

**EFFECTS OF ATTITUDE AND DESTINATION IMAGE ON ASSOCIATION
MEMBERS' MEETING PARTICIPATION INTENTIONS:
DEVELOPMENT OF MEETING PARTICIPATION MODEL**

By

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AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree

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Department of Hotel, Restaurant, Institution Management & Dietetics
College of Human Ecology

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ABSTRACT

Understanding association members' meeting participation behaviors is the key to the well-attended meeting, which is a common goal of both associations and host destinations. However, little research has contributed to theoretical development in this area, and the lack of a theoretical framework has negatively influenced the validity of existing research. Thus, this study attempted to explain association members' meeting participation behaviors, using a conceptually sound model of meeting participation, which was developed based on existing human behavior theories: the theory of reasoned action (TRA) and the theory of planned behavior (TPB). Another main objective of this study was to test the validity of the meeting participation model (MPM). By comparing the utility of three competing models (TRA, TPB, and MPM), this study confirmed the effectiveness of the meeting participation model (MPM) in explaining association members' intentions to attend the annual meeting.

The proposed meeting participation model was empirically examined using the data collected from 245 members of the International Council on Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Education (CHRIE). The results of model development revealed that the MPM fits the data very well, providing a systematic view of the decision-making process of association meeting participation. In addition, the findings of the model comparison using the structural equation modeling (SEM) revealed that all three competing models successfully provide a theoretical base for understanding association members' meeting participation behaviors. Specifically, the MPM provided a fuller understanding of meeting participation intention by adding two predictor variables (destination image and past meeting participation experience) to the TPB.

This study is the first research effort to investigate what makes association members attend, or not attend, association meetings based on theoretical frameworks. TRA and TPB

provided the necessary theoretical ground to develop the meeting participation model (MPM).

By adding a domain specific predictor variable (destination image) and a non-volitional habitual construct (past experience) to the original latent constructs conceptualized in pure TRA/TPB models, the MPM emerged as a theoretically strong and parsimonious framework for understanding association members' meeting participation behaviors. The results of the current study present a strong step toward providing practical as well as theoretical implications for future convention research.

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Major Professor
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

What makes professional association members decide to attend, or not attend, association meetings or conventions? Although this question has significant implications for the convention industry, it has not been seriously addressed by researchers. Some tourism and hospitality researchers have worked to answer this question over the last decade. However, the research has been exploratory and, therefore, has still not reached the point where we can clearly understand association members' meeting participation behaviors. In the hopes of answering the question, we developed a robust model of meeting participation, using intention-based human behavior theories, and tested the applicability of the model in the context of association meeting participation. In addition, we reaffirmed the validity of the proposed meeting participation model (MPM) by comparing the MPM with existing frameworks: the theory of reasoned action (TRA) and the theory of planned behavior (TPB).

The emphasis of this dissertation is on association meetings. Corporate meetings involve a different set of considerations because attendance is usually not voluntary but required. Thus, the decision process of where to hold a meeting, and especially who participates, rests with the respective corporation and not the potential attendees (Oppermann, 1994).

Background of the Convention Industry

The hospitality industry is immediately and directly influenced by any social or economic environmental changes. The convention and exhibition sector especially, which tends to be more

directly affected by the global economy, has struggled to cope with dramatic environmental changes during the last decade. The recent worldwide economic recession and international concern about security have caused both corporations and associations to reassess the need to continue holding large meetings, annual conventions, and exhibitions (Cetron & DeMicco, 2004). In such difficult times, however, more corporations and associations rely on meetings and exhibitions to meet a variety of corporate and association goals. According to recent industry data, the total spending in the convention and meeting industry in 2000 was \$122.1 billion (Successful Meetings, 2001). This figure, which includes spending on corporate and association meetings and the incentive travel market segments, represents an average 9% year-by-year growth since 1992. The data also show that even with the current economic climate, and with a conservative 5% growth projection, the convention and meeting market represented \$141.3 billion in total spending in 2003. Although growth in the convention market may be more difficult than in the boom years of the 1980s and 1990s, the future of the convention industry appears to be good as the global economy gradually revives and people continue to need to meet each other (Carlsen, 1999; Cetron & DeMicco, 2004).

Convention Market System: Three Major Players

There are three major players in the convention industry: associations/meeting planners, host destinations, and association members or attendees. The convention industry integrates these three major players as a system, interrelating with one another (Oppermann & Chon, 1997). Associations dominate the total conventions and meetings industry (Baloglu & Love, 2003), accounting for 74% of total meeting expenditure ("Meeting Market Report," 1998), 78% of all attendees, and 80% of all conventions and meetings (Edelstein & Binini, 1994). Some 66

million person trips are generated by association meetings in the United States alone (Oppermann, 1998). Today's association meeting market is becoming more competitive because of reduced sponsorships and the tighter travel funding for association members (Loverseed, 1993). With limited budgets, associations are forced to develop the best price-valued packages in the market (Hu & Hiemstra, 1996). As a result, associations and meeting planners are becoming more careful in selecting meeting destinations that really fulfill meeting attendees' needs and expectations.

On the other hand, direct and indirect economic benefits of conventions means that meeting destinations and convention providers compete heavily for the right to host association meetings (Elwood, 1992; Fenich, 1998; Oppermann & Chon, 1995). New convention facilities have been continuously added to the already saturated convention market. For the last two decades, the growth of convention space matched and, in many cases, exceeded the pace of convention expansion (Jackson, 2002). Fierce competition among destinations and meeting facilities for hosting association meetings is expected to continue (Golding, 2003).

The last player in the convention industry is association members or meeting attendees. Since temporal, financial, and many other constraints prevent association members from attending all of their associations' annual meetings, members are faced with the decision of whether to attend the meetings or not. This is a momentous decision affecting both associations and host destinations, because they depend financially on a large turnout (Oppermann, 1998). This decision, however, has not received adequate attention from researchers.

Trends of Convention Research

A review of convention and meeting management literature reveals that to date, the research has largely focused on two convention players: associations and destinations and their relationships (Lee & Back, 2004). Particularly, the associations' site-selection process and the destination marketing have drawn much attention from both researchers and practitioners. Although some studies provide critical insights into understanding association members' meeting participation behavior (Grant, 1994; Grant & Weaver, 1996; Ngamsom & Beck, 2000; Oppermann & Chon, 1995; Oppermann, 1998; Oppermann & Chon, 1995; Price, 1993), most research in this area has been exploratory, simply identifying motivating and inhibiting factors influencing association members' participation and non-participation decisions. Surprisingly, theoretical frameworks have not been developed and tested to explain the systematic process of meeting participation. Thus, it is important to revisit existing human behavior theories to test their applicability to association members' meeting participation behavior, and develop a new meeting participation model by integrating existing conceptual models and the sporadic findings on meeting participation behavior.

Conceptual Background

The attitude-behavior relationship has been a popular topic in a variety of fields of study seeking to better understand what influences human actions (Magee, 2004; Severin & Tankard, 2001). Research that tests the relationship between attitudes toward a behavior and willingness to behave suggests two main models that form the backbone of studies concerning attitude-behavior relationship in academia. They are Ajzen and Fishbein's (1977) theory of reasoned action (TRA) and Fazio's (1986) attitude-to-behavior process model.

TRA, which is derived from an expectancy-value model, is designed to predict and understand what causes people to behave in particular ways. TRA is based on the assumption that human beings are rational and make systematic use of information available to them before they decide to engage, or not to engage, in a given behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980).

According to Ajzen and Fishbein (1980), TRA applies well to human behaviors where the behavior in question is under full volitional control of individual. On the other hand, Fazio's process model assumes that attitudes can guide a person's behavior even when the person does not actively reflect and deliberate about the attitude (Fazio, Powell, & Williams, 1989).

According to the process model, how the decision is viewed by the subject is the main indicator of attitude that eventually will lead to a course of action. Both TRA and Fazio's process model allude to the same conclusion: attitude is the main predictor of behavior. However, they come to it from different angles. TRA states that people rationally consider their actions and the possible outcome and that intention is the major part of attitude formation (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Magee, 2004). On the other hand, in the Fazio's process model, the person's attitude is subject to the situation and events that surround the decision, which results in attitude formation about the decision and behavior (Fazio & Zanna, 1981; Fazio et al., 1989; Magee, 2004).

Because Fazio's process model supports the idea of routine decisions versus TRA's thinking decisions, it is reasonable that TRA should be used for research investigating association members' meeting participation behavior, which requires a significant amount of deliberation (Oppermann, 1995). However, an even more important point in the study of association members' meeting participation behavior is to know why many association members choose not to attend meetings and conventions. Situations may arise that may hamper the volitional control of an individual in given situations. In the meeting participation context, while

an association member may want to participate in a convention, there is still a question of how that can be achieved when there are many obstacles to attending. So including these obstacles in a study of meeting participation is essential. In that regard, an extended model of the TRA, the theory of planned behavior (TPB) was also used to explain association members' meeting participation behavior under volitional as well as non-volitional conditions. Although both TRA and TPB have been used extensively in social psychological research to explain a variety of human behaviors, these conceptual models have not been used, to the best of my knowledge, in the convention and meeting sector, particularly in association members' meeting participation research. These theoretical frameworks in relation to meeting participation behaviors will be discussed in Chapter 2.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The common goal of associations and destinations is to increase the number of attendees (Oppermann & Chon, 1997). Why is maximizing attendance important to associations and host destinations? How can they increase attendance? Ultimately, do they really understand association members' meeting participation behavior and the decision-making process? For a decade, meeting planners, destination marketers, and convention researchers have tried to answer these questions. However, research has still not reached a stage where we can clearly understand association members' meeting participation behavior. Only a few studies have inquired into reasons for participating in meetings and reasons why association members do not participate. Our lack of understanding in this area motivated this study, hoping to answer the ultimate question of how association members behave in the process of meeting participation.

It is not unusual to find people who have multiple association memberships. Yet, one cannot possibly attend all association annual meetings and conventions of the organizations of which one is a member (Oppermann, 1998). In fact, many people are often faced with the dilemma of having to choose one over the other parallel conference because of meeting schedule conflicts and financial limitations. This is an important decision affecting both the association and host location financially (Oppermann, 1998). For associations, annual conventions are an important revenue source, bringing in about one-third of their annual income (Shure, 1994). However, Oppermann's (1995) study revealed that annual conventions and meetings are attended by a mere 39% of total association members, tremendously reducing the potential earnings of associations. For destinations, on the other hand, attendance is closely related to the amount of direct and indirect expenditure in host communities. Convention attendees provide more significant economic impact than other visitors because they tend to stay longer and spend more than other types of visitors (Bailey, 1991; Ryan, 1999). Rutherford and Kreck's (1994) empirical study indicates that most convention attendees (approximately 60%) devote extra time and spending to tourism and recreational activities before, during, and after the convention event. Furthermore, satisfied convention attendees may very well turn into repeat visitors (Oppermann, 1998) and advertise the destination through the word of mouth (Abbey & Link, 1994). Destinations now recognize these positive benefits of meeting attendees and therefore develop more attractions for potential attendees. Hence, thorough understanding of association members' meeting participation behavior can help both associations and destinations achieve their respective goals.

Despite the important role of attendees in convention industry, relatively little research attention to date has been devoted to potential meeting attendees and their meeting participation

decision process (Oppermann, 1994; Price, 1993; Zelinsky, 1994). Most previous studies in this area has concentrated on determining and ranking convention service attributes important to meeting planners in the site selection process (Hu & Hiemstra, 1996; Lee & Back, 2004; Weber, 2001). One reason for this lack of attention on the meeting participation process may be the scarcity of theoretical concepts and models on the process of association members' decision making. Therefore, the following research questions were explored in this study:

- What are the factors that influence association members' meeting participation behaviors?
- Can intention-based human behavior theories (TRA or TPB) be the appropriate foundations for developing a conceptual model of meeting participation?
- Does, by adding new constructs, the proposed meeting participation model (MPM) truly advance our understanding of the specific determinants of meeting participation behaviors?
- What is the relative importance of each predictor variable in the MPM in predicting association members' meeting participation intention?
- Is the MPM superior to the TRA and the TPB in explaining association members' meeting participation behaviors?

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

Convention research on meeting participation behavior has focused on simply identifying motivational and inhibiting factors affecting association members' meeting-participation decision. Little research has contributed to theoretical developments in the area of meeting participation behavior of association members, and the lack of a strong theoretical framework may negatively influence the validity of research in this area (Oppermann & Chon, 1997). Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to gain an understanding of association members'

meeting participation behaviors through the development of a sound conceptual model. The specific objectives for this study include

- Identifying salient beliefs about an association member's attitude toward meeting participation, normative expectations of relevant others, facilitating and inhibiting control factors, and important destination attributes.
- Examining the causal relationship between belief constructs (behavioral, normative, control, and destination beliefs) and predictor variables (attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control, destination image, and past experience).
- Examining the causal relationship between predictor variables including past experience and meeting participation intention.
- Finding out the extent to which each predictor variable influences meeting participation intention.
- Independently testing three conceptual frameworks (TRA, TPB, and MPM), comparing the utility of three models, and finally determining which model is the best in explaining association members' intention to attend the meeting.

RESEARCH MODEL AND HYPOTHESES

To achieve the research objectives, the meeting participation model (MPM) was developed based on TRA and TPB. Figure 1 illustrates the hypothesized relationships in the proposed meeting participation model (MPM). Research hypotheses used in this study are summarized in two parts: model development and model comparison. Detailed explanations of each hypothetical relationship among the constructs in the MPM are presented in Chapter 2.

- Hypothesis 1: Behavioral beliefs toward meeting participation are positively associated with attitude toward meeting participation.
- Hypothesis 2: Normative beliefs toward meeting participation are positively associated with subjective norm (SN) about meeting participation.
- Hypothesis 3: Control beliefs over meeting participation are positively associated with association members' perceived behavioral control (PBC).
- Hypothesis 4: Destination beliefs are positively associated with destination image (DI).
- Hypothesis 5: Attitude toward meeting participation positively affects participation intention (PI).
- Hypothesis 6: Subjective norm (SN) about meeting participation positively affects participation intention (PI).
- Hypothesis 7: Perceived behavioral control (PBC) over the meeting participation positively affects participation intention (PI).
- Hypothesis 8: Destination image (DI) positively affects participation intention (PI).
- Hypothesis 9: Past participation experience (PE) positively affects participation intention (PI).

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research is important both theoretically and practically. On a theoretical level, this research extends the current body of knowledge about human behavior by examining the multiple factors that influence the meeting participation intention and behavior of association members. The theory of reasoned action (TRA) and theory of planned behavior (TPB) were used in this study. Applying human behavior models (TRA and TPB) to meeting participation

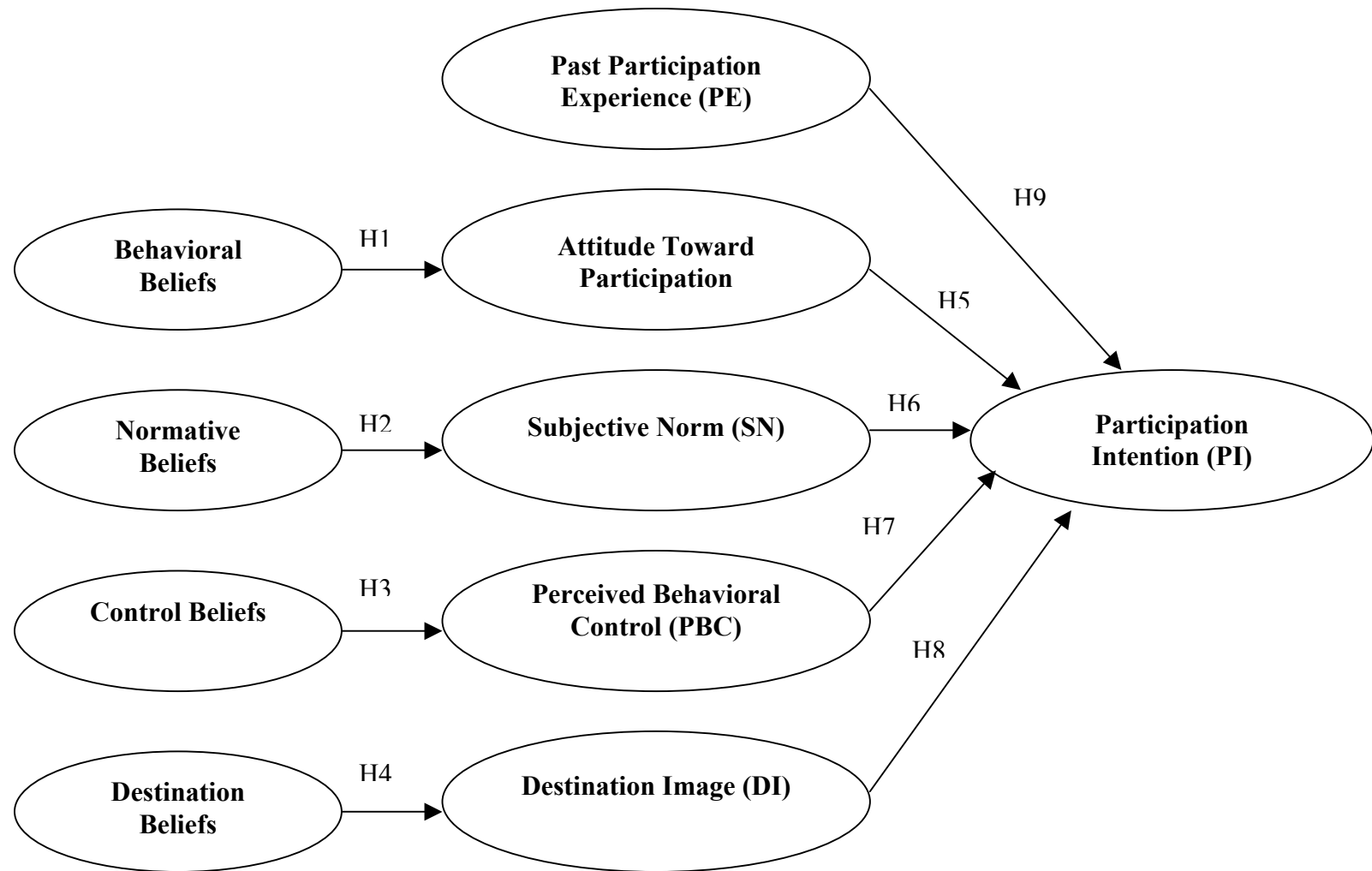


Figure 1. Meeting Participation Model (MPM)

behavior is important for the following reasons. First, although there have been some descriptive studies explaining association members' meeting participation process, there has been no theory-driven study on this topic. Incorporating existing theoretical frameworks establishes a sound network that helps extend our understanding of association members' meeting participation behavior (Zinni, 2002). In addition, the present study proposes the meeting participation model (MPM), which adds additional non-volitional constructs to existing TRA and TPB model constructs. A simultaneous inclusion of additional constructs and mediating variables to the proposed model is in line with recent theoretical development in the area of consumer behavior (Oh & Hsu, 2001). Therefore, this study aspires to contribute to the existing body of literature that has used TRA and TPB in a variety of contexts.

