well.
Facilitator: Oh really?
Interviewee: So on here not only do I get to do fun dives on a variety of different reefs, on different reefs there are a different variety of marine life. Some dives I do for fun and some dives I do for like my own personal research.
Facilitator: Okay.
Interviewee: You had that within that - this area. You've got - how big is the Great Barrier Reef? You've got hundreds of sites all the way up the East Coast, all the way up the Great Barrier from the top down to the bottom. Then again there's the variety. Further south you've got shipwrecks, which you can go diving. They don't usually have any shipwrecks up here.
Facilitator: Variety of dive sites.
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: Okay.
Interviewee: I guess under this one as well, the variety of fish life that I've seen there, you don't really get - like what you see here is not necessarily what you can see [unclear].
Facilitator: Yeah. So what do you see here that you don't see there?
Interviewee: Well sharks for one, like bigger sharks, even reef sharks you don't. That's about it. Oh here what I see more of than I see on there. Moray eels.
Facilitator: Moray eels.
Interviewee: For sure. On a daily - I probably see 10 to 15 moray eels. Here it's hard to find. Manta rays, oh an abundance of manta rays. Turtles I see more so here than I do over there.
Facilitator: Okay. Let me do the hard question now. Which one is the best site? Which one is the best destination?
Interviewee: Mauritius.
Facilitator: Why?
Interviewee: Just because I…
Facilitator: You already said or do you want to add new things?
Interviewee: Oh no, just the fact that they've got so much - I saw - the vibrance, the colours of the coral, the variety and the quantity of marine life I saw there compared to here. I don't know whether - not many people go to Mauritius diving compared to the amount of people that come here so I don't know whether that plays a part in - but yeah. And the fact it's 15 minutes. Here you've got to go a whole hour
and a half unless you can afford the helicopter flight. I guess as well as here, weather's not all year round. Come cyclone season it's all - the visibility is not that great.

Facilitator: Okay. All good here? Yeah. So let's move from the real world to the most successful SCUBA diving destination in your opinion. So I have here a list of attributes for the most successful SCUBA diving destination. So could you please tick?

Interviewee: Most successful like in the world?
Facilitator: For you.
Interviewee: For me?
Facilitator: Yes.
Interviewee: Not figures from...
Facilitator: The most successful SCUBA diving destination in your opinion. So I have a list here of attributes. So I would like to ask you to tick if you think that this is relevant or you can just cross if it's not relevant, and you can add attributes if you want. So I ask you to fill.

Interviewee: So what am I doing?
Facilitator: Yeah just tick.
Interviewee: Now is this off the boat or off the dive shop?
Facilitator: It's tourism features so here it's just related to SCUBA diving. This is more broad, so this is destination as a whole.
Interviewee: I wouldn't know how to answer that because I didn't really have to do much investigating about the destination.
Facilitator: So what do you do?
Interviewee: What did I do?
Facilitator: Yeah.
Interviewee: I went over there to visit friends who happened to know the owner of the dive shop who then just gave me a job. Word of mouth.
Facilitator: Okay so you can use word of mouth and you can tick - you can delete if you want these answers.
Interviewee: But I do know when I have looked for friends, like on the Internet, not much about dive sites but about dive companies, like how to get hold of them.
Facilitator: You can - if you want to add reputation of maybe the dive operator here.
Interviewee: Yeah TripAdvisor.
Facilitator: You can - here TripAdvisor if you want to.
Interviewee: [Unclear].
Facilitator: Outbreaks.
Interviewee: Lack of terrorism threat. Political stability. So if I cross out, that means it doesn't apply because you need a visa to get there.
Facilitator: No, no - yeah sure. So if you say that - if they request visa it doesn't matter, you will go. That's it. Oh good. Let me ask you what are the consequences of having these attributes in a destination for you? How does it impact in your diving on your experience?
Interviewee: It gives me a taste of what the other side of the world has to offer.
Facilitator: I don't want to give you - I don't want to put words but let me try to ask in a different way. So how do you feel by having this or not having? For example if you go - if you are going to dive in a place that the visibility is not good, you don't have variety of marine life, how do you feel?
Interviewee: Oh sad, very bad. I wouldn't go back there.
Facilitator: Oh great. It makes me want to go back for sure. Return trip would definitely - you know. It's somewhere I'd recommend to people highly to go.
Interviewee: What is the impact in your life? How do you feel? Do you feel happy, excited?
Facilitator: Of course, very happy and very excited. I live for diving. To go to a site that totally blows you away is - you feel good about it, considering the threat to coral bleaching around the world and the global...
Interviewee: Scale.
Facilitator: Yeah that's right, and to go and to still - the history as well and how the other side - yeah how they run their SCUBA diving. The shipwrecks that you dive,
they've got tell you different history compared to ones that are here. Yeah but it makes me very happy, very excited.

Facilitator: Okay, fantastic. So food on boat and additional activities, they are not important?
Interviewee: No. Well considering that it only takes 15 minutes to go to a dive site, you would really only go out there to go for a dive and come back. Obviously food - there'd be food in the dive shop or you could go to purchase your own. But to me if it's only going to take a short amount of time, you're not spending the whole day out in the water so therefore food's not important. Yes if you were spending a whole day out in the water, of course you would expect food to be supplied.

Facilitator: But in your case...
Interviewee: No it wasn't a major selling point for me.
Facilitator: Okay. Why short distance to dive sites is important? When you have this...
Interviewee: It gives you a chance to do more dives a day. Not only that, but to be sitting on a boat for a whole hour and a half, people get seasick and with me rocking boats make me tired. Sometimes you just want to get there, and the weather can change within an hour and a half. You want to be able to when the weather's great have your window and make your move.

Facilitator: Does it involve safety as well, dive safety?
Interviewee: It would but not to me it doesn't. The fact that you're 15 minutes to land in case anything had to happen but I didn't fear for my safety out there. Obviously anything could happen but they're pretty up to scratch with their safety and stuff like that. But yeah I guess the distance, you just - it gives you more time to do more dives; you're not wasting time, travel time.

Facilitator: Okay. Why do you dive?
Interviewee: It's my relaxation and my stress relief, my escape from the world. People drink to unwind, people go for runs to unwind; my way to relax and unwind is diving. Totally different world. You've got above the water or on earth or underwater and on Mars. But it's just a - you just forget; you feel weightless under there, the colour - colour stimulates one's mind. The colour, the different shapes and sizes, and I guess the fact that my interest in marine biology, how things grow.

Facilitator: Your curiosity is satisfied.
Interviewee: And the adventure, the unknown, exploration, exploring new sites that you've never seen before.

