

# Project 012.01 Tourism Patterns in Ynysybwl

For the Ynysybwl Regeneration Trust

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## Research Area Ynysybwl

Ynysybwl is a small village in South Wales next to Pontypridd. In cooperation with Science Shop Wales, an institution based at the Glamorgan University, and the Ynysybwl Regeneration Partnership, this research was created to identify and clarify the different tourist groups who are visiting Ynysybwl every year.

According to Williams (2008) the main tourist attraction in Ynysybwl is a small church from the 12<sup>th</sup> century with a cemetery. The church is located on a hill close to the main village and is easily reached on foot and or via a bicycle. There is also a small hotel and restaurant next to the church which is currently expanding its accommodation capacities.

This area next to Ynysybwl is located on a few bicycle and mountain bike maps as well as on hiking guides. Apart from the old church and cemetery, the area offers spectacular views over the Welsh countryside. Furthermore some rare bird species can be seen within the area and there are great hiking and mountain bike opportunities.

Besides these two buildings within the tourism area, there are no other tourists information centers or similar institutions in the area. The Ynysybwl Regeneration Partnership is planning to invest in this area to create a small tourist visitor center which could provide additional services, and offer a variety of different products.

Based on the characteristics of this area and the good cooperation opportunities with Science Shop Wales and the Ynysybwl Regeneration Partnership, this tourism destination has been chosen as data collection area. The results of this research will not only help the Regeneration Partnership in Ynysybwl to produce a marketing plan and the research will also assist with deciding how investments will be undertaken. Moreover, it will provide

destination marketers and regeneration organisations throughout Wales with useful information on how to create a marketing concept for their own tourism area. The developed research concept could help other destination marketers in their own research when gathering crucial information and characteristic about the tourists who are visiting their area.

## **Motivation**

Witt *et al.* (1991) stated that tourism is an important economical factor for Wales. They showed that visitor spending was responsible for 7.5 per cent of the gross domestic product, and that furthermore 10 per cent of all workplaces in Wales are dependent on the tourism industry. These facts demonstrate how important the tourism industry is for Wales, many small Welsh villages try to promote their area as tourism destination in order to develop and regenerate these economically poor regions which suffered from the pit and coal mine closings. Therefore in some areas charitable organisations, 'regenerations partnerships' have been set up to help these regions develop.

There are a few research papers about Wales as tourism destination in general (Witt *et al.*, 1991) or the possibility of marketing Welsh tourist destinations on the basis of the ex-colonial status of Wales (Pitchford, 1995). No research was found which focused on the sustainable development of small welsh natural and cultural heritage sites like in the case of Ynysybwl, or the motivation factors which lead to tourists mind to travel to this destination.

Most research into Welsh tourism, like the research of Witt *et al.* (1991), are more focused on the development of major tourist areas like the Rhonda Heritage Park or beach tourism (Phillips *et al.*, 2008) which is considered as the most important factor for tourists (Houston, 2002). Despite the fact that some research about tourism in Wales does exist, research about the motivation of the tourists to visit such areas are still missing. According to Tikannen (2007), Fodness (1994) and Goosens (2000) motivation is one of the least researched factors in tourism literature on the empirical and theoretical side. Furthermore previous research focuses more on the main tourist attractions mentioned above, and does not look at small cultural or natural heritages like Ynysybwl. Hence after an intense review of the existing literature about the Welsh tourism market, no research has been found which tried to identify the motives of tourists who are visiting small welsh heritages.

To market a tourism destination successfully information about the tourists who are visiting this area are necessary. That assumption is also supported by the following statement:

Tourists are consumers who purchase a number of diverse travel and tourism services. If those in the industry have a clearer understanding of why their products are in demand, they will not only be able to tailor their products more closely to the needs of their clients, but will also be better able to select the advertising and sales messages used to inform and persuade those clients to buy the products.

Holloway (1988:87)

Destination marketers need to know the influences and motives in the decision-making process of the tourists (Correia *et al.* 2007). Based on these findings a categorisation by demographic attributes and the destination loyalty of tourists could provide a proper framework to market a holiday destination successfully (Chen *et al.* 2001, Leisen 2001,).

## **Content**

After reviewing the general literature which provided a short overview about the tourism market within the United Kingdom and Wales, an introduction of the general marketing concepts and theories and the general theories of tourist motivation, five previous related studies about travel motivation and destination marketing have been reviewed and evaluated in detail. Based on this evaluation a theoretical framework based on the push- and pull motives which influence the decision-making process, has been created to measure the motives of tourists who travel to the destination area, and to categorise them according to their demographic factors and destination loyalty. The data for this research has been collected over the summer months in a small Welsh tourism area near the village Ynysybwl in cooperation with Ynysybwl Regeneration Partnership.