Much of the practical benefit derived from this study was based on the acknowledgement that associations and destinations would benefit from a better understanding of association members' meeting participation behaviors. Several references support this contention. Understanding association members' meeting participation behavior is important for both associations and destinations because the attendance level is closely related to associations' annual revenue and the direct and indirect economic impacts on destinations. The proposed meeting participation model (MPM) helps both associations and destinations develop effective marketing plans and, therefore, attract more association members to meetings and to destinations. Furthermore, the research model can be applied to leisure travelers' behavior, which may be a similar behavior pattern with association members' meeting participation behavior (Oppermann & Chon, 1997).

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Associations: Associations are organizations where members are associated for certain common purposes, whether they are for professional, industry, educational, science, or social reasons (Reichbart, 2004).

Association Meetings: Association meetings are gatherings like annual conventions, topical conferences, world congresses, workshops, and seminars held for the benefit of the association's membership (Reichbart, 2004).

Attitude: An attitude is an index of the degree to which a person likes or dislikes an object, where "object" is used in the generic sense to refer to any aspect of the individual's world (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980).

Behavioral Intention: Behavioral intention is an individual's decision or commitment to perform a given behavior (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980).

Conventions: Convention is a broad term that can refer to a large gathering with an educational and exhibit or exposition components (Eisenstodt, 2004).

Corporate Meetings: Corporate meetings range from small VIP board of directors meetings to large scale sales meetings, customer incentive meetings, and lower tiered staff training meeting (Reichbart, 2004).

Destination Image: Destination image is the signal or symbol presented to the individual by a site or region. It is the aggregate sum of beliefs about each destination attribute (Mercer, 1981).

Meetings: Meeting is a term often used by associations that can refer to a combination of educational sessions and exhibits, including seminars, forums, symposiums, conferences, workshops, and clinics (Eisenstodt, 2004).

Meeting Planners: Meeting planners organize meetings and other gatherings for companies, corporations, and associations. This gathering can range from a small board of directors meeting to national conventions (Eisenstodt, 2004).

Perceived behavioral control (PBC): PBC is the individual's control beliefs weighted by the perceived facilitation of the control factor in either inhibiting or facilitating the behavior (Taylor and Todd, 1995).

Subjective norm: Subjective norm is defined as a person's perception that most people who are important to him think he should or should not perform the behavior in question (Chang, 1998).

Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA): The theory of reasoned action (TRA) is an expectancy value model to predict and understand an individual's behavior. The theory assumes that human beings are rational and motivation-based and thus a person's behavior is determined by his/her intention to perform the behavior and that this intention is, in turn, a function of his/her attitude toward the behavior and his/her subjective norm (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980).

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB): The theory of planned behavior (TPB) is an extension of the TRA. The only difference between the TRA and the TPB is that the TPB takes account for non-volitional control, named “actual control,” over the behavior (Ajzen, 1985).

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CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews the literature on the meeting participation process and provides a conceptual model for meeting participation. The review comprises three sections: 1) the meeting participation process with a focus on various factors influencing association members' decision to attend meetings; 2) an introduction to the meeting participation model; 3) the development of research hypotheses based on human behavior theories.

Oppermann and Chon's (1997) meeting participation process model, the only process model of association members' decision making and meeting participation, is first presented with a focus on each meeting participation factor influencing association members' decision-making. Then, a comprehensive review of literature on meeting participation factors is presented. Based on the Oppermann and Chon's process model and the review of relevant literature on meeting participation factors, a conceptual model of association members' meeting participation behaviors is proposed. As the theoretical framework for the meeting participation model (MPM), the theory of reasoned action (TRA) and the theory of planned behavior (TPB) are reviewed. Finally, hypothetical relationships among the constructs in MPM are explained.

MEETING PARTICIPATION PROCESS

An understanding of association members' meeting participation process is important for both associations and meeting destinations because association members' meeting participation is closely related to an association's annual revenues and the direct and indirect economic impact on host destinations. Despite the important role of attendees in the convention industry, relatively little research to date has been done on meeting attendees and their participation

decision-making process. How to identify meeting attendees' needs and whether these needs can be associated with tangible variables have been topics for only a few convention researchers.

A review of convention literature revealed that some studies have shed light on the motivational and inhibiting aspects of convention attendees and non-attendees (Grant, 1994; Grant & Weaver, 1996; Ngamsom & Beck, 2000; Oppermann, 1998; Oppermann & Chon, 1995). However, these studies failed to incorporate various aspects of the meeting participation process. Recognizing the lack of a comprehensive analysis of all meeting participation factors, Oppermann and Chon (1997) introduced the Conference Participation Decision-Making Process Model (hereafter, the process model). The process model identifies several meeting participation variables and groups those variables into four factors: personal factors, association/conference factors, location factors, and intervening opportunities. Figure 2 shows Oppermann and Chon's (1997) process model.

The first set of factors in the process model are personal factors. The health status of individual, financial situation, family obligations, and time availability are all included in the personal factors. The second category, association/conference factors, consists of components related to the individuals' professional goals and involvement. General association/conference factors include individual involvement with the association, peer recognition, professional contacts, and the sense of global community. According to the process model, locational factors are influential, especially when considered in combination with personal and conference factors. Typical locational considerations include overall destination image, accessibility, climate, pre-/post activities, and previous experience. Lastly, intervening opportunities involve competing conventions and irregular events that may influence the participation decision. Today, it is not unusual to find people who have multiple association

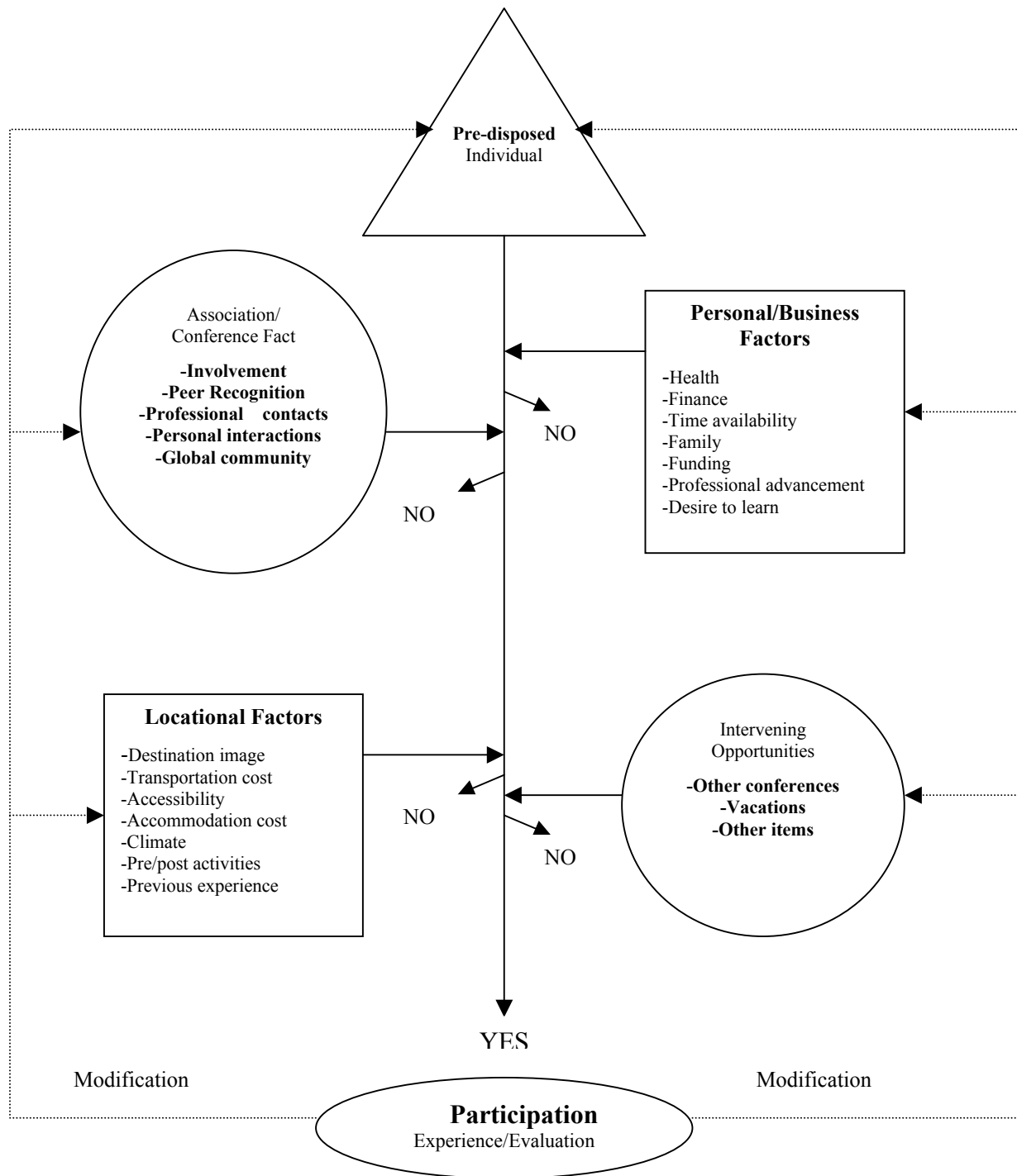


Figure 2. Oppermann and Chon's (1997) Participation Process Model

memberships. For them, attending all conferences or even all annual conventions of these organizations is hardly possible. In fact, many of them are often faced with the dilemma of having to choose one over another parallel conference because of meeting schedule conflicts and the financial limitations (Oppermann, 1998).

Although it is generally recognized as a cornerstone of the meeting participation process, Oppermann and Chon's (1997) process model was not empirically tested.

MEETING PARTICIPATION FACTORS

Four meeting participation factors in Oppermann and Chon's (1997) process model are well supported in many empirical studies. First, most research on meeting participation process has been focused on identifying motivating factors, which is equivalent with the association/conference factors in the Oppermann and Chon's process model. Second, a few studies focused not only on the motivating factors, but also on inhibiting factors in the meeting participation process. Those inhibiting factors are summarized in business factors and intervening opportunities in the process model. Also, family influence on association members' meeting participation decisions was found to be significant in a few empirical studies. This family factor is explained in personal factors in the process model. Lastly, the importance of meeting destination choice by associations and meeting planners has been emphasized in many studies. The destination image or locational factors are importantly addressed in the process model, too. Although there is no empirical evidence reported about the relative importance of each meeting participation factor, it is believed that destination image is one of the most prominent meeting participation factors. Overall, the review of relevant literature strongly supports Oppermann and Chon's (1997) process model and its four major meeting participation

factors. In the following subsections, literature on those four major meeting participation factors (motivational, destination image, inhibiting, and family influence factors) are reviewed.

Motivational Factors

In order for a meeting to be successful and lucrative, associations and meeting planners must increase the attendance level by understanding what motivates an individual to attend a meeting and designing their meeting accordingly (Grant & Weaver, 1996). In the first empirical study of this nature, Price (1993) identified four factors that influence meeting participation decision-making. According to Price, potential meeting participants consider “leadership”, “networking”, “education”, and “professional savvy” during the participation decision-making process. As shown in Table 1, these motivational factors have been empirically supported by several other researchers (Grant, 1994; Grant & Weaver, 1996; Ngamsom & Beck, 2000; Oppermann, 1998; Oppermann & Chon, 1995; Price & Murrmann, 2000). Furthermore, researchers have added other motivational factors, such as destination image (Grant & Weaver, 1996) and association involvement (Oppermann, 1998).

Overall, although researchers disagree in naming motivation factors, the results of their research indicate that education, networking, and professional leadership are the three most important motivators influencing association members’ meeting participation decision.

Education: A review of decision-making variables for meeting attendance revealed that education or professional improvement is the chief benefit of attending association meetings (Grant, 1994; Grant & Weaver, 1996; Ngamsom & Beck, 2000; Oppermann, 1998; Oppermann & Chon, 1995; Price, 1993). Not surprisingly, more than 90% of the associations offer formal education programs in various formats (Price, 1993). In addition, many associations offer

Table 1. Meeting Participation Motivation Factors

Author(s)	Subjects	Motivation Factors/Attributes
Price (1993)	468 attendants of the American Association for the Advancement of Science annual meeting (1993)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Networking • Professional savvy • Leadership
Grant (1994)	135 attendees of the International Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institution Education (CHRIE) 1993 conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Leadership • Networking • Potpourri
Oppermann (1995), Oppermann & Chon (1995)	72 attendees of the Society of Travel & Tourism Educators (ISTTE) 1994 Annual Conference.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping up with changes in my profession • Hearing speakers • Seeing people I know in my field • Learning new skills • Developing new professional relationships • Establishing a reputation in my field • Traveling to a desirable location • Representing my organization • Developing new personal relationships • Participating in informal social activities
Grant & Weaver (1996)	135 attendees of the CHRIE 1993 conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Leadership • Networking • Destination
Oppermann (1998)	123 participants of the Association of American Geographers (AAG) 1995 Chicago Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeing people I know in my field • Hearing speakers in my field • Present paper to colleagues • Keeping up with changes in my field • Developing new business relationships • Establishing a reputation in my field • Participating in informal social activities • Traveling to a desirable destination

Table 1. Meeting Participation Motivation Factors (Cont'd)

Author(s)	Subjects	Motivation Factors/Attributes
Ngamsom & Beck (2000)	43 attendees of the Fifth Annual Conference of Asia Pacific Tourism Association in Hong Kong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity for travel to overseas destination • Outdoor recreation • Business activities • Change of pace • Networking • Education
Price & Murrmann (2000)	700 association members from five different associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profession-based values (education) • Competency-based values (education) • People-based values (networking) • Association-based values (involvement) • Civic-based values (leadership)
Rittichainuwat, Beck, & Lalopa (2001)	231 attendees of the CHRIE 2000 conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education (conference programs) • Networking • Career enhancement • Traveling to desirable place • Leadership enhancement • Association related activities • Business activities • Self-esteem enhancement • Sightseeing

educational programs on leadership and management skills (Bowers, 1990). Therefore, educational programs at the association meetings enable association members and professionals to keep up with and use developments in their fields.

Networking: Generally, scheduled activities ranging from variety of food and beverage events to recreational activities such as golf, encourage informal social interaction (Price, 1993). According to Mintzberg (1973), non-line relationships are a primary characteristic of professional work and serve an important function as sources of information. The face-to-face nature of meetings maximizes the opportunity to develop bonds among attendees (Rosenthal &

Mezoff, 1980). In addition, informal social interactions and contacts among attendees provide up-to-date information on industry events, trends, competition, and unsolicited information on products, services, advertisement, employees, new business activities, etc. (Price, 1993). Both education and networking factors refer to gaining information, but they differ in the formality, structure, and purpose of communication. While education is a formal, patterned, and hierarchical type of exchange with a designated leader and behavioral-based objectives, networking is an informal, unpatterned, horizontal type of exchange of information (Price, 1993).