Facilitator: But the adventure comes from the new experience or from the dive by itself? Can you see the difference? For example doing a drift dive or a wreck dive or diving to see new things to push yourself.
Interviewee: Yeah push yourself, see new things. I may dive five times in one site but no one dive is ever the same. You go exploring places you haven't; you'll see stuff you haven't. But yeah my - I prefer diving new sites, places I've never seen, if I had the choice.

Facilitator: So you make the adventure, you get the adventure from diving in new...
Interviewee: Correct. Correct, yeah.
Facilitator: Okay, I understand. Okay. Do you want to add any other attributes here?
Interviewee: Tourism features. Another place as well - another thing, like if I had to do research of places to go, I would look at popularity based on reviews as well. That would influence my decision.

Facilitator: Okay so using TripAdvisor?
Interviewee: Oh yeah.
Facilitator: Let me just - so reputation.
Interviewee: Reputation.
Facilitator: I will put reputation here. Reputation.
Interviewee: I guess what it has to offer. My next destination I want to go is to Palau because of the history, World War One and World War Two. Something like that attracts me to go diving compared to if someone said oh come dive off another site here, I had the choice out of the two.

Facilitator: Okay.
Interviewee: History is a big thing as well.
Facilitator: Do you want to add here wrecks or history in the dive?
Interviewee: Yeah for sure. Wrecks are good, wrecks and history.
Facilitator: Do you want to add variety of dive sites?
Interviewee: In one place, yeah. Yeah, rather than having to travel.
Facilitator: All good?
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: That's it. That's it.

END OF TRANSCRIPT
Facilitator: My name is Ambrozio Quieroz, and as part of my PhD I am conducting interviews. I would like to ask you some questions about your experiences and thoughts in regards to SCUBA diving destinations. First I would like to ask you about your diving experience. How experienced are you as a diver?

Interviewee: I would consider myself as relatively experienced. I started diving in 2002. Since then I have almost done about 1000 dives all across the globe. I was travelling quite a bit. I have seen different things. I have tried out several different things. Regarding my skills, I am doing technical diving as well, which is wreck diving, deep diving, rebreather diving, with all different kinds of gases and gas mixtures. This is actually the level I am at.

Facilitator: So you are highly experienced.

Interviewee: Yeah. Let's say ambitious amateur. I'm not a professional diver. That's what I try to avoid as much as possible. I'm still amateur but on a relatively high level.

Facilitator: The second question is about your travel experiences to SCUBA diving destinations. You already started to talk about it a little bit. Do you consider yourself inexperienced domestic or internationally experienced?

Interviewee: Internationally experienced, absolutely. I mean of course to stay in shape I also do dives at home regularly, but I'm also in a club in Germany. Once a year at least I do an international trip. That's the minimum. Sometimes even two or three times if possible.

Facilitator: The third question is - it's about the relation between your diving activity and your travel decision-making. How important is your diving activity to your travel decision-making? I have a degree, so not important, not that important, important or highly important?

Interviewee: If I go for diving it's highly important, absolutely.

Facilitator: But in general for your travel - I mean for leisure.

Interviewee: It's important. At least it's important, yeah, absolutely.

Facilitator: Important. I have a handout here, and I would like you to think - to ask you to think about the two most successful SCUBA diving destinations that you have visited in the past. So could you please list the attributes that make these destinations so successful?

Interviewee: Warm water.

Facilitator: Yeah, but I need the two places.

Interviewee: Okay. In general...

Facilitator: No - yeah.

Interviewee: Okay, let's start with Philippines.

Facilitator: Philippines. One particular place there?

Interviewee: Malapascua.

Facilitator: Malapascua.

Interviewee: Malapascua.

Facilitator: What are the attributes for this place?

Interviewee: It's warm water.

Facilitator: Warm water.

Interviewee: Good weather. Visibility. Certain - how do you say - quality of marine life, let's say, so that you have a wide choice of different animals, different stuff, and preferably I would like to see bigger fish, so like sharks, rays...

Facilitator: So variety of marine life.

Interviewee: Variety of marine life.

Facilitator: In abundance.
Interviewee: Yep. As well, another point is of course the accommodation in terms of cleanliness, availability. Also the infrastructure in terms of transportation. To get there you need to have boats, you need to have a car, so to get all the way down to this place - it's not connected to a highway or anything. It's quite difficult to get there, so you have to have somebody who's helping you out to get there.

Facilitator: Let me just ask, accommodation and infrastructure, the way that you are saying, they are a negative attribute.

Interviewee: It's difficult to get there. That's the point.

Facilitator: And the accommodation? Just to be sure.

Interviewee: It's supposed to be clean, and this is a bit difficult at that place because...

Facilitator: Okay, so it's a kind of bad attribute, negative attribute.

Interviewee: Yep.

Facilitator: Okay, keep going.

Interviewee: The second destination, another favourite is Croatia. I'd like to emphasise the island of Rab, R-A-B.

Facilitator: Sorry?

Interviewee: It's an island.

Facilitator: What's the name of it?

Interviewee: Rab. R-A-B.

Facilitator: R-A-B.

Interviewee: So that's actually a small island. Again visibility, warm water, easily accessible by car.

Facilitator: So it's opposite.

Interviewee: Yes, it's - for me it's very comfortable to get there.

Facilitator: Why?

Interviewee: I use my own car, get there, so I can bring my own equipment with me. This is something which I...

Facilitator: So it's a short distance to you.

Interviewee: Relatively short.

Facilitator: Relatively short.

Interviewee: I mean still - relatively short, but it's still doable, so I can take my own equipment with me.

Facilitator: How far from your place?

Interviewee: It's about 1200 kilometres.

Facilitator: Okay. So it's relatively short. [Laughs]

Interviewee: It's one day to get there.

Facilitator: Okay.

Interviewee: That's actually - that's I call relatively short.

Facilitator: So 1200 kilometres.

Interviewee: It's one day. One day of travel.

Facilitator: One day.

Interviewee: Yeah. You have good accommodation there, good infrastructure.

Facilitator: Like what?

Interviewee: You have good dive shops where you have access even to mixed gas. As I told you I do technical diving, and for those in particular you have to have a good infrastructure. So you have to have good compressors in place, gases. You have to have access to oxygen, helium. That's available.

Facilitator: So all these things are specific infrastructure to the dive operator.

Interviewee: Right.

Facilitator: Okay. What else?

Interviewee: All right. Of course what - there is plenty to see. There is interesting marine life as well, but I'm also interested in wreck diving, and there is a wide choice of different wrecks available and accessible.

Facilitator: So a variety of dive sites.

Interviewee: Yes. The only bad thing I have to say about this is that it's become more regulated, so for instance where you used to have a permission, you have to buy a kind of - pay diving taxes and all this, so the government of Croatia was charging divers specifically. I found it a little bit disgusting.