Based on the outcomes of this research, the study can provide destination marketers with much needed information about travel motivation and tourist characteristics to enable an individual marketing plan of these small Welsh tourism areas based on the analysed data. Furthermore lucrative tourist groups based on the destination loyalty, and other factors, could be identified which will help destination marketers in making the decision on which a marketing plan should be focused. Moreover the results of the realised research would provide destination marketers with useful information in which direction investments should be undertaken to improve their tourism areas.

## Research Design

A literature review presented theoretical framework on which this survey research has been designed. A quantitative approach has been chosen and questionnaires used to collect data. Due to the quantitative characteristic of the research the majority of the questions were structured, and provided the respondent with answer possibilities in a Likert-Scale range.

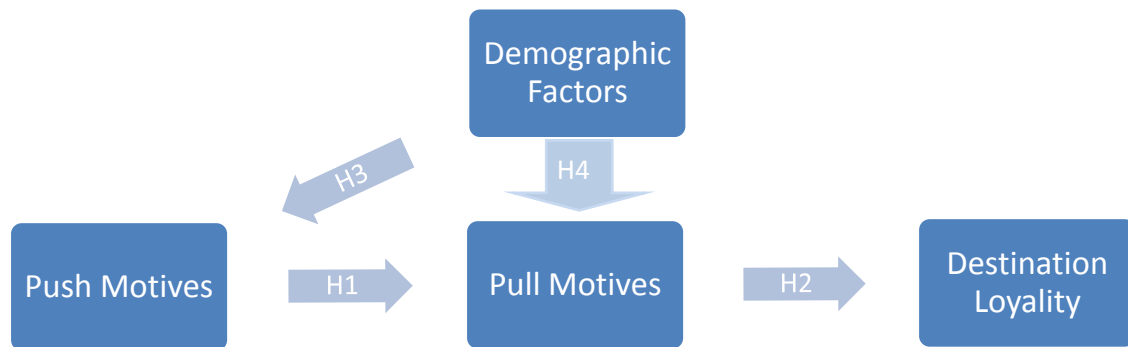


Figure 1 Theoretical Framework

The research was conducted over three months in summer 2009, and a total of 40 questionnaires have been completed and returned to the researcher. The questionnaires were distributed in two main tourist spots. They were given the opportunity to complete the questionnaire and put them into sealed answer boxes.

## Research Results

The research identified a relationship between the knowledge (push factors) and the core attractions (pull factors) which can lead to the assumption that tourists who are visiting small welsh heritages sites to increase their personal knowledge, are also interested in the variety of physical activities offered by the core attractions of the area. This can be important information for destination marketers because it shows that the possibility to increase knowledge should be advertised in combination with a variety of available physical activities to successfully attract tourists.

Moreover the research showed that tourists who were motivated to increase their knowledge (push factors) through the journey are also interested in the area attributes (pull

factors). The pull factor contains the natural environment of the area as well as costs and interesting architecture. This relationship is more obvious than the relationship between increasing knowledge and physical activities, because interesting architecture or landscape can actively help the tourist to increase his knowledge. Hence it is obvious that destination marketers should advertise the significant attributes of their area to attract this tourist group.

Furthermore the study showed a relationship between the socialisation factor and the area attributes. Hence it can be said that tourists who are travelling to small welsh heritages sites to do something different and have the possibility to meet new people, are also interested in the area attributes like landscape or architecture. This relationship can also be based on the fact that the availability of friends and family who were located next to the destination area has also been measured under the area attributes factor.

Two out of four push factors showed a significant relationship with the destination loyalty, two other factors showed a slight relationship with a Pearson correlation coefficient over 0.2 which could indicate that H2 could have been proven with a greater sample size. So it could be proven that if factors like accessibility, possibility for physical relaxation, costs and landscape are present, visitors tend to visit this destination again. This is important information for destination marketers who want to engage tourists with the area and support destination loyalty. Hence destination marketers should be aware of the fact that at least some push factors are having an influence on the destination loyalty and should try to promote and develop these factors.

The study showed that the demographic factors have no influence on the push or pull factors. This is important information for destination marketers because it shows that push – and pull motives are not based on age, gender or home country. Hence if destination marketers want to attract tourists with identical push or pull motives, the aim should be to reach a demographical greater spectrum and variety of possible tourists and not just one specific group. On the other side if destination marketers want to attract a specific tourist group based on their demographic attributes they should advertise a wide image of the area, because the research showed tourists with common demographic factors are not motivated by the same factors to travel to this area.

## **Cooperation with YRP and Science Shop Wales**

Concluding, it can be said that the beginning of the research project went very well but later on due to a change of contact person from the regeneration partnership, a huge delay of the data analyses process came up. This caused further problems for the researcher because of the limited time in the United Kingdom, and therefore the need to analyse the data in his home country and communicate the results by mail.

On the other side, the contact and support from Science Shop Wales was very good at every point of the research project. The employees of Science Shop Wales tried very hard to support the student and helped to resolve any kind of problem during the project.