Leadership: Leadership represents autonomy and responsibility; the person is now the influencer rather than the person being influenced by others. It is a state of mind similar to Maslow's concept of self-actualization (Price, 1993). In the leadership context, Schwartzman (1989) stated that meetings are exotic social systems that are often the place where 1) ideals such as equality of status among professionals are established; 2) cultural issues such as ethics are made visible; 3) power is displayed by who is included and who is not, who speaks and who listens. Thus, this factor represents a unique value of meeting participation, and it places attendees in a prestige position at the top of their professions. Convention research suggests that the leadership or ceremonial function alone gives meetings significant value (Price, 1993; Trice & Roman, 1973).

Destination Factor

Although destination image is only one aspect among many other factors affecting association members' meeting participation decision (Grant & Weaver, 1996), it is of considerable importance for associations and meeting planners. The review of the existing literature on meeting destination in relation to meeting attendance shows that the image of the

meeting destination is a pervasive variable (Alkjaer, 1976; Oppermann, 1994; Var, Cesario & Mauser, 1985; Usher, 1991; Zelinsky, 1994). Often, associations can build good attendance at their conventions simply by holding it at more favorably perceived destinations (Montgomery & Strick, 1995; Oppermann 1995; Usher, 1991; Zelinsky, 1994).

Usher's (1991) study was one of the first to investigate association members' destination preferences and the impact on attendance turnout. Using attendance data of 136 associations, Usher (1991) examined whether Las Vegas attracts a larger or smaller convention turnout than other destinations. For comparison, four meetings of each association were included, one in Las Vegas and another three at other destinations. Usher (1991) noted that the average turnout for meetings in Las Vegas was higher by 365 attendees than in other cities, indicating that associations holding their conferences in Las Vegas could expect considerably higher attendance on average. Var et al. (1985) showed that conferences in large urban areas are likely to be better attended than those in areas with fewer people living within commuting distance. Oppermann (1994) compared two association meetings hosted in Boston and Chicago and inferred that Boston had a much stronger drawing power on its respective audience than Chicago did. In another study, Oppermann (1995) investigated convention destination image from the perspective of meeting attendees. His findings showed that association members have location preferences, and if conferences are held in highly desirable destinations, the turnout is higher. Oppermann (1996) suggested that when selecting destinations, meeting planners need to turn to potential meeting attendees to get their insights into which destinations are more or less favored. This process can help associations and meeting planners maximize attendance and financial return from the meeting.

Despite the obvious effect of destination choice on meetings, the existing convention research on convention destination and destination preferences remains superficial, because research has inquired solely into a few general destination attributes such as climate, hotel rooms, meeting facilities, and recreation facilities that are not linked to specific destinations (Oppermann, 1994).

Accessibility: The location of a convention in the vicinity of a potential attendee may sway individual decisions to attend simply because it reduces not only travel distance, but also travel expenses (Var et al., 1985). Accessibility is often related to transportation cost, with the less accessible sites being usually more expensive.

Climate: Climate is an important factor, especially when an individual is sensitive to certain climates (Oppermann, 1994). For example, sensitivity to heat would preclude attendance a convention held in a humid climate, such as the tropics or Houston or San Antonio in the middle of summer.

Reputation/Tourist Attractions: The reputation or image of a potential convention location is a pervasive variable. Meetings destinations with famous tourist attractions and activities achieve a higher attendance because of their attractiveness to potential attendees (Alkjaer, 1976; Usher, 1991; Zelinsky, 1994).

However, those destination studies lack research on the true relationship between destination image and meeting turnout. Var et al. (1985) only used actual attendance at a series of conferences to evaluate some preconceived decision attributes. Similarly, Usher (1991) examined actual attendance at conferences to scrutinize Las Vegas as a convention destination. Zelinsky (1994) and Oppermann (1994) did not use any empirical evidence to support their propositions. In publications where one would expect a more detailed discussion and

examination of destination image and its impact, only fleeting reference is made to the issue and the influence of destination image on convention attendance (Oppermann, 1994).

Inhibiting Factors

Many researchers have focused primarily on identifying primary motivational factors in association members' meeting participation (Grant, 1994; Grant & Price, 1994; Grant & Weaver, 1996; Ngamsom & Beck, 2000; Oppermann, 1998; Oppermann & Chon, 1995; Price, 1993). However, motivational factors alone do not explain how association members' meeting participation decision is made. Arguably, it may be even more important to know why many association members choose not to attend conventions. Previous studies on travel decision-making processes suggest that travel inhibitors are more important than travel motivators during the travel decision-making process (Crompton & Ankomah, 1993; Sonmez & Graefe, 1998; Um & Crompton, 1992). Lack of funding, time constraints, inaccessibility of the destination, and family obligations are frequently cited as main barriers to convention participation (Ngamsom & Beck, 2000; Oppermann & Chon, 1995; Sonmez & Graefe, 1998). Table 2 presents results of empirical studies on factors inhibiting association members' meeting participation.

Oppermann and Chon (1995) explored meeting attendees' conference participation as it relates to destination preference. They found that cost is the most prominent barrier to meeting participation. In a survey of meeting participants and non-participants, Oppermann (1995) identified factors that affect the participation decision process of attendees and non-attendees. The results of Oppermann's (1995) study did not differ from previous studies. Time and cost issues are major barriers to attending meeting. A significant number of survey respondents chose location, travel distance, and no direct flight connections as main inhibitors to meeting

Table 2. Meeting Participation Inhibiting Factors

Author(s)	Subjects	Inhibiting Factors/Attributes
Oppermann (1995)	72 attendees of the Society of Travel & Tourism Educators (STTE) 1994 Annual Conference.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No travel funds from my organization • No time • Schedule conflict with other conference • Registration fee too high • Transportation cost too high • Hotel room too expensive • Travel access to the destination not convenient • Not a desirable destination • Conference topics not interesting • No leave from my organization
Oppermann (1998)	123 participants of the Association of American Geographers (AAG) 1995 Chicago Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No travel fund from my organization • No time • Did not submit any paper for presentation • Hotel room too expensive • Transportation cost too high • Registration fee too high • Too far away/travel time too long • Not a desirable destination • Conference topics not interesting • Schedule conflict other meetings
Ngamsom & Beck (2000)	43 attendees of the Fifth Annual Conference of Asia Pacific Tourism Association in Hong Kong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety/Security • Distance • Time • Money • Health problems
Rittichainuwat, Beck, & Lalopa (2001)	231 attendees of the CHRIE 2000 conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Money • Time • Distance • Difficult access to the destinations • Negative image of the destinations • Family obligations/responsibilities • Safety/security at destinations • I have been there before • Health problems

participation. Time, distance, and lack of funding were also cited as primary reasons for not attending conferences in other studies (Ngamsom & Beck, 2000; Oppermann, 1998; Rittichainuwat et al., 2001).

Family Influence

Convention and meeting travel represents the most significant market segment within business travel, accounting for one third of all business trips (Oppermann, 1994). However, such travel is not strictly business travel. Commonly, business meeting participation is combined with pleasure travel and even visiting friends or relatives. Meeting attendees are often accompanied by a spouse or other family members who enjoy the visit to the meeting destination.

Approximately 34% of all attendees at association meetings are accompanied by their spouses (Edelstein & Benini, 1994). In an empirical study to examine the influence of each family member on the decision to attend a convention in Las Vegas, Oh, Roehl, and Shock (1993) discovered that a spouse' desire to go on the trip was rated second only to convention participation. Further, respondents agreed that they and their spouses had relatively equal influence in decision making.

Overall, although the existing literature on meeting participation factors have shed some light on the motivational and inhibiting aspects of convention attendees and non-attendees, those research efforts failed to synthesize various aspects of the meeting participation process into specific theoretical frameworks. Oppermann and Chon (1997) stated that although many meeting participation variables have been addressed in previous research, a comprehensive analysis of all factors and their relative influence is lacking. In that regard, Oppermann and Chon's (1994) process model incorporates those sporadic findings on meeting participation factors, and,

therefore, provides a comprehensive view of the meeting participation process by association members. However, their process model was not built on a theoretical framework, and it has not been empirically tested. Building a process model on a theoretical framework is extremely important because it encompasses a set of interrelated constructs and propositions that present a systematic view of meeting participation phenomena (Kerlinger, 1979). Also, a better explanation of meeting participation behaviors can be achieved through a theoretical framework that provides a unifying structure, integrating various explanatory factors (Barling, Fullagar, & Kelloway, 1992). Hence, a theory-driven conceptual model of meeting participation, which conceptually synthesizes all major meeting participation factors, is developed and presented in the following section.

MEETING PARTICIPATION MODEL

Using two attitude-behavior theories, the Oppermann and Chon's (1997) process model is reorganized in the meeting participation model (MPM). The MPM is presented in Figure 3. The proposed MPM is a systematic integration of four major meeting participation factors based on the theory of reasoned action (TRA) and the theory of planned behavior (TPB), which is an extension of the TRA.

According to the TRA, a person's behavior is determined by the intention to perform a behavior and that this intention is, in turn, a function of the attitude toward the behavior and a subjective norm, which is a person's perception that most people who are important to the person think he/she should or should not perform the behavior in question (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). However, a number of barriers to human behaviors may exist, so including these groups of non-volitional variables in the original volitional model is essential in studying certain human

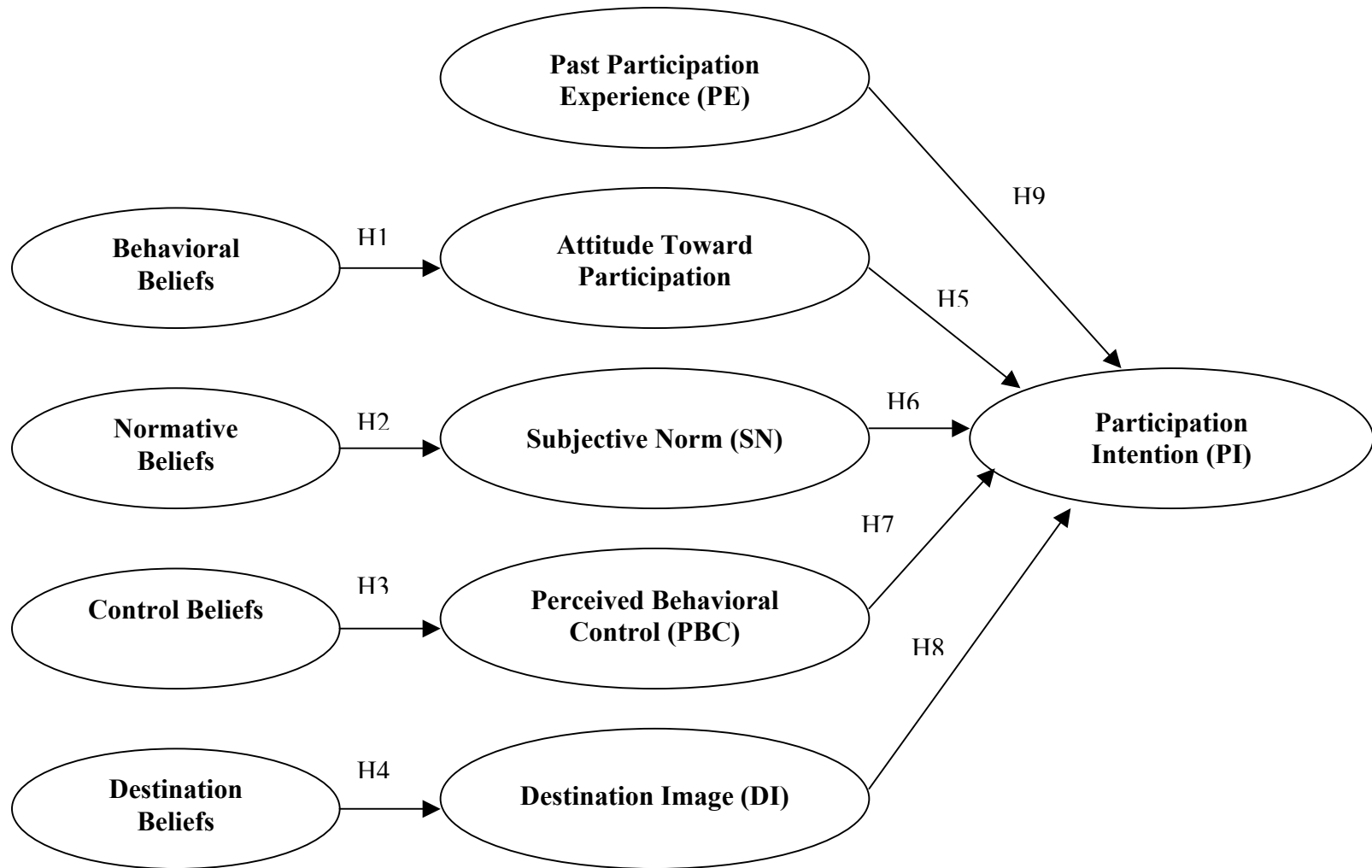


Figure 3. Meeting Participation Model (MPM)

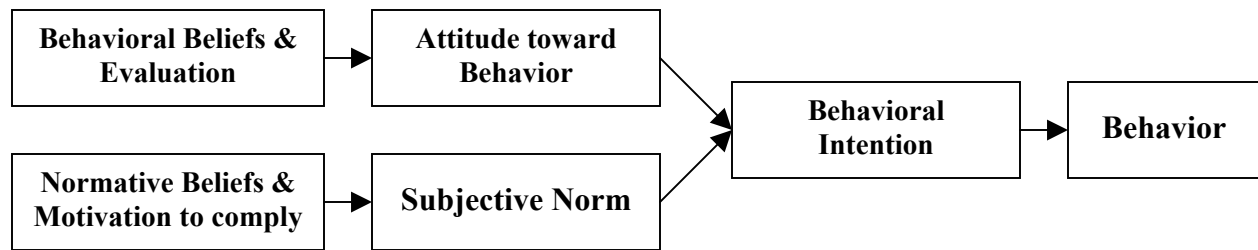


Figure 4a. The theory of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980)

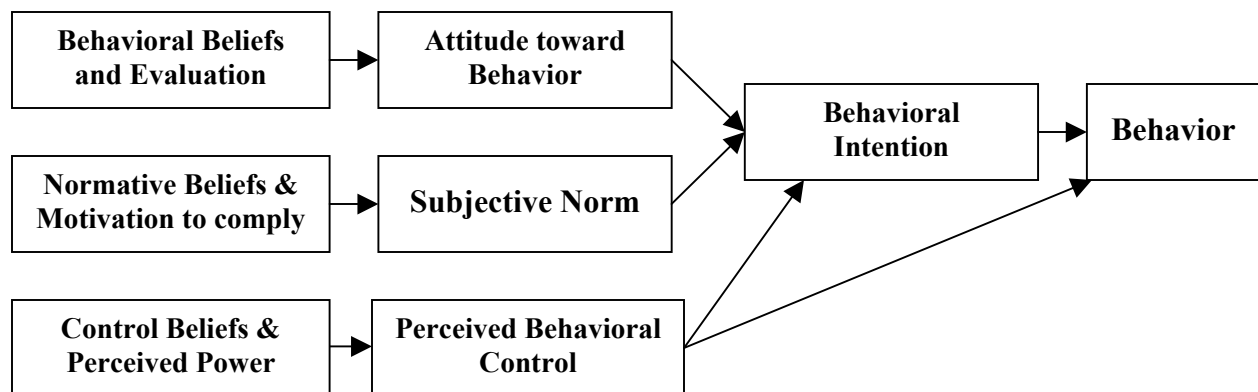


Figure 4b. The theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1985)

behaviors. In that regard, TPB was developed to explain human behaviors under both volitional and non-volitional control. The main difference between TRA and TPB, as shown in Figure 4, is that TPB contains non-volitional factors like perceived behavioral control, which is an individual's actual possession of the opportunities and resources required to perform the behavior (Ajzen, 1985).

Based on the initial assumption that association members' meeting participation behaviors are under their volitional control, Ajzen and Fishbein's (1980) TRA and Ajzen's

(1985) TPB were adopted to predict and explain the psychological processes of meeting participation. Three major meeting participation factors in the MPM can be explained with three indicators (attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control) of behavioral intention in the TPB.

First, attitude toward meeting participation can be explained through the motivating factor, which has several salient belief items, such as education and networking. Second, subjective norms about meeting participation can be understood by the family influence factor in the context of meeting participation behavior. Although existing convention literature provide only one important referent, family, it is hypothesized that more referents, such as colleagues and bosses, can influence association members' meeting participation decisions. Lastly, perceived behavioral control over meeting participation can be assessed through the inhibiting factor in the meeting participation model (MPM). Relevant literatures provide several control belief items, such as time and money.