Facilitator: So a relatively expensive fees to have access to...
Interviewee: Yeah, they're forcing you to make use of a dive shop. If you want to dive independently, which is also doable because it's a public sea, so nobody can protect you from that, you have to have a specific permission, which is relatively expensive. It's 400 Euros a year just to get into the water. This is - I find it a little bit disgusting.

Facilitator: It's a kind of national regulation.

Interviewee: Yep, and this is also contradictory, because in the past it was public so everybody could jump into the sea where he liked. Of course there were some regulations in place about not diving in harbours and ports and others of course for safety reasons. But nowadays they're even forcing you more and more that you have to make use of existing dive shops.

Facilitator: Okay. What else? Or is that over?

Interviewee: I think this is covering both spots.

Facilitator: Hard question. Which one is the best?

Interviewee: I can't say that, because they are both so different. They do different things. One is recreational SCUBA diving, and the other one is hard-core tech diving. You can't compare them. Both things are very nice. Both things I like to do. My heart would actually say probably the wreck diving at Croatia is my favourite.

Facilitator: Because of the wreck dives and...

Interviewee: Specifically the thrill. It's the challenging thing. It's more challenging, more exciting, with all the preparation, planning. It's more complex. That's probably why I like it even more.

Facilitator: Okay. Fantastic. Let's go to - we are going to the final turn. So now I would like you to think about the most successful SCUBA diving destination. It's something that comes from you. I have a list of attributes here. They are - I would like to ask you to tick, saying that this is important or you can delete, just crossing. I have gaps here, I have space, so you can fill with the attributes that you think are relevant for the most successful SCUBA diving destination.

Interviewee: All right.

Facilitator: Okay?

Interviewee: I'll have a look.

Facilitator: You can put it here.

Interviewee: Sure.

[Activity 11:22 to 12:19]

Facilitator: So you are listing different kinds of - do you want to put them together as varieties of dive sites? Or no?

Interviewee: I don't know how specific you would like to have it. I mean you can also summarise that. It's about the [unclear] of the dive sites. So it's supposed to be - there should be variety, but to me actually it's relatively challenging.

Facilitator: Okay.

[Activity 12:51 to 14:12]

Interviewee: Okay, so number 7 is about safety, so there's something they should - there should be trained people on board or in the dive shop with access to the equipment and how to use. They should behave professionally. Like for instance here on board you have [hosties] who are [unclear] combined dives and this is a bit borderline. I mean I don't care because I don't need to have anybody supporting me. I can look after myself. But if you have to rely on those people, I am doubting that they can really help you. I have seen them diving and they are just surviving themselves underwater. I'm not sure about that. Another safety feature to my opinion is having [desk and] support. The dive shop should not only consist out of diving and diving operations. If you need support for booking or in case of complaints or little issues, questions, even invoicing, all this should be transparent and professional. So there is some...

Facilitator: Administrative...

Interviewee: It belongs to the business. That's also what I would require. So if I call the shop then I'm expecting somebody is answering the phone, or at least answering an email within the next 48 hours, or stuff like this. This is sometimes - when you talk about dive shops, sometimes quite a weak point. Accessibility to people.

Facilitator: I understand. Now I have tourism features.
Interviewer: I don't have children.
Facilitator: Go ahead.

Interviewer: If I'm diving, I'm diving. Food is important. Accommodation. Landscape should fit. Cleanliness, this is absolutely a must.

Interviewer: If you talk about easiness to access of information, it's including internet, all kind of sources is it?
Facilitator: Yes. But basically the main way - the main communication to the destination. So if you want to add different things like forums or Trip Advisor or…

Interviewer: Yeah, but this should still - still any kind of operation nowadays is supposed to have its own website. It should be made from a good quality. It should really explain exactly what is the service they are offering, and also to my opinion should have always transparency about costs, so that this should be communicated in a good way, so that there are no surprises afterwards.

Facilitator: Like what?

Interviewer: When you're booking a low cost air courier, for instance, then sometimes you'd be surprised about the price that you have to pay afterwards. It's looking cheap, but at the end of the day it's almost 30 or 40 per cent more expensive than you thought. This is something actually this is giving you a bad experience. This stays in your mind and it's always connected to this dive shop. They treated - there was no transparency on pricing and all this. So this is actually different here. When you check the website here, they have their PDFs or their catalogue where they are exactly showing this is the price level, this is what you're booking, this is what you pay, and this is it. So there's fully, a hundred per cent transparency about this. There are no surprises. No extra hidden charges or anything. If you're booking any extra services like a dive guide, this is something they explain to you very clear. This is what it takes, this is what we're offering you, you can go for it or you don't. It's your choice. This is what I'm talking about.

Facilitator: Okay, fantastic.

Interviewer: Political stabilities and all this. For me this is - I'm not afraid about terrorism attack, but I'll give you an example, Egypt, I don't travel to Egypt anymore since about - I stopped travelling regularly there since almost four years since all the trouble has started. You feel that, because you feel the unhappiness of the people. I mean if you're just focusing on your sport and your diving and you stay just in your resort, you don't see that. You don't feel that even. I have many friends who are still travelling there and doing dives and having a good time there. As soon as you leave your resort, as soon as you leave your hotel and get on the road, you're on the streets there, the people are not happy, and you feel - you see that. It's all frustration and all this. So this is one of the reasons why I don't go there anymore.

Facilitator: Okay.

Interviewer: Infrastructure, specifically it should support dive matters.
Facilitator: You can add.

Facilitator: Hyperbaric chamber.
Interviewer: That's something that should be supported somewhere around that has capacities just for the sake of safety.