Despite its general applicability to various human behaviors, however, the TRA and the TPB have not been exempted from modifications and alternative conceptualizations to explain various human behaviors (Oh & Hsu, 2001). Likewise, the meeting participation model (MPM) adds two additional non-volitional factors (destination image and past meeting participation experience) to the TPB to better understand and delineate association members' meeting participation behaviors. As emphasized in the previous section, destination image can significantly affect association members' meeting participation decisions, and this proposition has been constantly proven in many empirical studies (Alkjaer, 1976; Oppermann, 1994; Var, Cesario and Mauser, 1985; Usher, 1991; Zelinsky, 1994). Also, many studies investigating various human behaviors have proven that past experience is a reliable indicator of future

behavior. Detailed theoretical relationships among the constructs in the MPM are explained in the subsequent sections.

Belief Constructs and Predictor Variables

Because of its achievement in developing a model to predict various human behaviors, the theory of reasoned action (TRA) and the theory of planned behavior (TPB) have been the basis of research and studies in a wide variety of fields. Usually, TRA and TPB are discussed at two levels. In order to gain a deeper understanding of the factors influencing the behavior in question, it is necessary to look for the determinants of the attitudinal, normative, and control components. Those determinants are beliefs that individuals hold about themselves and their environment (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). The first level explains attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control in terms of beliefs about consequences of performing the behavior (attitudinal beliefs), about the normative expectations of relevant referents (normative beliefs), and about control over the behavior in question (control beliefs). At the next level, behavioral intentions are explained in terms of attitude toward behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Average correlations for each hypothetical relationship in the TRA and TPB are presented in Table 3.

Many empirical studies using TRA or TPB have found significant relationships between belief variables and indicators of behavioral intention: behavioral beliefs and attitude, normative beliefs and subjective norm, and control beliefs and perceived behavioral control (see Table 3). Through a meta-analysis of 185 studies using TPB, Armitage and Conner (2001) discovered that the average correlations for each path is .50, .50, and .27 ($p < .001$), respectively. In the following sub-sections, each causal relationship between belief constructs (behavioral, normative, control

and destination beliefs) and indicator constructs (attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control, and destination image) in the MPM is theorized and hypothesized.

Table 3. Average Component Relationships for Studies of TRA and TPB

Relationship	Number of Tests	Average Correlation (R)*	Variance (R^2)
<i>Sheppard, Hartwick, and Warshaw's (1988) Meta-analysis of TRA studies</i>			
BI-Behavior correlation	87	.53	
Multiple correlation (ATT + SN) with BI	87	.66	
ATT-BI correlation	87	.67	
SN-BI correlation	87	.62	
<i>Armitage & Conner's (2001) Meta-analysis of TPB studies</i>			
Multiple correlation (BI + PBC) with behavior	63	.52	.27
BI-Behavior correlation	48	.47	.22
PBC-Behavior correlation	60	.37	.13
% Variance added by PBC to Behavior	66	.14	.02
Multiple correlation (ATT + SN + PBC) with BI	154	.63	.39
ATT-BI correlation	115	.49	.24
SN-BI correlation	137	.34	.12
PBC-BI correlation	144	.43	.18
% Variance added by PBC to BI	136	.24	.06
Behavioral belief-ATT correlation	42	.50	.25
Normative belief-SN correlation	34	.50	.25
Control belief-PBC correlation	18	.27	.27

* $p < .001$, ATT=Attitude Toward Behavior, SN=Subjective Norm, BI=Behavioral Intention, PBC= Perceived Behavioral Control

Behavioral Beliefs Toward Attitude

Attitude is an individual's positive or negative evaluation of performing the behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). A person's attitude toward behavior is determined by the set of salient beliefs that he/she holds about performing the behavior. Each belief associates the object with a certain attribute. The evaluation of each attribute contributes to the attitude in direct proportion

to the individual's subjective probability that the object possesses the attribute in question (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2001). Thus, a behavioral belief refers to an individual's subjective probability that a behavior will lead to a certain consequence (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). According to TRA, the strength of each behavioral belief (bb_i) is multiplied by the evaluation of its consequence (be_i), and attitude is determined by summing the resulting products across all salient behavioral beliefs (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). The basic structure of attitude is shown in the following equation:

$$\text{Attitude} = \sum_i^n bb_i be_i \quad (1)$$

In the context of meeting participation behaviors, an association member who believes that attending a meeting or conference will bring positive consequences, such as educational or professional benefits and networking opportunities (motivational factors), would have a favorable attitude toward attending the meeting. Thus, it can be postulated that behavioral beliefs about meeting participation can influence association members' attitude toward meeting participation.

- *Hypothesis 1: Behavioral beliefs about meeting participation are positively associated with attitude about meeting participation.*

Normative Beliefs Toward Subjective Norm

Subjective norm is defined as a person's perception that most people who are important to the person think he/she should or should not perform the behavior in question (Chang, 1998). According to TRA and TPB, the subjective norm is a function of a set of beliefs termed as normative beliefs. Normative beliefs are concerned with the likelihood that important referent individuals, such as spouse, parents, or colleagues, would approve or disapprove of the behavior

(Ajzen & Madden, 1986). Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) explain that to obtain an estimate of a subjective norm, each normative belief (nb_i) of an individual is first multiplied by his/her motivation to comply with the referent (mc_i). Then, the cross products are summed for all salient referents. Thus, the subjective norm can be illustrated as:

$$\text{Subjective Norm (SN)} = \sum_i^n nb_i mc_i \quad (2)$$

In the context of meeting participation, if an association member believes that most referents, i.e. his/her parents, friends, advisors/bosses, and/or colleagues (family influence factor), think he/she should attend the meeting or conference, the perceived social pressure to attend the meeting will increase with his/her motivation to comply. Conversely, if he/she believes that most referents are opposed to his/her meeting attendance, his/her perception of social pressure not to attend the meeting will increase with his/her motivation to comply. Therefore, it is hypothesized that an association member's normative beliefs about meeting participation can influence the subjective norm about his/her meeting participation.

- *Hypothesis 2: Normative beliefs toward meeting participation are positively associated with subjective norm about meeting participation.*

Control Beliefs Toward Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC)

According to Ajzen (1985), besides behavioral beliefs and normative beliefs, human behavior is also guided by beliefs about the presence of factors that may facilitate or impede performance of the behavior and the perceived power of these factors (control beliefs). Perceived behavioral control is a function of control beliefs, which are the individual's perception of the

extent to which he/she possesses internal and external factors that may increase or decrease the perceived difficulty of performing the behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Park, 2003). According to the Ajzen (1985), internal factors include such variables as individual differences, information, skills, abilities, and emotion, while external factors involve time, financial opportunity, and dependence of others. To estimate the perceived behavior control, each control belief (cb_i) is multiplied by the perceived power of the control factor to facilitate or inhibit performance of the behavior (pp_i). The resulting products are then summed across all salient control beliefs. Thus, perceived behavioral control can be expressed in the following equation:

$$\text{Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC)} = \sum_i^n cb_i pp_i \quad (3)$$

As proved in the relevant literature on meeting participation factors, association members' meeting participation decisions are affected by various internal and external variables (inhibiting factors). For example, time constraints/schedule conflicts, family obligations, and/or the lack of financial support from the involved organization are considered external factors, while the ability to present papers at the meeting and emotions are internal factors. Therefore, an association member's control beliefs over his/her meeting participation should influence his/her perceived behavioral control over the meeting participation.

- *Hypothesis 3: Control beliefs over meeting participation are positively associated with perceived behavioral control (PBC).*

Destination Beliefs Toward Destination Image

The proposed meeting participation model (MPM) adds an additional belief construct (destination beliefs) and the hypothetical relationship between destination beliefs and destination

image. It has been suggested in travel destination choice models that individuals integrate their subjective evaluations of each attribute in different ways so they have distinctive preferences for the destinations. In other words, the destination attributes are perceived to be input factors that produce image (Holbrook 1981; Young & Kent, 1985). Um and Crompton (1992) stated that individuals' beliefs about a destination's attributes help to increase or reduce a potential traveler's motive to travel to the destination. They operationalized destination beliefs as consisting of two components: 1) the relative strength of beliefs about each destination attribute in evaluating each place as a possible destination; and 2) the extent to which prospective destinations were believed to possess certain destination attributes. Hence, the logic of the hypothetical relationship between meeting destination beliefs and destination image is similar to that of travel destination choice process models. The sum of each destination attribute strength (db_i) multiplied by the evaluation of each attribute (de_i) determines the destination image.

$$\text{Destination Image (DI)} = \sum_i^n db_i de_i \quad (4)$$

Many empirical studies on meeting participation factors have indicated that the meeting destination itself could affect association members' decisions about meeting participation. When association members feel that a particular meeting destination possesses a satisfactory level of performance on each destination attribute, such as accessibility, climate, tourist attractions, and safety/security, they will have a favorable image of that destination. Thus, it is hypothesized that association members' destination beliefs can influence a destination's overall image.

- *Hypothesis 4: Destination beliefs are positively associated with destination image.*

Predicting Meeting Participation Intention

TRA and TPB posit that behavioral intention is determined by attitude toward behavior, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control with relative weights (Park, 2003). Behavioral intention is not so simple as to be equally influenced by various determinants all the time (Park, 2003). There are conflicts among the determinants that influence behavioral intentions.

According to Ajzen and Fishbein (1980), the relative weights (w) of the determinants of behavioral intention should measure the behavioral intention because the relative importance of attitudinal, normative, and perceived behavioral control factors may vary from person to person and across situations (Park, 2003). Thus, behavioral intention in TPB can be illustrated as follows:

$$\text{Behavioral Intention} = w_1 \text{ Attitude (A)} + w_2 \text{ Subjective Norm (SN)} + w_3 \text{ Perceive} \\ \text{Behavior Control (PBC)} \quad (5)$$

As explained in Oppermann and Chon's process model and the relevant literatures on meeting participation factors, association members' meeting participation decisions are influenced by four major determinants: 1) attitude toward the meeting participation (motivational factors); 2) subjective norm toward the meeting participation (family influence factors); 3) perceived behavioral control over the meeting participation (inhibiting factors); and 4) destination image (destination factors). Besides, the proposed meeting participation model hypothesizes that past meeting participation experience is another important determinant of association members' meeting participation intention. Therefore, the meeting participation intention can be formulated as such:

$$\text{Behavioral Intention (BI)} = w_1 \text{ Attitude (A)} + w_2 \text{ Subjective Norm (SN)} + w_3 \text{ Perceived Behavior Control (PBC)} + w_4 \text{ Destination Image (DI)} + w_5 \text{ Past Experience (PE)} \quad (6)$$

Each hypothesized relationship between five indicator variables and behavioral intention and the empirical support of those relationships are described in the following sub-sections.

Attitude Toward Participation Intention

Attitude toward a behavior refers to the degree to which a person has a favorable or unfavorable evaluation of the behavior in question (Ajzen, 1991). According to TRA, attitude is populated to be the first and most important antecedent of behavioral intention. Attitude is an individual's positive or negative belief about performing a specific behavior. Once an attitude is formed about an action or event, the attitude leads to the formation of behavioral intentions with respect to that action. In other words, an individual will intend to perform a certain behavior when he or she evaluates it positively. Therefore, TRA and TPB assume that attitudes have a direct effect on behavioral intention.

There is substantial amount of research investigating the casual relationship between attitudes and behavioral intentions. Several studies have shown that attitude is the best predictor of a behavior and behavioral intention. In a meta-analysis of 87 studies that employed the TRA (see Table 3), Sheppard, Hartwick, and Warshaw (1988) discovered that the average correlation for the prediction of behavioral intentions from attitude toward behavior was .67 ($p < .001$). On the other hand, Armitage and Conner's (2001) meta-analysis of 185 studies using TPB found the average correlation of behavioral intention and attitude is .49 ($p < .001$). Both studies indicated that attitude is the strongest indicator of behavioral intention among three antecedents (attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control). There are also a number of empirical

Table 4. Tourism and Hospitality Research Using the TRA and the TPB

Author(s)	Activity	Theory	Relationship	Correlation (<i>r</i>)
Young & Kent (1985)	Recreation	TRA	BI-B	.77
			(ATT + SN)-BI	.74
			ATT-BI	.66
			SN-BI	.56
Ajzen & Driver (1991)	Leisure participation r	TPB	BB-B	.37 ~ .63
			NB-B	.07 ~ .32
			CB-B	.05 ~ .49
Ajzen & Driver (1992)	Leisure choice	TPB	(BI + PBC)-B	.78
			BI-B	.75
			PBC-B	.73
			(ATT+SN+PBC)-BI	.86
			ATT-BI	.54
			SN-BI	.70
			PBC-BI	.80
Buttle & Bok (1996)	Hotel choice	TRA	BB-ATT	.78
			NB-SN	.20
			(ATT + SN)-BI	.80
			ATT-BI	.80
			SB-BI	.30
Kim & Park (1997)	Hotel choice	TRA	BB-ATT	.78
			NB-SN	.20
			ATT-BI	.81
			SN-BI	.13
Oh & Hsu (2001)	Gambling	TPB	BI-B	.42*
			ATT-BI	.10*
			SN-BI	.09*
			PBC-BI	-.39 ~ .40*
			PB-BI	.43*
			PB-B	1.20*
Vanucci & Kerstetter (2001)	Meeting planners' use of Internet	TPB	BI-B	27.57**
			ATT-BI	44.98**
			SN-BI	26.21**
			PBC-BI	31.94**
			PBC-B	48.96**

*Path Coefficient ($p < .05$); ** χ^2 ($df = 1, p < .05$); () = Multiple correlation; ATT=Attitude Toward Behavior, SN=Subjective Norm, PBC=Perceived Behavioral Control, BI=Behavioral Intention, B=Behavior, H=Habit, PB=Past Behavior, BB=Behavioral Belief, NB=Normative belief, CB=Control Belief.

evidences that TRA and TPB have been successful in explaining a variety of human behaviors in the tourism and hospitality areas (see Table 4).

Ajzen and Driver (1992) showed that leisure choice intentions are predicted with considerable accuracy from attitudes toward behavior. Using TRA, Buttle and Bok (1996) examined international business travelers' intention to stay in the same hotel on the next trip. They discovered that attitude toward behavior was an important predictor of behavioral intention. Therefore, if general measures of attitude have shown a positive relationship between attitude and behavioral intention, then the same should hold for specific measures between attitude toward meeting participation and participation intention. Thus, it is hypothesized that association members having favorable attitude toward meeting participation are more likely to attend the meeting.

- *Hypothesis 5: Favorable attitude toward meeting participation positively affects participation intention (PI).*

Subjective Norm Toward Participation Intention

A subjective norm refers to perceived social pressure to perform or not to perform the behavior (Ajzen, 1991). In TRA, subjective norms are assumed to be a function of beliefs that specific individuals approve or disapprove of performing the behavior. It is assumed that an individual will intend to perform a certain behavior when he/she perceives that important individuals think he/she should. In the context of meeting participation, the key factor underlying subjective norms are important others. Although meeting participation is voluntary, the normative pressure from colleagues, advisors/bosses, or family is expected to have some impact on association members' intention to attend the meeting. The direct link between subjective

norms and behavioral intention can be described as compliance because an individual accepts influence in order to gain a favorable reaction from another person or group (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000; Warshaw, 1980). For example, if colleagues or coworkers think very highly of a member's ability to represent them, this might encourage the member to participate in the meeting. Similarly, family members can also have an impact on a member's intention to attend the meeting because if a member wants to participate in the meeting and has family obligations, the family must be supportive of his/her meeting participation or else it will be difficult for the member to attend the meeting.

The proposition that an individual's subjective sense of his/her normative environment predicts intention has been successfully supported in many empirical studies. Sheppard et al. (1988) found that the average correlation for the prediction of behavioral intentions from subjective norms in 87 TRA studies was .62 ($p < .001$). In the review of 137 TPB studies, Armitage and Conner (2001) also revealed that the average correlation of intention and subjective norm is .34 (see Table 3). The significant causal relationship between subjective norm and intention has become more obvious in hospitality and tourism research using TRA and TPB. In an analysis of business travelers' hotel choice processes, Kim and Park (1997) used TRA. They found a significant correlation between subjective norm and behavioral intention was significant (see Table 4). On the other hand, Vanucci and Kerstetter (2001) used TPB in explaining meeting planners' intention to use the Internet to plan group meetings. The results of their studies revealed that subjective norm was found to be significantly related to their usage of the Internet. Based on the results of empirical tests of the theories, it is hypothesized that association members' relevant referents positively affect association members' meeting participation decisions.

- *Hypothesis 6: Subjective norm (SN) favoring meeting participation positively predicts participation intention (PI).*

Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC) Toward Participation Intention

Perceived behavioral control is defined as the extent to which the person believes that he or she has control over personal or external factors that may facilitate or constrain behavior (Ajzen, 1991). If the behavior is not under complete volitional control, the individuals need to have the necessary resources and opportunities in order to perform the behavior in question. The more resources and opportunities individuals think they possess, the greater their perceived behavioral control should be over the behavior (Madden et al., 1992). Ajzen (1991) stated that people are not likely to form a strong intention to perform a behavior if they believe that they do not have any resources or opportunities to do so even if they hold positive attitudes toward the behavior and believe that important others would approve of the behavior.

For example, in the context of meeting participation, an association member may have favorable attitude about attending the meeting, and his/her colleagues and supervisor(s) at work may want him/her to attend the meeting because he/she is viewed as someone who can represent his/her organization well. As a result, he/she may want to attend the meeting, but if he/she is faced with a situational constraint (lack of funding, schedule conflict, or family obligation), he/she may not feel in full control of the situation and have no intention of participating in the meeting. Hence, the inclusion of such situational constraints, which are specific to association members' decision-making processes, can reduce the unexplained variance in the MPM and increase the value of research in this area.

Therefore, it is assumed that perceived behavioral control is positively and directly associated with behavioral intention. This proposition has been successfully evidenced in many empirical studies investigating various human behaviors with TPB. In a critical review of TPB studies, Armitage and Conner (2001) confirmed that overall perceived behavioral control adds an average of 6% to prediction of behavioral intention. They also discovered that the average correlation between perceived behavioral control and behavioral intention was significant at .43 (see Table 3). The effectiveness of perceived behavioral control in predicting behavioral intention was also proved in the hospitality and tourism research (see Table 4). Um and Crompton (1992) asserted that the inclusion of situational variables, such as financial, time, or other constraints, that are specific to a tourist's decision-making context reduces the unexplained variance in the destination choice models and increases the management value of research in that area. In examining gambling behaviors with a modified TPB model, Oh and Hsu (2001) found a significant relationship between perceived behavioral control and behavioral intention (see Table 4). Also, Ajzen and Driver (1992) discovered a significantly high correlation of .80 between perceived behavioral intention and behavioral intention in leisure choice behaviors. As discussed in previous sections, many extraneous factors, such as financial resources and other opportunities, influence association members' meeting participation decisions. Thus, it is assumed that association members, who have full control over those situational variables or intervening factors, are more likely to attend the meeting.

- *Hypothesis 7: Association members' perceived behavioral control (PBC) over meeting participation positively affects participation intention (PI).*

Destination Image Toward Participation Intention

TRA and TPB have been modified in various ways by researchers to explain various human behaviors (Oh & Hsu, 2001). According to the meta-analysis of 87 studies using TRA (Sheppard et al., 1988), only 17 studies (20 % of the total sample) used TRA as it was originally intended to be used. Ajzen (1991) stated that a simultaneous inclusion of other constructs in the same model is in line with recent theoretical developments in human behavior research. In that regard, the proposed MPM model adds additional non-volitional construct, destination image, which may increase the predictive power of association members' meeting participation behaviors.

Association members' meeting participation decision-making processes are very similar to tourists' travel decision-making processes (Oppermann & Chon, 1997). In tourism, a number of researchers have studied the topic of a destination image, with a focus on identifying the role of a destination image in travelers' decision-making processes. In a critical review of research on destination image in tourism, Chon (1990) concluded that a destination image has a crucial role in an individual's travel decision-making process. Mayo and Jarvis (1981) also stated that when deciding a travel destination, individuals depend on the destination image most among a number of factors. In addition, Echtner and Ritchie (1991) asserted that destinations with strong and positive images are more likely to be considered and chosen in the travel decision process. Due to the importance of destination image, many travel process models have emphasized the role of image as well as perceived situational variables when explaining individuals' travel-purchase behaviors. According to Crompton's (1977) two-stage model, destination choice behavior was characterized as being a function of the interaction between perceived situational constraints (perceived behavioral control in the MPM) and destination image. Crompton (1977) suggested

that destination images were first prioritized in terms of ideal preference, and the prioritization was then amended by the impact of perceived situational constraints. In an empirical study of the role of destination image, Um and Crompton (1992) discovered that individuals' beliefs about a destination's attributes, as a facilitator or an inhibitor, help increase or reduce a potential traveler's motive to travel to the destination.

Some empirical studies on destination image in convention and meeting area have proved that destination choice has a significant influence on association members' meeting participation decisions. In a study of the relationship between meeting destination choice and convention turnout, Usher (1991) discovered that the average turnout of meetings in Las Vegas was 365 attendants higher than in other comparable cities, indicating that associations holding their conferences in Las Vegas could expect considerably higher attendance on average. On the other hand, Oppermann (1995) investigated convention destination image from the perspective of meeting attendees. Their findings showed that association members have location preferences, and that for the meetings being held in favorable destinations, association members' intentions to attend the meeting was high. Thus, it is hypothesized in the MPM that destination image can influence association members' meeting participation intention.

- *Hypothesis 8: Favorable destination image (DI) is positively associated with participation intention (PI).*

Past Experience Toward Participation Intention

In order to increase the predictive power of TRA and TPB, many researchers have attempted to add past experience as a substantive predictor of behavioral intention and future behavior, equivalent to the other predictors (attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioral

control) in the model (Aarts, 1998; Ajzen, 2002; Oh & Hsu, 2001; Ouellette & Wood, 1998; Sonmez & Graefe, 1998; Taylor & Todd, 1995; Yoo, 2004). Research has proved that past experience can be used successfully as a predictor variable of behavioral intention and future behavior. Although Ajzen (1991) did not include a past experience variable in his TRA and TPB, he recognized the role of past experience as a predictor variable of behavioral intention and future behavior. Ouellette and Wood (1998) conducted a meta-analysis of existing research data to test the direct effect of past experience on future response. Their study revealed that past experience was an important predictor of future behavior and intention. Because of the empirical evidence of past experience's contribution to future behavior, the proposed MPM includes past experience as an antecedent of intention.

In the hospitality research, Oh and Hsu (2001) added past experience as a non-volitional predictor that influences gambling behaviors, and they tested the relationship between past gambling experience and gambling intention and future behavior (see Table 4). Their study discovered that the gambling behavior intention is a direct function of past experiences, supporting the hypothesized relationship between past experience and behavioral intention. Based on many empirical supports, therefore, it is hypothesized in the MPM that association members' meeting participation intention can be predicted by their past participation experiences.

- *Hypothesis 9: Past participation experience (PE) positively affects participation intention (PI).*

The following Table 5 summarizes the research hypotheses formulated in the meeting participation model (MPM).

Table 5. Summaries of Research Hypotheses

<i>Predicting Attitude, SN, PBC, and DI from Salient Beliefs</i>
H1: Behavioral beliefs are positively associated with attitude toward meeting participation.
H2: Normative beliefs are positively associated with subjective norm (SN).
H3: Control beliefs are positively associated with perceived behavioral control (PBC).
H4: Destination beliefs are positively associated with destination image (DI)
<i>Predicting BI from Attitude, SN, PBC, DI, and PE</i>
H5. Positive attitudes toward meeting participation have a positive and direct relationship with participation intention (PI).
H6: Subjective norms (SN) favoring meeting participation positively affect participation intention (PI).
H7: Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC) over the meeting participation positively affects participation intention (PI).
H8: Favorable destination image (DI) is positively associated with participation intention (PI).
H9: Past experience (PE) positively affects participation intention (PI).

SUMMARY

This chapter discussed the meeting participation process and the relevant literature. Recognizing the lack of theoretical support for association members' meeting participation process, the author introduced the meeting participation model (MPM) based on two human behavior theories: TRA and TPB. The proposed meeting participation model (MPM) adds two additional non-volitional determinants (destination image and past meeting participation experience) to TRA and TPB. Research hypotheses are summarized in Table 5. Chapter 3 discusses research methodology used in this study.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Behavioral Beliefs: A behavioral belief is the subjective probability that the behavior in question will produce a given outcome. Behavioral beliefs link the behavior of interest to expected outcomes (Ajzen, 2002).

Control Beliefs: Control beliefs are the beliefs about the presence of factors that may facilitate or impede performance of the behavior and perceived power of these factors (Ajzen, 1985).

Education: Education is a formal, patterned, and hierarchical type of exchange with a designated leader and behavioral-based objectives, i.e., to know or to do something new and better (Price, 1993).

Leadership: Leadership represents autonomy and responsibility; the person is now the influencer rather than the person being influenced by others. It is a state of mind similar to Maslow's concept of self-actualization (Price, 1993).

Networks: Networks can be defined as people talking to each other, sharing ideas, information, and resources. It is the process that is important in linking and clustering resources that have a momentum in and of themselves (Naisbitt, 1982).

Normative Beliefs: Normative beliefs are concerned with the likelihood that important referent individuals, such as spouse, parents, and friends, or groups would approve or disapprove of performing the behavior (Ajzen & Madden, 1986).

Process Model: Fazio's attitude-to-behavior process model, process model in short, states that attitude can guide a person's behavior even when the person does not actively reflect and deliberate about the attitude (Fazio, 1986).

Salient Beliefs: Salient beliefs are a small number of beliefs – perhaps five to nine – that a person can attend to at any given moment (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980).

Theory: A set of interrelated constructs and propositions that presents a systematic view of phenomena (Kerlinger, 1979).

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CHPATER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the research design and the data analysis procedures used to achieve the research objectives are discussed. A flow chart of the research procedures of this study is presented in Figure 5. The first section describes the developmental process of the research instrument for this study. The second section discusses the questionnaire with a focus on question items for latent constructs in the research model. In the third section, the survey method used in this study is elaborated. Finally, the last section presents the data analysis procedures.

DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

A primary requirement of this study was the development of a research instrument that would soundly measure each construct in the proposed meeting participation model (MPM). As shown in Figure 5, the research instrument for this study was developed through several steps. The following section describes the development of the initial research instrument.

Guidelines for Research Instrument

In developing measurements for each construct in TRA and TPB, Ajzen (2002) suggested that researchers must explicitly describe the behavior for their respondents. The goal behavior in question should be defined in terms of its target, action, context, and time (TACT) at the beginning of the questionnaire (Ajzen, 2002). In the context of meeting participation, simply asking respondents about “meeting participation” is ambiguous, and attitude toward meeting participation can be affected by recent meeting participation experiences that temporarily raise the accessibility of one or another type of association meeting. Instead, in this study, the

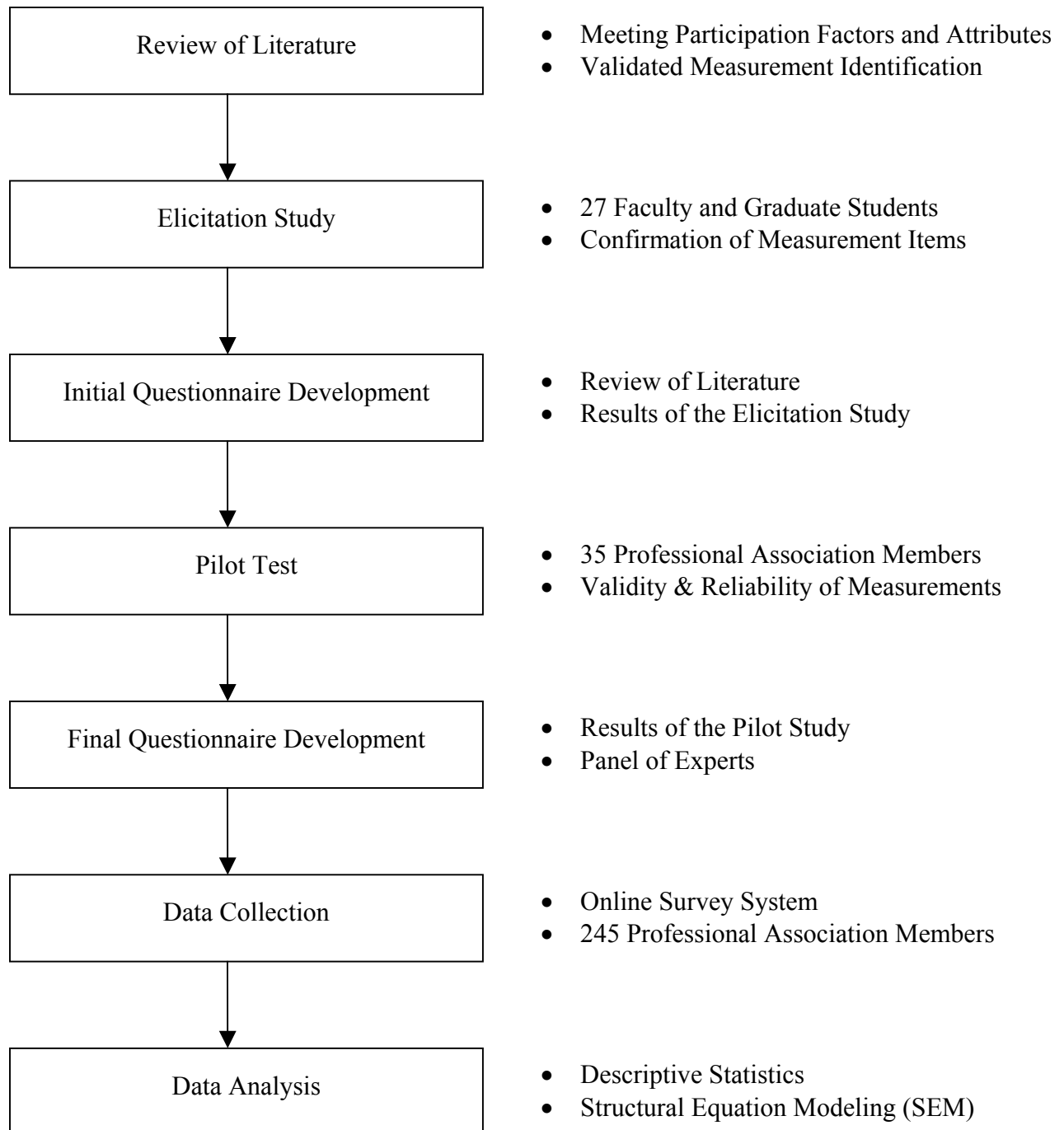


Figure 5. Research Procedures of the Study

the meeting participation behavior was stated specifically, i.e., “attending (action) the CHRIE conference (target) in Las Vegas, NV (context) from July 27-31, 2005 (Time).”

All predictor constructs (attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control) in TRA and TPB can be assessed directly, by asking respondents to judge each construct on a set of scales (Ajzen, 2002). In addition, these predictors can also be measured indirectly using corresponding beliefs. Although direct measure often yields findings of interest, it can also produce measures with relatively low reliability and lead to underestimating the relationships among the constructs in TRA and TPB (Ajzen, 2002). By measuring predictor variables through belief structures, researchers can theoretically gain insight into the underlying cognitive foundation and therefore understand why people hold certain attitudes, subjective norms, and perceptions of behavioral control (Ajzen, 2002). Further, another benefit of using the belief-based measures is that the reliability of belief-based measures is not an issue. It is in their aggregate that they provide a single manifest indicator of latent construct (Ajzen, 2002). Therefore, as suggested by Ajzen (1991), this study used belief-based measures for predictor variables in the proposed meeting participation model.

Sources of Measurement

Measurement items were developed from two different sources: previous literature and an elicitation study. For measurements of hypothetical constructs (attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control, and meeting participation intention), this study adopted items that have been validated in a variety of studies. In addition, for measurements of accessible belief constructs, relevant literature on the meeting participation process was first reviewed to find possible beliefs items. The results of the review were then compared with the results of an

elicitation study to derive the final set of measurement items for salient beliefs (behavioral, normative, control, and destination beliefs). Ajzen (2002) suggested that because attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control are assumed to be based on corresponding sets of beliefs, an elicitation study is required to identify accessible behavioral, normative, and control beliefs. Through the elicitation study, researchers can construct a list of the most commonly held beliefs in the research population, and those beliefs provide the basis for constructing a standard questionnaire for the main study (Ajzen, 2002). In an elicitation study of this research, respondents were given a description of the behavior in terms of target, action, context, and time (TACT) and were asked a series of open-ended questions to elicit accessible beliefs.

Elicitation Study

Based on the guidelines for developing an elicitation study (Ajzen, 2002), an elicitation study in the context of association meeting participation was developed and administered to 27 faculty members and graduate students in a midwestern university (See Appendix C). Detailed information of a relevant conference (American Dietetic Association (ADA) Conference, International Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education (CHRIE) convention, Hospitality and Tourism Graduate Conference, or Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA) convention) was given to each respondent based on membership in an association. Respondents were then asked to answer eight open-ended questions to elicit salient behavioral, normative, control, and destination beliefs for attending a given conference.