Interviewer: No, if I want to go there I don't care. For this I don't care.
Facilitator: Okay. Let me just have a look.
Interviewee: Sure. Hopefully you can read it.
Facilitator: Yeah. Let me ask you - when you have a destination, a successful destination, so you have these attributes, what are the consequences for you of having this?
Interviewee: The chance that I want to go there for diving is pretty likely.
Facilitator: How do you feel? What does it bring to you?
Interviewee: It will raise expectations. It is making me want to see it myself. I want to experience it. It awakes some desires.
Facilitator: That's basically what it is that I'm looking for. I'm trying to understand how these things impact in your life.
Interviewee: So actually like for instance now Australia - if my brother wouldn't live in Australia it's not very likely that I would get here because it's too far away. There are many other places which are easily accessible to me, where I can even do my most favourite tech diving stuff for less money. So this is actually not a cheap destination for me. But because I can combine it with the trip to my brother, I said okay in this case it's a good opportunity also to get out to the Great Barrier Reef. Then it made sense to me. But if I would just have to do a booking only to see the Great Barrier Reef, it's not very likely that I would do that.
Facilitator: How do you feel when you have this?
Interviewee: When I have this package, let's say, that's something where I would say it would make me interested, absolutely interested, a place which I would consider that I have to see.
Facilitator: Why?
Interviewee: Because it would fulfill all the needs that I have regarding diving.
Facilitator: So what are the - what are these needs?
Interviewee: For me actually the primary issues are being good sites, visibility, are all around the diving. Actually I can live with a lower quality of accommodation or maybe with a bit lower quality of food, as long as the diving is good. I can tell you I've been to dive sites where I was sleeping in a camp, so there was almost no service level, but the diving was awesome. That's why you get there. That's why you want to see this, because this is a place where, for instance, you have any specific wreck, or where you have specifically nice sites in terms of marine life. So for me, diving is the absolute priority.
Facilitator: But I'm trying to go further. I want to catch your feelings.
Interviewee: Okay, emotions, okay.
Facilitator: That's right.
Interviewee: Actually excitement, so absolutely that you get excited about it. It gives you a certain satisfaction as soon as you have completed the dive, or as soon as you have seen it. For instance I would be very sad if I would not have seen any sharks when I get to the Great Barrier Reef, just for example. It would really give me a bad feeling about it. There are certain...
Facilitator: So bad feeling...
Interviewee: Disappointment is also possible. I know when you go for a dive - for whale watching, for instance, and you don't see any whales, you will be very disappointed as well, because this is by purpose the reason why you get over there, why you do all this. This is the same like with the diving. You have a certain quality of expectations, things that you have to see, and there it can go pretty wrong. This is also something that can damage your picture about a destination, because if those things don't happen to you, then you might think why should I go there again, or you would also give this word to mouth.
Facilitator: You would spread - yeah.
Interviewee: So if somebody is asking you what was your experience there, you might say it was not good because this and this and this was missing. To me actually I have - when I get somewhere I have certain expectations, things I would like to see. Also I can become quite disappointed about things. But as well, if I have accomplished the mission let's say, then it's given me a good satisfaction, a good feeling, and even a certain kind of happiness.
Facilitator: If I do this I have...
Interviewee: If you do this you will have a destination that would be very interesting to me, that I would very likely to consider to visit, to see. If you can make all this together to happen. According to my experience in this context, this doesn't exist, because there's always something missing. There's always a certain point which is not covering these needs. It's either too expensive or it's too far away. So this is a bit tricky. You always have to make a certain compromise. Either you pay a little bit more or you're travelling a bit further, or you are downgrading your expectations in terms of the things to see. You always have to do a compromise.

Facilitator: Okay. That's it. Do you want to add any other attributes?
Interviewee: No. I think this is pretty much it. You have covered already good points with your proposals.
Facilitator: Thanks. That's it.
Interviewee: All right. Thank you for that.

END OF TRANSCRIPT
Facilitator: Let's go. Okay, well my name is Ambrozio Queiroz and as part of my PhD, I am interviewing divers. I have some questions about your experience and thoughts in regards to SCUBA diving destinations. So the first thing that I'd like to know is about your diving experience, so how experienced are you as a diver? I have three options - low, medium or highly experienced.

Interviewee: I'd say maybe medium.

Facilitator: So what are the characteristics that you have that makes you describe yourself as...

Interviewee: Well I did the open water course and also now the advanced course, so I've had all the training and I know how to set up the gear, but I still like that somebody double checks that it's right, because sometimes you forget something little. They're like, okay - and you're like, oh yeah. Yeah, well I've dived a good amount of times I think and in different destinations and - yeah - and now we were doing the buddy dive, so you are not with a guide. That was the first time I did it here. At first, it was literally like, whoa…

Facilitator: [Laughs].

Interviewee: …so I don't know where I'm going but then when you actually - because with the guide, you're always just going wherever with the guide, but now you actually have to think. Like where did you go and go back and make sure you have the right amount of oxygen and [bubbles], so you have to take care of yourself. Also we did the buddy dive now in the dark.

Facilitator: A night dive?

Interviewee: Yeah.

Facilitator: Okay, nice. So the second question is about your travel experience to SCUBA diving destinations, so how experienced are you as a traveller to SCUBA diving destinations?

Interviewee: You mean in different countries?

Facilitator: Yeah, that's the point. I have three options - inexperienced, domestically experienced or internationally experienced.

Interviewee: Well international. I can't do domestic. I'm from Finland. So there is no - well there is diving in Finland, but it's not good. Yeah, I've been in Egypt in Sharm El Sheikh. Yeah and then in Cuba.

Facilitator: In Cuba?

Interviewee: Can't remember where we went to - off to an island there - then in Thailand, so in Ko Tao and also in Koh Phi Phi and now here, so Cairns, yeah.

Facilitator: Okay, in Cairns. Okay, wonderful. So the third question is about the relation between your diving activity and your travel decision making, so how important is your diving activity to your travel decision making? I have options - not important, not that important, important or highly important.

Interviewee: Let's say important, because I love the sea and I like swimming and I like everything - just snorkelling - because before I SCUBA dived, we used to travel a lot when I was small. We always went to some nice beach and the best beaches are the ones that have fish and something to look at. I don't just like a blank, white beach so I really liked Egypt, because even with the snorkel you just have a reef and then you have the drop. You can snorkel quite deep and see a lot of stuff.

Facilitator: Nice. So now I would like to ask you to think about two of the most successful SCUBA diving trips that you have had in the past. So I would like to compare
these two destinations and I would like to have also a list of the attributes of this whole destination.

Interviewee: Okay.
Facilitator: Okay?
Interviewee: I think - well if I have to pick maybe Egypt...
Facilitator: Egypt - with the Red Sea?
Interviewee: Yeah, the Red Sea and then this one here.
Facilitator: Here?
Interviewee: Yep.
Facilitator: Okay, Great Barrier Reef, Cairns, [Aussie Land].
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: Look, what are the attributes from Red Sea?
Interviewee: So in the Red Sea, it's the fish. It's...
Facilitator: The variety of the fish?
Interviewee: Yeah and the size and the amount. There is a lot. When I was there, it was just full of parrotfish and big ones and colourful ones. So I think compared to the amount of coral, there is much more fish than here. Also you have morays and lionfish and it's really easy to see them. So the morays are just like - there and...
Facilitator: Do you want to highlight - sorry - do you want to highlight the abundance of marine life?
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: I mean it's not only the variety but the number.
Interviewee: Yeah, so it's nice. I like when you have a big cloud of fish...
Facilitator: [Laughs].
Interviewee: ...that you just swim into.
Facilitator: What else?
Interviewee: Here, I like the - well you have sharks. You have turtle…
Facilitator: The variety as well?
Interviewee: Also, yeah. I like animals, so for me it's important that it has something to see, also the coral are nice here.
Facilitator: Okay, quality of coral.
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: Okay, what else? It's the whole destination - includes what is in the water and also what is in the surface.
Interviewee: You mean not in the country, but just in the sea?
Facilitator: In the whole destination. What is in the sea? What is on the land?
Interviewee: Well I liked in Egypt…
Facilitator: The service...
Interviewee: Okay, well in Egypt we also did a dive from the beach, so you actually...
Facilitator: Shore dive?
Interviewee: Yeah, shore dive. So…
Facilitator: Variety of dive sites?
Interviewee: Yeah. In here it's just - it's quite the same - especially when we did - or I've done now nine dives together, so it's quite the same. We're doing many dives in same places, but - yeah - here I really like the overnight trip. So you're sleeping on the boat, you're eating, you're meeting the people you are diving with, you're making friends. In Egypt, it's more like - I have been there with my family, so with my dad and my brother. They dive and it's just like, come on. Let's go now. Then you just sit, have a quick food, maybe some tea and then again to the sea, so it was only a few dives a day, but here you live here and you live and breathe SCUBA diving so you can really experience it and especially when you do it many times in a row.
Facilitator: What about the service in those places?
Interviewee: I like the service here. It's good.
Facilitator: Do you want to pick some attributes?
Interviewee: What is good?
Facilitator: Yeah, what's good?
Interviewee: Well they let us be quite independent, so they say, okay would you like a guide or are you comfortable going alone? In Egypt they're more like, they want to hold
your hand at the first dive and see how you do - more maybe careful. But I think that's because there is a lot of Russian tourists that drown. So they really take more care of the safety there.