Table 6 summarizes the results of the elicitation study. The elicitation study provided results very similar to results in previous literature (Grant, 1994; Oppermann & Chon, 1995;

Table 6. Candidate Items for Beliefs: Results of the Elicitation Study

	<i>Benefits of attending (ADA, CHRIE, PCMA, or Graduate) conference.</i>	<i>Frequency (%)</i> *
Behavioral Beliefs	Networking and associating with others in my area	24 (89)
	Learning more knowledge, skills, trends in my area	22 (82)
	Presenting papers or serving on educational programs	15 (56)
	Traveling opportunity (away from the ordinary)	11 (41)
	Satisfying job requirement/expectations	8 (30)
	Seeking career opportunity	7 (26)
Normative Beliefs	<i>Groups or people who would approve or disapprove respondent's participation in the conference.</i>	<i>Frequency (%)</i>
	Advisors or boss in your organization	21 (78)
	Friends and colleagues	17 (63)
	Family members (spouse, parents, etc.)	7 (26)
	Host or sponsors of the meeting	4 (15)
	Industry partner/leader in your area	2 (7)
Control Beliefs	<i>Factors that facilitate or inhibit respondent's participation in the conference.</i>	<i>Frequency (%)</i>
	Money (costs)	24 (89)
	Time (Schedule conflicts)	19 (70)
	Travel Distance	10 (37)
	Weather Conditions	4 (15)
	Family obligations	3 (11)
Destination Beliefs **	<i>Meeting destination attributes that are important to respondents when making participation decision</i>	<i>Frequency (%)</i>
	Accessibility (ease of getting to the meeting site)	18 (67)
	Hotel facilities	15 (56)
	Local tourist attractions	14 (52)
	Local weather	11 (41)
	Good food	10 (47)
	Safety and security	8 (30)
	Destination reputation	5 (19)
	Convention and meeting facility	5 (19)
	New place that I have never visited before	4 (15)
	Local price	4 (15)

* Total sample size is 27. ** Eighty two percent of respondents (22) answered that meeting destination affects their decision to attend the meeting.

Grant & Weaver, 1996; Oppermann, 1998; Price & Murrmann, 2000; Ngamsom & Beck, 2000). Education and networking with others were the two most prominent benefits of attending association meetings. Meeting participation decisions tend to be influenced most by an advisor or boss and colleagues. In terms of extraneous factors that facilitate or inhibit participation, money and time were the two most important factors affecting association members' decision. Finally, most of respondents (82%) responded that the meeting destination affects their decision to attend the meeting. Among many destination attributes, accessibility, hotel facilities and local tourist attractions were chosen as the three most important destination attributes.

Pilot Study

Initial research instrument, which was developed based on a review of literature and an elicitation study, was refined through the pilot online study. The major purpose of pilot study was three fold: (1) to assess the reliability of multiple measurements, (2) to check content validity of questionnaire wording, and (3) to estimate anticipated response rate in the actual survey. The pilot study was administered to a total of 100 Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA) Heartland Chapter members. Of the convenience sample of 100 prospective respondents, a total of 35 respondents completed the pilot online survey, resulting in a 35% response rate. Table 7 shows the reliabilities of the construct measurements.

Cronbach's alpha (α) was used as a measure of internal consistency of measurements. Belief constructs (behavioral, normative, control, and destination beliefs) and the past experience construct were not included in the reliability analysis because these constructs have only one summative measurement (i.e. $\sum bbbe_i$, $\sum nb_1mc_i$, $\sum cb_1pp_i$, and $\sum db_1de_i$) or only one quantifiable measure (i.e. the number of participation in past meetings). The reliability scores, ranging from

Table 7. Reliability of Measurements

Construct	# Items	Cronbach's alpha (α)
Attitude toward meeting participation	9	.89
Subjective norm about meeting participation	2	.85
Perceived behavioral control over meeting participation	3	.89
Destination image	3	.95
Meeting participation intention	3	.97

.85 for subjective norm to .97 for meeting participation intention, indicated that the scales used in this study are satisfactory to measure constructs of interest.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Based on the results of pilot study, changes in wording and questionnaire design were made. However, all initial measurement items were kept for the main survey. The final version of the questionnaire was composed of eight pages (online version) with a total of 18 questions and 65 sub-questions to measure 10 constructs and respondents' demographic information (See Appendix D). The first page covered a general introduction to the survey. Questions related to 10 constructs were covered on page 2 through 7. Finally, the last page asked a few questions in order to determine the characteristics of the sample.

Measuring Belief Constructs

Beliefs play a key role in TRA and TPB. They provide the cognitive and affective foundations for attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 2002). For example, in the context of association members' meeting participation behaviors, we can explore

why association members hold certain attitudes toward meeting participation, who influences the decision to attend a meeting, and what factors facilitate or inhibit a decision about meeting participation. Through the review of relevant literature and an elicitation study, the following belief measures were developed.

Behavioral Beliefs

Five items (education, networking, paper presentation, travel opportunity, and job requirement) were drawn from the literature and the elicitation study for measuring behavioral beliefs toward meeting participation. Because belief-based attitude is the sum of the belief strength multiplied by outcome evaluation ($\sum bb_i be_i$), two questions were asked about each of the five belief items generated. First, behavioral beliefs (bb_i) were measured by asking a respondent to rate the strength of his/her belief about each of the five benefits of attending the meeting on a 7-point scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7). On the other hand, outcome evaluations (be_i) were assessed by asking a respondent to evaluate the five salient beliefs about meeting participation on a 7-point scale ranging from *extremely unimportant* (1) to *extremely important* (7).

Normative Beliefs

Two relevant referent groups or individuals (advisor/boss and colleagues) were identified through the review of literature and the elicitation study. Assessing normative beliefs (nb_i) followed logic similar to what was involved in measuring behavioral beliefs. Respondents were asked to rate the strength of influence of each relevant referent on their decision to attend the

meeting on 7-point scale ranging from *extremely unlikely* (1) to *extremely likely* (7). Motivation to comply (mc_i) was measured by asking respondents' general motivation to comply with respect to each accessible referent. Overall, the belief-based measure of subjective norm was the sum of the normative beliefs (nb_i) multiplied by respondent's motivation (mc_i) to comply with each referent ($\sum nb_i mc_i$).

Control Beliefs

Three control belief items (money, time, and travel distance) were identified from the elicitation study and the literature. Control beliefs (cb_i) were measured by asking respondents to rate how often their meeting participation decision is affected by each belief item on a 7-point scale ranging from *very rarely* (1) to *very frequently* (7). Perceived control power (pp_i) was measured by asking respondents to rate how much control they believe they have over each control belief (cb_i) on a 7-point scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7). The belief-based perceived behavioral control was the sum of the control beliefs multiplied by perceived control power ($\sum cb_i pp_i$).

Destination Beliefs

The proposed meeting participation model (MPM) included additional constructs to the existing constructs in TRA and TPB. One of newly added constructs predicting association members' intention to attend the meeting was destination image. Assessing destination image followed logic similar to what was involved in measuring other constructs in TRA and TPB. Two question sets were needed in order to measure the strength of destination attribute (db_i) and

the attribute evaluation of a particular destination (de_i). Thus, the belief-based measure of destination image was the sum of the destination beliefs multiplied by destination outcome evaluation ($\sum db_i de_i$). Through the review of literature and an elicitation study, seven destination attributes (accessibility, hotel facilities, tourist attractions, weather, good food, and safety/security) that are important to association members during the participation decision-making process were identified. The strength of each destination belief (db_i) was measured by asking respondents to rate the importance of each destination attribute on a 7-point scale ranging from *very unimportant* (1) to *very important* (7). On the other hand, destination attribute evaluation (de_i) was assessed by asking respondents to evaluate the specific meeting destination (Las Vegas, NV) for the 2005 CHRIE conference on a 7-point scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7).

Measuring Hypothetical Constructs

All predictor variables and behavioral intention were assessed directly by asking respondents to judge each item on a 7-point *disagree-agree* scale. As Ajzen (2002) emphasized, measures for each latent construct were directly compatible with the behavior in terms of action, target, context, and time.

Attitude Toward Meeting Participation

A set of seven semantic differential scales was used to assess attitude toward meeting participation. Each of the seven scales appeared after the following statement: "For me to attend the CHRIE conference in Las Vegas, NV in July, 2005 is ____." The bipolar adjectives of the

semantic differential scales included *good/bad*, *useful/useless*, *beneficial/harmful*, *pleasant/unpleasant*, *wise/foolish*, *valuable/worthless*, and *interesting/boring*. As Ajzen (2002) suggested, those adjectives contained three separable components: instrumental (*useful/useless*, *valuable/worthless*, *beneficial/harmful*), experiential (*pleasant/unpleasant*, *wise/foolish*, *interesting/boring*), and evaluative (*good/bad*, *valuable/worthless*) adjectives.

Subjective Norm

A respondent's social norm was measured on two items by asking whether the association members' important referents would approve or disapprove his/her meeting participation on a 7-point *disagree-agree* scale. The two measurement items had an injunctive quality, consistent with the concept of subjective norm (Ajzen, 2002). This has been generally accepted by researchers because of its ability to capture various occasions of the focal behavior (Bentler & Speckart, 1981).

Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC)

Three measures of perceived behavioral control (PBC) were developed to capture association members' confidence that they can perform the behavior in question. As Ajzen (2002) suggested, the measures of PBC included questions to capture the association members' sense of self-efficacy with respect to attending the meeting as well as questions to assess association members' beliefs that they have control over the behavior. For example, measurement items such as "I have resources and time to attend the meeting (self-efficacy)" and "Whether or not I attend the meeting is completely up to me (controllability)" were used to measure respondents' self-efficacy and controllability, respectively.

Destination Image and Past Experience

Newly added constructs in the MPM were destination image and past experience. Three measurement items were developed to measure the overall image of the meeting destination (Las Vegas, NV) for the 2005 CHRIE conference, on a 7-point *strongly disagree-strongly agree* scale. Each question assessed respondents' overall image of the meeting destination and their satisfaction level of the choice of the meeting destination for the conference.

On the other hand, like past experience measures used in earlier research (Ouellette & Wood, 1998; Taylor & Todd, 1995; Oh & Hsu, 2001), past meeting participation behavior in this study was measured with quantifiable items: frequency of meeting participation.

Meeting Participation Intention

An association member's intention to attend the meeting, which refers to the likelihood that he/she will attend the meeting, was measured with three items; "I intend to attend the meeting", "I plan to attend the meeting." and "I will make an effort to attend the meeting." As suggested by Ajzen (2002), the measurement items for intention were highly correlated with each other.

Measuring Demographic Variables

Finally, a few demographic questions were asked at the end of the questionnaire. Demographic variables are often used in consumer behavior models because they provide objective characteristics of consumers, which are easy to identify and measure (Snepenger & Milner, 1990). Also, demographic variables have been used extensively to identify a market and

to describe the characteristics of a market in hospitality and tourism studies (Grant & Weaver, 1996). In this study, respondents' age, gender, education level, income, working environment, race, marital status, and association membership periods were assessed.

SURVEY METHOD

The purpose of this study was to develop a robust model that explains and predicts association members' meeting participation behavior. To accomplish this goal, we conducted an online survey to 1,020 International Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education (CHRIE) members. This survey was approved by the university's Institutional Review Board (See Appendix B).

Populations and Sample

The population for this study is association members who have been to association meetings and share the same interests in their associations. The study targeted the International Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education (CHRIE) members. Table 8 describes the target association. Although it is true that the chosen association (CHRIE) may not necessarily represent all professional associations, Oppermann (1998) asserted, based on his review of literature, that motives and inhibitors for attending meetings are very similar across associations (Oppermann, 1998).

There is a major difference in the target sample of this study and the samples used in previous research. In contrast to previous studies targeting only actual meeting attendees (Grant, 1994; Ngamsom & Beck, 2000; Oppermann, 1995; Oh et al., 1993; Rittichainuwat et al., 2001; Price, 1993), this study focuses on general association members and their intention to attend a

meeting, which means that the sample also includes those who, in fact, may not attend the meeting. Hence, it does not induce a bias towards those members who actually attend the meeting (Oppermann, 1998).

Table 8. Descriptions of the Target Association for This Study

Participating Association	Description	Founding Year	Membership Categories	Number of Member
International Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education (CHRIE)	An international organization of hospitality and tourism education for schools, colleges, and universities.	1946	Industry, Education (educators and graduate students), Association (individual and institutional)	1,020

* Source: *The International Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education Homepage* (<http://www.chrie.org>)

Data Collection

This study used an online survey. There are advantages and disadvantages to using an online survey. Ilieva, Baron, and Healey (2002) asserted that online surveys have such advantages as low financial burden, relatively short response time, high control of the sample, and availability to directly load data into the analysis software. On the other hand, major concerns of online surveys include sampling frames, a high rate of undeliverable e-mail, and an ultimately unpredictable response rate (Park, 2003). However, given the need for social science studies to be reliable and replicable, an online survey is a promising means for conducting future surveys because it allows both replicability and some degree of cross-study comparability (Tornatzky & Klein, 1982; Schaefer & Dillman, 1998). Hence, although it is not free of weaknesses, this study used an online survey because of the compelling advantages. Online

surveys can be broadly divided into two categories: e-mail and web-based surveys. Because each method has unique characteristics, it cannot be asserted that one is better than the other (Park, 2003). However, Ilieva et al. (2002) asserted that combining the two methods is the most appropriate method for an online survey. Establishing contact through personalized email and providing the questionnaire in HTML format or sending the website URL combines the advantages of email and web-based surveys and optimizes the use of online data collection (Ilieva et al., 2002). This study combined the two online survey methods.

After getting permission from the CHRIE, an invitation email (See Appendix E), which contains an introduction to the research and a link to the actual online survey, was sent to 1,020 CHRIE members. Association members could participate in the survey by clicking the link embedded in the email, which connects to the survey website. On the other hand, those who did not want to participate in the survey could block the further emails by simply clicking the remove button. Two reminder e-mails (See Appendix F) were sent only to those who did not respond and did not block the email. Previous research indicates that follow-up contact significantly increases response rates (Dillman, 2000; Sheehan & McMillan, 1999). Data were collected over a 10 day period in March 2005.

DATA ANALYSIS

Structural equation modeling (SEM) was used as a main data analysis technique. Advantages of SEM compared to multiple regression include more flexible assumptions (particularly allowing interpretation even in the face of multicollinearity), use of confirmatory factor analysis to reduce measurement error by having multiple indicators per latent variable, and the attraction of SEM's graphical modeling interface (Garson, 2004). Collected data were

analyzed using SPSS for Windows 11.0 and LISREL 8.54. The procedures of data analysis employed in this study are summarized in Figure 6.

The proposed meeting participation model (MPM) was analyzed using the two-step approach suggested by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). They suggested that researchers first evaluate the internal and external consistency of latent variables' indicators before evaluating the

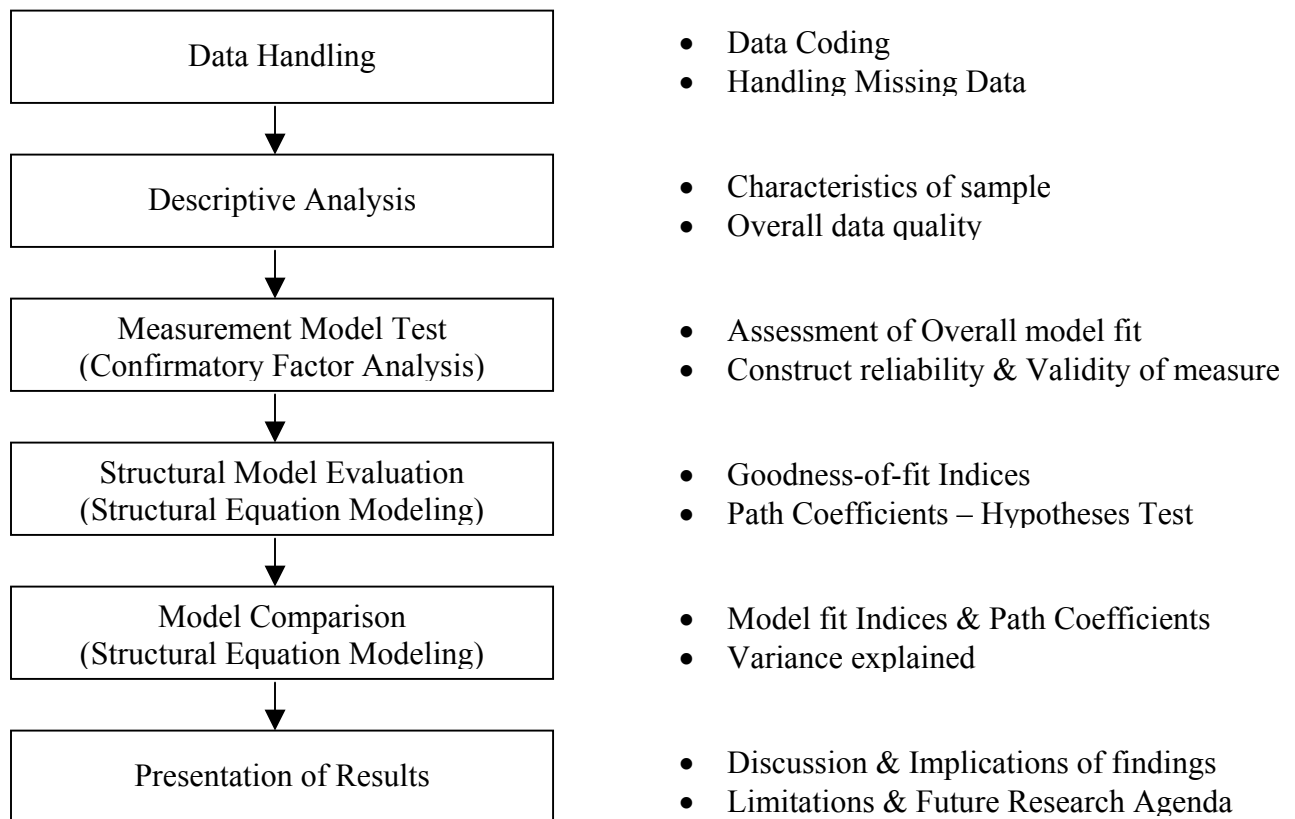


Figure 6. Data Analysis Procedures of the Study

structural portion of a model. The rationale of this approach is that accurate representation of the reliability of indicators is best accomplished in two steps to avoid the interaction of measurmeent

and structural models (Hair et al., 1998). The two-step approach used for the data analysis of this study is explained in the following sub-sections.

Measurement Model Evaluation

A satisfactory level of reliability and validity of the measurement model has to be met before testing for causal relationships among the constructs in the structure model (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The function of a measurement model is to clarify how well the observed indicators serve as a measurement instrument for the latent variables (Joreskog & Sorbom, 1998). A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using LISREL 8.54 was performed to test the reliability and validity of measurements for latent constructs in the model. First, a reliability check was conducted. Composite reliability of a construct was computed to assess the reliability of indicators representing each construct in the measurement model. The concept and interpretation of the composite reliability is similar to that of Cronbach's coefficient alpha, except that it also takes into account the actual factor loadings rather than assuming that each item is equally weighted in the composite load determination (Chau & Hu, 2001). Composite reliability of .70 for all constructs in the measurement model was used as an acceptable threshold suggested by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994).

A validity check was also conducted to estimate the degree to which a measurement represents and logically connects the observed phenomenon to the construct (McDaniel & Gates, 1993). Factor loadings of the observed variables for each latent variable were checked for convergent validity (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). Factor loading .40 was used as the threshold value for convergent validity of measurements. Also, average variance extracted (AVE), which reflects the overall amount of variance in the indicators accounted for by the latent construct

(Hair et al, 1998), was used to test for convergent and discriminate validity. Hair et al. (1998) asserted that higher AVE values occur when the indicators are truly representative of the latent construct and suggested the AVE value .50 as the threshold for the convergent validity. Discriminant validity was assessed by comparing average variance extracted (AVE) with the squared correlation between two constructs (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). Anderson and Gerbing (1988) suggested that when the AVE value in each construct exceeds the squared correlation between two latent constructs, the discriminant validity is satisfied.

Structural Model Evaluation and Hypotheses Test

The structural equation modeling (SEM) allows researchers to conduct systematic and simultaneous evaluation of variables used in the model from which causal inference might be approximated (Back, 2001). Back (2001) summarized major benefits of using SEM in multi-construct model. First, it allows the researchers to investigate whether a hypothesized cause does actually have an effect by computing path coefficients between the exogeneous variables and the endogeneous variables. Second, it allows researchers to measure mediating effects by easily creating additional paths in the hypothesized model. Third, the SEM provides information about goodness of fit of the hypothesized model, which allows researchers to compare competing models.

Structural equation modeling (SEM) using LISREL 8.54 was used to determine the causal relationships among constructs proposed in the meeting participation model (MPM). The overall fit of the proposed structural model was assessed through the fit indices provided by the LISREL. The goodness of fit indices used in this study include chi-square statistics, the root mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA), the non-normed fit index (NNFI), and

comparative fit index (CFI). However, goodness of fit indices alone cannot assess the appropriateness of the structural model. Anderson and Gerbing (1988) suggested that in order to examine the model accurately, the parameter estimates among latent variables should be measured along with the fit indices. That is because it is possible to obtain satisfactory level of model fit where hypothesized paths in the structural model result in non-significant coefficient estimates. Standardized path coefficients were used to test hypothesized paths among constructs proposed in the structural model.

Model Comparison

One of the objectives of this study was to compare the utility of three competing models (TRA, TPB, and MPM) and to determine which model best explained association members' intentions to attend the annual meeting. The choice of comparison procedure depends on whether the competing models are nested within one another (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1998). To compare competing models that are not nested within one another (like the current study) the procedures usually consist of three steps. First, multiple model fit indices are assessed to check the appropriateness of each competing model. Once competing models successfully fit the data, path coefficients and predictive power or variance explained (*Adjusted R²*) of models are then compared. Model fit indices and explanatory power being equivalent, the best model is the most parsimonious one (Bagozzi, 1992; Taylor & Todd, 1995). Based on such comparisons, the three competing models (TRA, TPB, and MPM) were evaluated for overall model fit, path coefficients, and their contribution to predicting meeting participation intention

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CHAPTER IV

**ASSOCIATION MEMBERS' MEETING PARTICIPATION BEHAVIORS:
DEVELOPMENT OF MEETING PARTICIPATION MODEL**

Abstract

Understanding association members' meeting participation behaviors is the key to the well-attended meeting, which is a common goal of both associations and host destinations. However, little research has contributed to theoretical development in this area, and the lack of a theoretical framework may negatively influence the validity of research. This study attempts to explain association members' meeting participation behaviors by introducing the meeting participation model (MPM) derived from existing human behavior models (the theory of reasoned action and the theory of planned behavior). The proposed MPM was empirically examined using the responses to a survey on association meeting participation intentions collected from 245 members of the International Council on Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Education (CHRIE). The results reveal that the MPM fits the data very well, providing a fuller understanding of association meeting participation. In addition, findings from this study suggest that past behavior and subjective norm are strong predictor of meeting participation intention. Several implications for the research model and actual meeting planning practices are discussed.

KEY WORDS: Theory of reasoned action (TRA), Theory of planned behavior (TPB), Meeting participation model (MPM), Association meetings, Destination image.

INTRODUCTION

The hospitality industry is immediately and directly influenced by any social or economic environmental changes. Particularly, the convention and exhibition sector, which tends to be more directly affected by the global economy, has struggled to cope with dramatic environmental changes during the last decade (Cetron & DeMicco, 2004). The recent worldwide economic recession and international concern about security have caused both corporations and associations to reassess the need to continue holding large meetings, annual conventions, and exhibitions. Thus, the growth in the current tight market situation becomes more difficult than in the boom years of the 1980s and 1990s. In such difficult times, however, more corporations and associations rely on meetings and exhibitions to meet a variety of corporate and association goals, and the future of the convention industry appears to be good as the global economy gradually revives and people continue to meet each other (Carlsen, 1999; Cetron & DeMicco, 2004).

The common goal of associations and meeting destinations is to increase the number of attendees (Oppermann & Chon, 1997). For associations, annual conventions are an important revenue source, bringing in about one-third of their annual income (Shure, 1995). For destinations, on the other hand, attendance is closely related to the amount of direct and indirect expenditure in host communities. Furthermore, satisfied convention attendees may very well turn into repeat visitors (Oppermann, 1998) and advertise the destination through the word of mouth (Abbey and Link, 1994). Then, how can associations and meeting destinations increase meeting attendance? What factors influence association members' decision to attend, or not attend, the meetings? Ultimately, do associations and destinations really understand the complicated association meeting participation process? Although these questions have significant

implications for the convention industry, they have not been seriously addressed by researchers. A number of studies have inquired into reasons for participating in meetings and reasons why association members do not participate (See Table 1 and 2). However, these studies have been descriptive in nature and, therefore, have still not reached a stage where we can clearly understand association members' meeting participation behaviors. One reason for this lack of understanding of association meeting participation may be the scarcity of theoretical concepts and models to explain the complicated process of association meeting participation. Therefore, the main purpose of this article is to explain and predict association meeting participation through the development of a conceptually sound model, which systematically integrates various meeting participation factors. To achieve this research goal, the meeting participation model (MPM) was developed based on two intention-based human behavior models: the theory of reasoned action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) and the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1985), both of which have been successfully applied to various human behaviors. The following specific research objectives can be achieved by assessing the proposed meeting participation model:

- Identifying salient belief items for each meeting participation factor.
- Testing relationships between beliefs constructs and predictor variables.
- Examining the causal relationship between predictor variables and meeting participation intention.
- Finding out the extent to which each predictor variable influences meeting participation intention.

In the next section, four major meeting participation factors are identified through a review of literature. Then, we review existing theoretical frameworks and apply these

frameworks to the domain of association meeting participation. Further, in the same section, the meeting participation model and its hypothetical relationships are presented along with research hypotheses. In methodology, the development of measures and data collection process is thoroughly discussed. Finally, the last section presents findings, discussion issues, and implications and suggests directions for future research.

MEETING PARTICIPATION FACTORS

An overall review of relevant literature on association meeting participation reveals that association members' meeting participation process can be generally explained by four major factors: motivational factor, inhibiting factor or situational constraint, destination factor, and relevant referent factor.

Motivational Factors

In order for an association meeting to be successful and lucrative, associations and meeting planners must increase the attendance level by completely understanding what motivates an individual to attend a meeting; they can then design the meeting appropriately (Grant & Weaver, 1996). In the first empirical study of this nature, Price (1993) identified four motivational factors that influence meeting participation decision-making. According to Price (1993), potential meeting participants consider "leadership," "networking," "education," and "professional savvy" during the participation decision-making process. As shown in Table 1, these motivational factors have been empirically supported by several other researchers (Grant, 1994; Grant & Weaver, 1996; Ngamsom & Beck, 2000; Oppermann, 1998; Oppermann & Chon, 1995; Price & Murrmann, 2000).

Insert Table 1 About Here

As presented in the summary of motivational factors in Table 1, education or professional improvement, networking, and leadership are the three chief benefits of attending association meetings. Educational programs at the association meetings enable association members and professionals to keep up with and use developments in their fields. On the other hand, the face-to-face nature of meetings maximizes opportunities to develop bonds among attendees (Rosenthal & Mezoff, 1980). In addition, informal social interactions and contacts among attendees provide up-to-date information on industry events, trends, competition, and unsolicited information on products, services, advertisement, employees, new business activities, etc. (Price, 1993). Lastly, meetings are exotic social systems that are often the place where 1) ideals such as equality of status among professionals are established; 2) cultural issues such as ethics are made visible; 3) power is displayed by who is included and who is not, who speaks and who listens (Schwartzman, 1989). This leadership or self-actualization factor represents a unique value of meeting participation, and it places attendees in a prestigious position at the top of their professions (Price, 1993; Trice & Roman, 1973).

Inhibiting Factors

A number of researchers have focused primarily on identifying primary motivational factors in association members' meeting participation (Grant, 1994; Grant & Weaver, 1996; Ngamsom & Beck, 2000; Oppermann, 1998; Oppermann & Chon, 1995; Price, 1993). However, motivational factors alone do not explain how association members' meeting participation

decisions are made. Arguably, it may be even more important to know why many association members choose not to attend conventions. Previous studies on travel decision-making processes suggest that travel inhibitors are more important than travel motivators during the travel decision-making process (Crompton & Ankomah, 1993; Sonmez & Graefe, 1998; Um & Crompton, 1992). Table 2 presents results of empirical studies on factors inhibiting association members' meeting participation. Lack of funding, time constraints, inaccessibility of the destination, and family obligations are frequently cited as main barriers to meeting participation. Among these, cost and time issues are the two major barriers to attending association meetings (Ngamsom & Beck, 2000; Oppermann, 1995; Oppermann & Chon, 1995; Rittichainuwat et al., 2001).

Insert Table 2 About Here

Destination Factor

Although destination image is only one of many other factors affecting association members' meeting participation decisions, it is of considerable importance for associations and meeting planners (Grant & Weaver, 1996). The review of the existing literature on meeting destination in relation to meeting attendance shows that the image of the meeting destination is a pervasive variable, and associations can build good attendance at their conventions simply by holding it at more favorably perceived destinations (Alkjaer, 1976; Montgomery & Strick, 1995; Oppermann 1995, 1994; Usher, 1991; Var, Cesario, & Mauser, 1985; Zelinsky, 1994). Specific destination attributes important to meeting attendees include accessibility, tourist attractions,

hotel facilities, and safety, all of which have been frequently cited by researchers (Oppermann 1998; Lee & Park, 2002; Ngamsom & Beck, 2000; Oppermann 1998;). In a study of destination image, Oppermann (1995) proved that association members have location preferences, and if conferences are held in highly desirable destinations, the turnout is higher. Oppermann (1996) also suggested that when selecting destinations, meeting planners need to turn to potential meeting attendees to get their insights into which destinations are more or less favored. This process can help associations and meeting planners maximize attendance and financial return from the meeting.

Family Influence

Convention and meeting travel represents the most significant market segment within business travel, accounting for one third of all business trips (Oppermann, 1994). However, such travel is not strictly business travel. Commonly, business meeting participation is combined with pleasure travel and even visiting friends or relatives. Meeting attendees are often accompanied by a spouse or other family members who enjoy the visit to the meeting destination. Approximately 34% of all attendees at association meetings are accompanied by their spouses (Edelstein & Benini, 1994). In an empirical study to examine the influence of each family member on the decision to attend a convention in Las Vegas, Oh, Roehl, and Shock (1993) discovered that a spouse' desire to go on the trip was rated second only to convention participation. Further, respondents agreed that they and their spouses had relatively equal parts in decision making.

Overall, although the existing literature on association meeting participation has shed some light on the motivational and inhibiting aspects of convention attendees and non-attendees,

those research efforts failed to synthesize various aspects of the meeting participation process into specific theoretical frameworks and examine the relative influence of each factor on association members' decision-making (Oppermann & Chon 1997). Building a meeting participation model on a theoretical framework is extremely important because it encompasses a set of interrelated constructs and propositions that present a systematic view of meeting participation phenomena (Kerlinger, 1979). Also, a better explanation of meeting participation behaviors can be achieved only through a theoretical framework that provides a unifying structure, integrating various explanatory factors (Barling, Fullagar, & Kelloway, 1992). Hence, a theory-driven conceptual model of meeting participation, which systematically synthesizes all major meeting participation factors, is developed and presented in the following section.

CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

The attitude-behavior relationship has been a popular topic in a variety of fields of study seeking to better understand what influences human actions (Magee, 2004; Severin & Tankard, 2001). Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) developed a model, the theory of reasoned action (TRA), which forms the backbone of studies concerning attitude-behavior relationship. TRA is based on the assumption that human beings are rational and make systematic use of information available to them before they decide to engage, or not to engage, in a given behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). According to TRA, people rationally consider their actions and the possible outcome, and their behavioral intentions are the major part of attitude formation (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Magee, 2004). Based on the initial assumption that association members' meeting participation behaviors are under their volitional control, TRA was adopted as a fundamental framework to predict and understand the psychological processes of meeting participation.

Insert Figure 1 About Here

Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

According to TRA, a person's behavior is determined by the intention to perform a behavior and that this intention is, in turn, a function of the attitude toward the behavior and the subjective norm, which is a person's perception that most people who are important to the person think he/she should, or should not, perform the behavior in question (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). However, a number of barriers to human behaviors may exist, so including these groups of non-volitional variables in the original volitional model is essential in studying certain human behaviors. In that regard, the theory of planned behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1985), an extension of TRA, was developed to explain human behaviors under both volitional and non-volitional control. The main difference between TRA and TPB, as shown in Figure 1, is that TPB contains non-volitional factor, perceived behavioral control, which is an individual's actual possession of the opportunities and resources required to perform the behavior (Ajzen, 1991). According to TPB, perceived behavioral control influences a behavior directly as well as indirectly through behavioral intention (See Figure 1). Although these two frameworks are used extensively in the social psychological research to explain a variety of human behaviors, they have not been used in the domain of association meeting participation.

MEETING PARTICIPATION MODEL

Three of four major meeting participation factors (motivational, inhibiting, and family influence factors) can be successfully applied to the constructs in TPB. First, the benefits of meeting participation (motivational factor) can be included in the behavioral beliefs and attitude structure in TPB. Second, important referents' pressure for meeting participation (family and other relevant referents factor) can be explained with the normative beliefs and subjective norm structure in TPB. Lastly, many extraneous constraints (inhibiting factor) can be absorbed in the control beliefs and perceived behavioral control structure in TPB. Based on the conceptualization of TPB, three major meeting participation factors are successfully included in the model. Despite its general applicability, however, TPB has not been exempted from modifications and alternative conceptualizations to explain various human behaviors (Oh & Hsu, 2001). Likewise, TPB needs to be modified or extended to absorb the remaining major meeting participation factor (destination factor) and other possible determinant variables.