Facilitator: Okay - there?
Interviewee: Yeah, in Egypt. So here, you have to take the responsibility of yourself, but I like that too, because sometimes I was like, okay I've done it before. You don't have to hold my hand. I'm okay now.

Facilitator: [Laughs] okay.
Interviewee: Yeah, here it was just like, okay so you've done your open water. It was in this last December, so it has been nearly a year. They're like, would you like to have a guide? We will recommend it to you, but if you don't want it…

Facilitator: So different options?
Interviewee: Yeah and then they just said, okay here have a buddy. Here you go. I was like, whoa okay. But it was nice. It was good. I like the freedom here and also you can choose what you want. Like I did the course, so they said, okay you can choose. Do you want to do a fish thingy or would you like to do a buoyancy course and also we jumped off the boat and night dived, so that's included in the course though, so I didn't do any classes or course in Egypt. I did my open water in Thailand, but…

Facilitator: Are you a doing a course here?
Interviewee: Yeah, I'm doing the advanced…
Facilitator: Which one is the best destination?
Interviewee: Well I must say here, because I am now…
Facilitator: Why?
Interviewee: Well maybe because - well…
Facilitator: Do you watch…
Interviewee: I dove in Egypt a long time ago. I would like to go there now and do it again when I'm more advanced.

Facilitator: Experienced?
Interviewee: Yeah, so I would like to see and compare, but I have really enjoyed this trip, just because of the people. The crew is nice and young and you're friends here. You can just sit with them and have a chat. In Egypt, it was more like, okay - here, here - bossy, bossy, bossy and…

Facilitator: Friendly staff as well?
Interviewee: Yeah and the whole atmosphere.
Facilitator: Atmosphere?
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: Nice. See?
Interviewee: Yep.
Facilitator: A lot of things.
Interviewee: Yep.
Facilitator: Do you want to add any other thing?
Interviewee: No, I think that's…
Facilitator: No worries.
Interviewee: ...it.
Facilitator: Look, now we're going to move from the real world, from the most successful SCUBA diving destination in your opinion. So it's in your head.
Interviewee: Oh.
Facilitator: So I have a list of attributes again.
Interviewee: Okay.
Facilitator: But now I would like to ask you to tick if you think that this is relevant for the most successful SCUBA diving destination…
Interviewee: Or not?
Facilitator: …or not.
Interviewee: Okay.
Facilitator: Just cross the line, yeah.
Interviewee: Okay.
Facilitator: Okay? So have a look.
Interviewee: So what is good - then I put a cross?
Facilitator: Yeah, it's organised for groups. You can see SCUBA diving [features]. Here - environmental - environmental features, service. Tourism features - so it's out of the water.
Interviewee: So if I put good, what is good?
Facilitator: No.
Interviewee: I do a cross?
Facilitator: Just a tick like this.
Interviewee: Oh, yeah. Cool and the next - okay.
Facilitator: Then you pass the line - cross the line - if you think that is not…
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: …important. Do you want some water?
Interviewee: I'm fine, thanks.
Facilitator: Okay.
Interviewee: Do I just do everything [laughs]?
[Pause]
Interviewee: This part?
Facilitator: Mm-hm.
Interviewee: Yep.
Facilitator: Okay. Let me just have a look. These are the conditions.
Interviewee: Oh, I'm sorry.
Facilitator: No. No worries - just to highlight - because they will put this on software…
Interviewee: Okay.
Facilitator: …and then - okay - look, what are the consequences - I mean the feelings that you have - when you have these attributes in a destination? How do you feel?
Interviewee: Well really amazed. It's just the wow factor, because I don't have sea at home. It's all muddy and you have lakes. Also, I just love seeing the animals and stuff, so when I see turtle I'm just like, oh. Here when you had to…
Facilitator: So what do you feel when you see a turtle?
Interviewee: Just amazement and happy and lucky and it's just really a unique feeling, because it's always when you see something new that you've never seen and something you've only seen on a TV. You're like, oh I want to do it. I want to see that.
Facilitator: [Laughs].
Interviewee: Then you're just like - we went down and there's a turtle sleeping there. I'm like, oh GoPro - in your face. Then the turtle's just like - looks at you and it's just like, oh. Also the big fish here – the Wally fish - it's so nice - just comes to you like, pat me. Then you're like, oh.
Facilitator: [Laughs] okay, wonderful. So just the last question, so why do you dive…
Interviewee: Well it's a totally different world under the sea and it's colourful and it's really interesting. Every time you go down, you see something new and you pay attention to something. The more you dive, the more you pay attention to little stuff - like some coral and something that you've never seen before and because the ocean is huge, so you can always experience something new. It's just exciting and fun and like that.
Facilitator: Excitement?
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: Okay, do you want to add any other attributes here?
Interviewee: Let me see.
Facilitator: If you want - give you the pen. Can you dive in Finland?
Interviewee: I think, yes.
Facilitator: Why don't you dive there?
Interviewee: There's just nothing to see. The water is really - you have to do a lake dive or the sea is just green and the Gulf of Finland is quite polluted, so you'll just see a few
fish maybe there and here. But for me, the night dive was fun and exciting, because you could see some sharks and stuff, but I prefer the day time to the night time, because you can see more. So in Finland, you would just - I think it's more like deep diving and more like practice diving and stuff like that. But I don't know. I don't think I will ever dive in Finland.

Facilitator: [Laughs] no worries.
Interviewee: So yeah, no I think this is - this is okay.
Facilitator: That's it?
Interviewee: Yep, good.

END OF TRANSCRIPT
Facilitator: My name is Ambrozio Queiroz, and as part of my PhD I am conducting interviews with divers. So, I have some questions about your experience and thoughts in regards to SCUBA diving destinations. The first thing is about your diving experience. So, how experienced are you as a diver? I have three options; lower experience; medium; or highly experienced?

Interviewee: [Laughs]. I have around a hundred dives. So, I would put myself in the highly experienced.

Facilitator: Fantastic. Let me ask you about your travel experience to SCUBA diving destinations. How experienced are you as a traveller to SCUBA diving destinations? I have options again; inexperienced; domestic experienced; or international experienced?

Interviewee: How experienced in travelling to SCUBA diving destinations?

Facilitator: Yes.

Interviewee: I would say I would be all around good; both domestic and internationally.

Facilitator: Yes, if you were international, it's also considering domestic. What are the characteristics that lead you to describe yourself as international experienced?

Interviewee: Because I've been diving in three parts of the world now. So I will put that as experienced because it is more than most people that I meet. Does that answer your question?

Facilitator: Yeah. Let's talk about the relation between your diving activity and travel decision making.

Interviewee: Okay.

Facilitator: How important is your diving activity to your travel decision making? I have options again; not important; not that important; important; or highly important.

Interviewee: Highly important these days.

Facilitator: Okay, fantastic. Now I have a handout here, and I would like to ask you to think of two of the most successful SCUBA diving destinations that you have visited in the past. I'd like you to compare them and list the attributes from this place.

Interviewee: Okay.

Facilitator: Place and country.

Interviewee: Which I would say was a successful one?

Facilitator: The most successful. Two.

Interviewee: That would be Bali for me, number one.

Facilitator: Where in Bali?

Interviewee: I don't remember; east part of Bali.

Facilitator: Okay. Was it Tulamben or no?

Interviewee: Sorry?

Facilitator: Is it Tulamben?

Interviewee: Tulamben?

Facilitator: Where is the shipwreck?

Interviewee: Yeah, it was part of the time where the shipwreck was.

Facilitator: What are the attributes that you can highlight from this destination?

Interviewee: Good variety of the wildlife. That would be the most important one.

Facilitator: Right, so marine life.

Interviewee: The visibility of the water as well.

Facilitator: What else?

Interviewee: Is there anything else that was important for me? Maybe, meeting nice people while I was there.

Facilitator: You mean?

Interviewee: Other divers. Something that I did not know beforehand of course.
Facilitator: Okay. Do you want to add any other?
Interviewee: [Unclear].
Facilitator: About the whole destination.
Interviewee: No, that's all I have.
Facilitator: Okay, fantastic. Second one?
Interviewee: Was in Thailand. That one I really liked.
Facilitator: Where in Thailand?
Interviewee: I went to all around, but one I would say that stands out is the [Samosan] Islands. Isn't that what they call them?
Facilitator: Silo...
Interviewee: We can change around; we can say Koh Phi Phi.
Facilitator: Koh Phi Phi. What are the attributes that you can highlight from Koh Phi Phi?
Interviewee: I remember again, with the wildlife and clarity of the water I liked. There I would say, quality of the dive shop was a big factor. The amount of dives that I did. I got 20 when I was there.
Facilitator: What do you mean, the number of dives, or number of different dive sites?
Interviewee: No, just number of dives that I did.
Facilitator: Okay.
Interviewee: [Laughs]. I guess that has nothing to do with location.
Facilitator: Okay. Any other?
Interviewee: No, that's about it.
Facilitator: Okay, so, now let's move from the real world to the most successful SCUBA diving destination.
Interviewee: Okay.
Facilitator: In your opinion.
Interviewee: My opinion, okay.
Facilitator: I have a handout here, with a list of attributes they are organised per groups. I'd like to ask you to tick if confirming or deleting, just crossing.
Interviewee: Okay.
Facilitator: You can add more attributes that you think that are relevant.
Interviewee: So, this is the ideal world?
Facilitator: Yes.
Interviewee: I see you have a lot of things here that are related to a specific dive shop?
Facilitator: Yes. Because it's related to environmental attributes, related to dive shop tourism as a whole and other attributes.
Interviewee: Right, so tick or strike through. Physical, price, in terms of budgets? I guess that one is highly relative between people.
Facilitator: Yeah. Do you want...
Interviewee: I want it to be physical.
Facilitator: Okay.
Interviewee: Within my budget. Does not have to be the cheapest. Situational conditions. Is that perceived ones, or real ones? I take that as perceived ones.
Facilitator: [Laughs].
Interviewee: That's all fair. Alright. I have this complete.
Facilitator: Fantastic. Let me ask you now, information by the dive master, it's not important?
Interviewee: No. Not anymore. Maybe was when I was less experienced.
Facilitator: Alright. Let me ask you now, what are the consequence of having these attributes for you? How do you feel?
Interviewee: In terms of having a more rewarding dive perhaps?
Facilitator: Yes, something like this.
Interviewee: Yeah. I have a feeling maybe sometimes the dive shops is kind of like a race to the top. If you've been with a really good one, the other one is bad by comparison. So, once you know and realise certain attributes; like good food on a boat, that very fast becomes the new standard for what you want out of your dive, because that's what you expect beforehand.
Facilitator: So to answer your question, I think the best thing you get out of having those attributes is, you get what you expect.
Interviewee: Why do you dive? To fulfil what?
Facilitator: That's a good question. I think mostly I like it for improving technique underwater.
Facilitator: Okay, pushing yourself?
Interviewee: So, I do it to be better at it, yeah.
Facilitator: What else?
Interviewee: Yeah, it's more like I said. It's seeing the variety in wildlife that you don't see on the surface. That's definitely a big factor.
Facilitator: Different kinds of species, or new experiences?
Interviewee: Or just lots of them. Both in volume, and in variety.
Facilitator: Fantastic. Do you want to add any other attribute?
Interviewee: No. Yeah, maybe, specifically seeing new things. I think this very rewarding one. Going back to the dive sites that I've been to before, that also makes them good, that I saw something new.
Facilitator: Okay. New things underwater?
Interviewee: Yeah.
Facilitator: Can be?
Interviewee: New types of species, kind of thing.
Facilitator: Okay. Fantastic, that's it mate.
Interviewee: We're done, alright.

END OF TRANSCRIPT
Example of initial coding from interview with respondent #18

Interviewee: Yeah! The...ahm.. What is?...The abundance, like, you know, the number, the variety and the abundance... the number of fish down there, like you know, yellow, blue, shiny and silver, you know... it is everywhere.... it’s just different... so, I am going to say abundance and like you said, variety.

Facilitator: And you also said less people. Is that important?

Interviewee: Ahm... Because they go out of on the pontoon... it’s actually on the Pontoon, it might be a lot of people... but it’s less crowded in term of marine operators that go to a site, you know. In Cairns, sometimes you have three or four boats all sitting on the same coral and it just a little bit crowded... you know, where about... it’s their reef, the Pontoon is there reef, their license. Yeah, so, I think less crowded.

Facilitator: Do you think anything what of the water?

Interviewee: I was just thinking... there is a huge boat... like a it’s a fast trip, fast trip to the reef. It means that your time at the reef is maximized. Because, they are so fast... it means more time on the reef. A very comfy boat too, comfy boat. Here there is also a social side... because obviously if you are going for three days/two nights, I like the people on board. Obviously, it is all divers... it’s your kind of people... you know, what do we call it, sociability?
Example of initial coding from interview with respondent #04

Interviewee: Look it up, it’s an amazing - it’s the smallest democracy in the world and it’s a little rocky island in the middle of the South Pacific between New Zealand and Tonga. It has no rivers, it’s just a coral atoll and a mountain. Because there’s no rivers, there’s no soil running off into the ocean so it’s amazingly clear. So what makes Niue so special is very clear water - no freshwater runoff - unique marine species.

Facilitator: Like?

Interviewee: Banded sea snakes.

Facilitator: Do you think the snakes are attributes?

Interviewee: They are because there is a feature there - a geographical feature - that is unique in the world. It’s a cave where you can enter from the ocean and come up into a dry area that’s not accessible to land animals. The sea snakes come up through that and they lay their eggs in the rocks. The baby sea snakes hatch out in the rocks and slither their way back down and then go through back of the cave into the ocean. Sea snakes, sea snake cave.

Facilitator: Like?

Interviewee: ... for the divers. So we hired a minivan and we would drive around until we saw another beach track and we’d go down there and we’d explore that and we’d come out in a cave by the ocean. Amazing.
### Appendix 10 – Integration of variables between stage one and stage two.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables implemented (stage two)</th>
<th>Variables identified (stage one)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Historic and cultural activities</td>
<td>Cultural activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural scenery/Landscape</td>
<td>Landscape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local lifestyle</td>
<td>Local lifestyle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment activities and facilities (e.g. theatres, galleries, cinemas)</td>
<td>Night life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adventure activities (e.g. rafting, skydiving)</td>
<td>Other water activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of visa</td>
<td>Cost of vista</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price of the diving permit for Marine Park*</td>
<td>Exchange conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price of SCUBA diving services</td>
<td>Feasible price in terms of budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price of accommodation services</td>
<td>Most inexpensive destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price of restaurant services</td>
<td>Value for money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prices of transport to the destination (e.g. airline tickets)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional operations (e.g. safety measures, quality of gear, dive operations, reliable boat)</td>
<td>Professional operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental commitment of the dive operator (e.g. number of divers per group, good role behaviour)</td>
<td>Reliable boat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly staff/Casual atmosphere</td>
<td>Casual atmosphere/friendly staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good dive master/ Dive Guide</td>
<td>Good dive master</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information by the dive master/ dive briefing</td>
<td>Information given by the dive master</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to stay on a live aboard</td>
<td>Opportunity to learn about marine environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to improve diving skill/ Diving training package</td>
<td>Opportunity to improve diving skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental equipment available</td>
<td>Rental equipment available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy dive conditions</td>
<td>Easy diving conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good underwater visibility</td>
<td>Good underwater visibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality and environmental conditions of the dive site</td>
<td>Undamaged dive sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warm water</td>
<td>Warm water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety and abundance of marine life</td>
<td>Abundance of marine life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to dive with manta rays</td>
<td>Manta Rays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to dive with sharks</td>
<td>Shark encounters/feeding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to dive with whales</td>
<td>Whales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance or flying time to the destination</td>
<td>Close distance from home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote location</td>
<td>Remote location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and medical facilities</td>
<td>Quality of medical system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destination airport quality</td>
<td>Easy access to the destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local transport quality</td>
<td>Transport access to the destination (e.g. airport)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication level in English</td>
<td>English spoken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popularity/Fame as a diving destination</td>
<td>Popularity of the destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy access to tourist information online</td>
<td>Reputation of the dive operators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reviews on Google/TripAdvisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queiroz Neto, A. – Investigating competitiveness through customer value in SCUBA diving tourism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy access to tourist information on-site</td>
<td>Word-of-mouth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to do a deep dive (depth below 30 meters)</td>
<td>Easy access to information about the destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short distance to dive site</td>
<td>Deep dive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to dive in a cave</td>
<td>Short distance to dive site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety of dive sites/diving activities</td>
<td>Underwater cave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to dive on shipwrecks</td>
<td>Shore dives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No visa required</td>
<td>Deep dive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of disease outbreaks</td>
<td>Additional activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of terrorism threats</td>
<td>Variety of dive sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political stability</td>
<td>Uniqueness of dive sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security and visitor safety</td>
<td>Opportunity to dive in a cave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace and quietness</td>
<td>Opportunity to dive in a Marine Park/ Protected area/ National Reserve*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation services</td>
<td>Opportunity to dive on an artificial reef*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hygiene, cleanliness and sanitation</td>
<td>No visa required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant services</td>
<td>Lack of disease outbreaks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of terrorism threats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Political stability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visitors safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peaceful and quietness</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accommodation services</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cleanliness and hygiene</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local cuisine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Western food available</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note1:** The following destination attributes were disregarded due to the lack of importance perceived in the first stage (based on frequency): Easy exit/entry on boats, food on board, general service quality, host community, not well visited/less tourists, facilities for children and elderly, family oriented, travel and diving package, electricity, internet availability, ability to speak visitor’s mother language, (different from English), educated to deal with tourists, underwater trails and role of women in local culture.

* Arbitrarily added by the research to measure SCUBA diver’s perspective towards artificial reefs and marine parks.
Appendix 11 – Survey questionnaire for stage two

Hi,

My name is Ambrozio Queiroz Neto, researcher, lecturer and SCUBA diving assistant instructor. As part of my PhD degree at Griffith University, I am conducting an online survey with SCUBA divers. If you are a recreational SCUBA diver, I would like to hear from you. I am aiming to investigate SCUBA divers' opinions and preferences in regards to SCUBA diving destinations. Hence, there is no hard questions. The questionnaire has a total of 19 questions and it takes approximately 5-10 minutes to complete it. There is no right or wrong answers. To be involved in this research, you should be at least 18 years of age.

This survey does not collect any private information that could identify individuals. As a result, responses will remain anonymous and any results will be published collectively. The data collected will be analysed and form part of the PhD thesis. The results obtained in this study may also be published in academic journals and presented at academic conferences. The data collected will be stored securely and kept until the research has been completed and results published. At the end of this period, all electronic records will remain property of Griffith University.
This research has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at Griffith University. The approval number is 2015/523.

If you wish to receive results of the research, please leave your contact details at the end of the survey. You can also contact the researcher through ambrozio.queirozneto@griffithuni.edu.au.

Any concerns about the ethical conduct of this research or the researchers, should be directed to: Research Ethics Committee Griffith University Phone: +61 3 735 4375 Email: research-ethics@griffith.edu.au

There are 19 questions in this survey

TRAVEL EXPERIENCE

1) How many leisure international trips have you undertaken in your whole life?

Please choose only one of the following:

- 0
- 1-4
- 5-10
- More than 10

2) How many international trips to a SCUBA diving destination have you undertaken in your whole life?

Please choose only one of the following:

- 0
- 1-4
- 5-10
- More than 10

Number of international trips you have undertaken where you engaged in SCUBA diving.

3) How many leisure domestic trips (with more than 3 days) have you undertaken in your whole life?

Please choose only one of the following:
4) How many domestic trips to a SCUBA diving destination have you undertaken in your whole life?

Please choose only one of the following:

- 0
- 1-4
- 5-9
- 10-25
- 26-50
- More than 50

Total number of domestic trips you have undertaken where you engaged in SCUBA diving.

5) Which of the following global regions have you ever done SCUBA diving?

Please choose all that apply:

- Americas (Central/Caribbean)
- Americas (North)
- Americas (South America)
- Africa
- Asia
- Europe
- Oceania/ South Pacific
- Others: ___________________

Mark as many as applicable

SCUBA DIVING EXPERIENCE

6) How many years of diving experience do you have (since your first diving certification)?

Please choose only one of the following:
7) Please indicate your highest SCUBA diving certification.

Please choose only one of the following:

- Open water or equivalent
- Advanced open water or equivalent
- Divemaster or equivalent
- Assistant instructor or equivalent
- Dive instructor or equivalent
- Other: _____________

8) What is your dive training organization?

Please choose all that apply:

- PADI
- SSI
- CMAS
- NAUI
- BSAC
- IDEA
- PDIC
- SDI/TDI
- Other: ______________

9) How many dives do you have logged?

Please choose only one of the following:

- 0-5 dives
- 6-20 dives
- 21-50 dives
- 51-100 dives
- 101-250 dives
- 251-500 dives
- More than 500 dives

10) What diving gear do you own?
Please choose all that apply:
- No diving gear owned
- Basic diving gear (e.g. snorkel, mask and fins)
- More specialised diving gear (e.g. BCD, regulator and dive computer)

SCUBA DIVING TRIP CHARACTERISTICS

11) Do you usually organise your own SCUBA diving trips?
Please choose only one of the following:
- Always (100% of the time)
- Sometimes (75% of the time)
- Rarely (25% of the time)
- Never (0% of the time)

12) Do you usually contact a travel agency to organise your SCUBA diving trips?
Please choose only one of the following:
- Always (100% of the time)
- Sometimes (75% of the time)
- Rarely (25% of the time)
- Never (0% of the time)

13) How do you usually travel on a SCUBA diving trip?
Please choose only one of the following:
- By yourself
- With partner
- With partner and kids
- With friends
- Other: ____________

ASSESSMENT OF DESTINATION COMPETITIVENESS ATTRIBUTES

14) In your opinion, how important are the following destination attributes for a successful SCUBA diving destination?
Please choose the appropriate response for each item:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination attributes</th>
<th>7-point Likert scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good underwater visibility</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety and abundance of marine life</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality and environmental conditions of the dive site</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy dive conditions</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warm water</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to dive with sharks</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to dive with manta rays</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to dive with whales</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to do a deep dive (depth below 30 meters)</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to dive on an artificial reef</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
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<td>Opportunity to dive in a cave</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to dive in a Marine Park/ Protected area/ National Reserve</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price of the diving permit for Marine Park</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information by the dive master/ dive briefing</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good dive master/ guide</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental equipment available</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional operations (e.g. safety measures, quality of gear, dive operations, reliable boat)</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental commitment of the dive operator (e.g. number of divers per group, good role behaviour)</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly staff/Casual atmosphere</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short distance to dive site</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to improve diving skill/ Diving training package</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to stay on a live aboard</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popularity/Fame as a diving destination</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price of SCUBA diving services</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation services</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price of accommodation services</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hygiene, cleanliness and sanitation</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security and visitor safety</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant services</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price of restaurant services</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic and cultural activities</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural scenery/Landscape</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adventure activities (e.g. rafting, skydiving)</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local lifestyle</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Entertainment activities and facilities (e.g. theatres, galleries, cinemas) 1-2-3 4 5-6-7
Easy access to tourist information online 1-2-3 4 5-6-7
Easy access to tourist information on-site 1-2-3 4 5-6-7
Peace and quiet 1-2-3 4 5-6-7
Communication level in English 1-2-3 4 5-6-7
Health and medical facilities 1-2-3 4 5-6-7
Destination airport quality 1-2-3 4 5-6-7
Local transport quality 1-2-3 4 5-6-7
Prices of transport to the destination (e.g. airline tickets) 1-2-3 4 5-6-7
Lack of terrorism threat 1-2-3 4 5-6-7
Lack of disease outbreaks 1-2-3 4 5-6-7
Political stability 1-2-3 4 5-6-7
Distance or flying time to the destination 1-2-3 4 5-6-7
Remote location 1-2-3 4 5-6-7
No visa required 1-2-3 4 5-6-7
Cost of visa 1-2-3 4 5-6-7

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHICS

15) How old are you?

Please write your answer here:

___________

Number of years old. Minimum of 18yo.

16) What is your gender?

Please choose only one of the following:

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to disclose

17) What is your highest level of education?

Please choose only one of the following:

- High School
- Technical/Trade qualification
- University degree
- Postgraduate degree
- Other: __________
18) What is your occupational category?

Please choose only one of the following:

- Clerical or service
- Education and training
- Executive administrator
- Homemaker
- Labourer
- Middle management
- Trade/ Machine operator
- Professional/Technical
- Retired
- Sales/ Marketing
- Self-employed/ Business owner
- Student
- Other: ____________

19) What is your country of residency?

Please choose only one of the following:

- Australia
- Brazil
- England
- France
- Germany
- Italy
- New Zealand
- Spain
- The Netherlands
- United States of America
- Other: ____________

CONTACT DETAILS

Please leave your email if you would like to receive feedback of the research.

Please write your answer here:

________________________
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www.SCUBAbestchoice.com
Email: ambrozio.queirozneto@griffithuni.edu.au
Please submit by 30.12.2016 – 00:00
Submit your survey. Thank you for completing this survey.