One main distinction between association meetings and corporate meetings is the "freedom of choice" on the side of the association meeting participation (Oppermann & Chon, 1997). This freedom of choice makes the association meeting market similar to the leisure travel market because association members' travel patterns and buying behaviors are potentially influenced by their perceptions of the destination (Oppermann & Chon, 1997). As emphasized in the previous section, the choice of meeting destination can significantly affect the level of meeting attendance. In fact, not all conventions and meetings are necessarily attended for the association's stated business or for professional purposes exclusively. Many times, meetings and conventions become an excuse to take a vacation, with many attendees bringing their families to the meetings (Rutherford & Kreck, 1994). For this reason, destination becomes a more important

factor in influencing association members' decision making. Therefore, the proposed meeting participation model addresses the importance of destination choice in association meeting participation by including destination beliefs and destination image structure in the model.

Another additional predictor variable added to pure TPB is past meeting participation experience. Although convention and meeting research shows no empirical evidence of the relationship between past meeting participation experience and future meeting participation, adopting the position that past experience and reasoned action can co-exist has been popular practice among researchers in various fields. In the context of meeting participation, Oppermann (1998) proved that association members who are actively involved in association activities and events are much more likely to attend the annual meeting than those who are not often involved in association events. Therefore, it is a reasonable attempt to add past experience variable to the proposed model. Figure 2 presents the proposed meeting participation model (MPM).

Insert Figure 2 About Here

HYPOTHETICAL RELATIONSHIPS

Because of its achievement in developing a model to predict various human behaviors, TRA and TPB have been the basis of research and studies in a wide variety of fields. Usually, both models are discussed at two levels. In order to gain a deeper understanding of the factors influencing the behavior in question, we must look for the determinants of the attitudinal, normative, and control components. Those determinants are beliefs that individuals hold about

themselves and their environment (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). Thus, in MPM, the first level explains attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and destination image in terms of beliefs about consequences of performing the behavior (behavioral beliefs), about the normative expectations of relevant referents (normative beliefs), about control over the behavior in question (control beliefs), and about evaluation of each destination attribute (destination beliefs). At the next level, meeting participation intentions are explained in terms of attitude toward meeting participation, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, destination image, and past meeting participation experience.

Belief-Based Constructs

Beliefs play an integral role in TRA and TPB. They are assumed to provide the cognitive and affective foundations for attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 2002). Through the beliefs, we can theoretically gain insights into why association members hold certain attitudes toward meeting participation, subjective norms about meeting participation, perceptions of behavioral control over the meeting participation, and preferences about a particular meeting destination.

Behavioral Beliefs: A person's attitude toward behavior is determined by the set of salient beliefs that he/she holds about performing the behavior. Each belief associates the object with a certain attribute. The evaluation of each attribute contributes to the attitude in direct proportion to the individual's subjective probability that the object possesses the attribute in question (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2001). Thus, a behavioral belief refers to an individual's subjective probability that a behavior will lead to a certain consequence (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). In the context of association meeting participation, an association member assesses the consequences of

attending a meeting in terms of each benefit attribute, such as education, networking, and leadership opportunities (motivational factors). If he/she believes that attending a meeting or conference will bring positive consequences, he/she would have a favorable attitude toward attending the meeting. Thus, it can be postulated that behavioral beliefs about meeting participation can influence association members' attitude toward meeting participation.

Hypothesis 1: Behavioral beliefs about meeting participation are positively associated with attitude about meeting participation.

Normative Beliefs: Normative beliefs refer to the perceived behavioral expectations of such important referent individuals or groups as the person's spouse, family, and colleagues (Ajzen, 2002). Normative beliefs are concerned with the likelihood that important referent individuals would approve or disapprove of the behavior (Ajzen & Madden, 1986). In the context of association meeting participation, if an association member believes that most important referents, i.e., his/her parents, friends, advisors/bosses, and/or colleagues (family influence factor), think he/she should attend the meeting or conference, the perceived social pressure to attend the meeting will be increased with his/her motivation to comply. Conversely, if he/she believes that most referents are opposed to his/her meeting attendance, his/her perception of social pressure not to attend the meeting will be increased with his/her motivation to comply. Therefore, we postulate that an association member's normative beliefs about meeting participation can influence the subjective norm about his/her meeting participation.

Hypothesis 2: Normative beliefs toward meeting participation are positively associated with subjective norm (SN) about meeting participation.

Control beliefs: Control beliefs are the individual's perception of the extent to which he/she possesses internal and external factors that may increase or decrease the perceived

difficulty of performing the behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Park, 2003). According to Ajzen (1985), internal factors include such variables as individual differences, information, skills, abilities, and emotion, while external factors involve time, financial opportunity, and dependence of others. As proved in the relevant literature on meeting participation factors, association members' meeting participation decisions are affected by various internal and external variables (inhibiting factors). For example, time constraints/schedule conflicts, family obligations, and/or the lack of financial support from the involved organization are considered external factors, while the ability to present papers at the meeting and emotions are internal factors. Therefore, it is assumed that association members' perceived power over each control factor to impede or facilitate their meeting participation contributes to perceived behavioral control over meeting participation.

Hypothesis 3: Control beliefs over meeting participation are positively associated with perceived behavioral control (PBC).

Destination Beliefs: The proposed meeting participation model (MPM) adds an additional belief construct (destination beliefs) and the hypothetical relationship between destination beliefs and destination image. Travel destination choice models suggest that individuals integrate their subjective evaluations of each attribute in different ways, so they have distinctive preferences for the destinations. In other words, the destination attributes are perceived to be input factors that produce image (Holbrook 1981; Young & Kent, 1985). Um and Crompton (1992) stated that individuals' beliefs about a destination's attributes help to increase or reduce a potential traveler's motive to travel to the destination. They operationalized destination beliefs as consisting of two components: 1) the relative strength of beliefs about each destination attribute in evaluating each place as a possible destination; and 2) the extent to which prospective destinations were believed to possess certain destination attributes. Hence, the logic

of the hypothetical relationship between meeting destination beliefs and destination image is similar to the one between behavioral beliefs and attitude toward behaviors. The sum of each destination attribute strength multiplied by the evaluation of each attribute determines the destination image. When association members feel that a particular meeting destination has a satisfactory level of performance on each destination attribute, such as accessibility, climate, tourist attractions, and safety/security, they will have a favorable image of that destination. Thus, it is hypothesized that association members' destination beliefs can influence a destination's overall image.

Hypothesis 4: Destination beliefs are positively associated with destination image.

Predictor Constructs

TPB posits that behavioral intention is determined by attitude toward behavior, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control with relative weights. In addition, the proposed meeting participation model hypothesizes that destination image and past meeting participation experience can further explain association meeting participation.

Attitude: Attitude toward a behavior refers to the degree to which a person has a favorable or unfavorable evaluation of the behavior in question (Ajzen, 1991). According to TPB, attitude is postulated to be the first and most important antecedent of behavioral intention. Once an attitude is formed about an action or event, the attitude leads to the formation of behavioral intentions with respect to that action. In other words, an individual will intend to perform a certain behavior when he or she evaluates it positively. Thus, in the context of association meeting participation, it is hypothesized that association members having favorable attitude toward meeting participation are more likely to attend the meeting.

Hypothesis 5: Favorable attitude toward meeting participation positively affects participation intention.

Subjective Norm: A subjective norm refers to perceived social pressure to perform or not to perform the behavior (Ajzen, 1991). In TPB, it is assumed that an individual will intend to perform a certain behavior when he/she perceives that important individuals think he/she should. In the context of meeting participation, although meeting participation is voluntary, the normative pressure from colleagues, advisors/bosses, or family should have some impact on association members' intentions to attend the meeting. The direct link between subjective norms and behavioral intention can be described as compliance because an individual accepts influence in order to gain a favorable reaction from another person or group (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000). For example, if colleagues or coworkers think very highly of a member's ability to represent them, this might encourage the member to participate in the meeting. Similarly, family members can also have an impact on a member's intention to attend the meeting because if a member wants to participate in the meeting and has family obligations, the family must support of his/her meeting participation or else it will be difficult for the member to attend the meeting.

Hypothesis 6: Subjective norm favoring meeting participation positively predicts participation intention.

Perceived Behavioral Control: Perceived behavioral control is defined as the extent to which the person believes that he or she has control over personal or external factors that may facilitate or constrain behavior (Ajzen, 1991). If the behavior is not under complete volitional control, the individuals need to have the necessary resources and opportunities to perform the behavior in question. The more resources and opportunities individuals think they possess, the greater their perceived behavioral control should be over the behavior (Madden et al., 1992). For

example, in the context of meeting participation, an association member may have a favorable attitude about attending the meeting, and his/her colleagues and supervisor(s) at work may want him/her to attend the meeting because he/she is viewed as someone who can represent his/her organization. As a result, he/she may want to attend the meeting, but if he/she is faced with a situational constraint (lack of funding, schedule conflict, or family obligation), he/she may not feel in full control of the situation and have no intention of participating in the meeting. Hence, including such situational constraints, which are specific to association members' decision-making processes, can reduce the unexplained variance in MPM and increase the value of research in this area.

Hypothesis 7: Association members' perceived behavioral control (PBC) over meeting participation positively affects participation intention.

Destination Image: Association members' meeting participation decision-making processes are very similar to tourists' travel decision-making processes (Oppermann & Chon, 1997). In a critical review of research on destination image in tourism, Chon (1990) concluded that a destination image plays a crucial role in an individual's travel decision-making process. In addition, Echtner and Ritchie (1991) asserted that destinations with strong and positive images are more likely to be considered and chosen in the travel decision process. Because destination image is so important, many travel process models have emphasized the role of image to help explain individual travel-purchase behaviors. Crompton (1977) suggested that destination image was first prioritized in terms of ideal preference, and the prioritization was then amended by the impact of perceived situational constraints. Based on the Crompton's process model and TPB, therefore, it is hypothesized in MPM that destination image can influence association members' meeting participation intention.

Hypothesis 8: Favorable destination image is positively associated with participation intention.

Past Experience: In order to increase the predictive power of TPB, many researchers have attempted to add past experience as a substantive predictor of behavioral intention and future behavior, equivalent to the other predictor variables in the model (Aarts, 1998; Ajzen, 2002; Oh & Hsu, 2001; Ouellette & Wood, 1998; Sonmez & Graefe, 1998; Taylor & Todd, 1995; Yoo, 2004). Although Ajzen (1991) did not include a past experience variable in his TPB, he also recognized the role of past experience as a predictor variable of behavioral intention and future behavior. Ouellette and Wood (1998) conducted a meta-analysis of existing research data to test the direct effect of past experience on future response. Their study revealed that past experience was an important predictor of future behavior and intention. Because of empirical evidence that past behavior contributes to future behavior, the proposed MPM includes past meeting participation experience as an antecedent of meeting participation intention.

Hypothesis 9: Past participation experience positively affects participation intention.

METHOD

Questionnaire Development

Measurement items were developed from two different sources: the literature review and an elicitation study. To measure predictor constructs (attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control, destination image, and meeting participation intention), this study adopted items that have been validated in a variety of studies. In addition, to measure beliefs constructs (behavioral, normative, control and destination beliefs), relevant literature on meeting participation factors was first reviewed to find possible belief items. Then, these items were compared with the results of an elicitation study. Ajzen (2002) suggested that because attitude,

subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control are presumably based on corresponding sets of beliefs, an elicitation study is required to identify accessible behavioral, normative, and control beliefs. A convenience sample of 27 faculty members and graduate students in a Midwestern university was asked to complete an open-ended eliciting questionnaire to derive the final set of measurement items for salient beliefs (behavioral, normative, control, and destination beliefs). The initial questionnaire, which was developed based on relevant literature and an elicitation study, was refined through a pilot study with 35 Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA) members. The measurement reliability was also assessed. Reliability scores for each construct, ranging from .85 to .97, indicated that the scales used in this study are satisfactory in measuring constructs of interest. Based on the results of the pilot study, a final version of the questionnaire was made, comprising 18 questions and 65 sub-questions to measure 10 constructs and respondents' demographic information.

Measurement Design

The proposed meeting participation model (MPM) was assessed through three levels of examination: salient beliefs constructs, predictor constructs, and intention construct. All hypothetical constructs except past meeting participation experience were measured using at least two items in 7-point Likert-type scales.

Measuring Beliefs Constructs: Beliefs play a key role in TRA and TPB because they may provide the cognitive and affective foundations for attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 2002). As recommended in the original TRA and TPB, belief constructs are treated as unidimensional belief structures (i.e., $\sum bb_i be_i$, $\sum nb_i mc_i$,

$\Sigma cb_i pp_i$, and $\Sigma db_i de_i$), each of which has an independent effect on behavioral intention through attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control.

Five items (education, networking, paper presentation, travel opportunity, and job requirements) were drawn from the literature and the elicitation study for measuring behavioral beliefs construct. Because belief-based attitude is the sum of the belief strength multiplied by outcome evaluation ($\Sigma bb_i be_i$), two questions were included for each of the five belief items generated. First, behavioral beliefs (bb_i) were measured by asking a respondent to rate the strength of his/her belief about each of the five benefits of attending the meeting on a 7-point scale ranging from *strongly disagree (1)* to *strongly agree (7)*. On the other hand, outcome evaluations (be_i) were assessed by asking a respondent to evaluate the five salient beliefs about meeting participation on a 7-point scale ranging from *extremely unimportant (1)* to *extremely important (7)*.

Normative beliefs also had two components: (a) perception of specific referents' opinions on whether an individual should or should not attend the meeting (normative beliefs or nb_i), and (b) motivation to comply with the wishes of the specific referents (motivation to comply or mc_i). Three relevant referent groups (advisor/boss, colleagues, and family members) were identified through the review of literature and the elicitation study. Respondents were asked to rate the strength of influence of each relevant referent (nb_i) on their decision to attend the meeting on 7-point scale ranging from *extremely unlikely* to *extremely likely*. Motivation to comply (mc_i) was measured by asking about respondents' general motivation to comply with opinion of each accessible referent. Overall, the belief-based measure of subjective norm (SN) is the sum of

normative beliefs (nb_i) multiplied by the respondent's motivation to comply (mc_i) with each referent ($\sum nb_i mc_i$).

Three control belief items (money, time, and travel distance) were identified from the elicitation study and the literature. Control beliefs (cb_i) were measured by asking respondents to rate how often their meeting participation decision is affected by each belief item on a 7-point scale ranging from *very rarely* to *very frequently*. Perceived control power (pp_i) was measured by asking respondents to rate how much control they believe they have over each control belief (cb_i) on a 7-point scale ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. The belief-based perceived behavioral control (PBC) is the sum of the control beliefs multiplied by perceived control power ($\sum cb_i pp_i$).

Through the elicitation study and the literature review, we identified six destination attributes (accessibility, hotel facilities, tourist attractions, weather, good food, and safety/security) that are important to association members when they make the decision to attend the meeting. Destination beliefs (db_i) were measured by asking respondents to rate the importance of each destination attribute on a 7-point scale ranging from *very unimportant* to *very important*. The destination attribute evaluation (de_i) was assessed by asking respondents to evaluate the specific meeting destination (Las Vegas) for the 2005 CHRIE conference on a 7-point scale ranging from *strongly disagree (1)* to *strongly agree (7)*. The belief-based measure of destination is the sum of the destination beliefs (db_i) multiplied by destination outcome evaluation ($\sum db_i de_i$).

Measuring Predictor Constructs: All predictor variables (attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control, and destination image), except past meeting participation

experience, were assessed directly by asking respondents to judge each item on a 7-point scale. A set of seven semantic differential scales was used to assess attitude toward meeting participation. Each of the seven scales appeared after the following statement: “For me to attend the 2005 CHRIE conference in Las Vegas from July 27-31, 2005 is ____.” The bipolar adjectives of the semantic differential scales include *good/bad*, *useful/useless*, *beneficial/harmful*, *pleasant/unpleasant*, *wise/foolish*, *valuable/worthless*, and *interesting/boring*. The subject’s social norm was measured on two items by asking whether the association members’ important referents would approve or disapprove of the respondent’s meeting participation using a 7-point scale ranging from *strong disagree (1)* to *strongly agree (7)*.

Three measures of perceived behavioral control (PBC) were developed to capture association members’ confidence that they can perform the behavior in question. As Ajzen (2002) suggested, the measures of PBC included questions to capture the association members’ sense of self-efficacy for attending the meeting as well as questions to assess association members’ beliefs that they have control over the behavior. For example, measurement items such as “I have resources and time to attend the meeting (self-efficacy)” and “Whether or not I attend the meeting is completely up to me (controllability)” were used with a 7-point scale ranging from *strongly disagree (1)* to *strongly agree (7)*.

New predictor constructs in MPM are destination image and past meeting participation experience. Three measurement items were developed to measure the overall image of the meeting destination for the 2005 CHRIE conference, Las Vegas, on a 7-point scale ranging from *strongly disagree (1)* to *strongly agree (7)*. Each question assessed respondents’ overall image of the meeting destination for this year’s CHRIE conference and the satisfaction level with the choice of the meeting destination for the CHRIE conference. On the other hand, like past

experience measures used in earlier research (Ouellette & Wood, 1998; Taylor & Todd, 1995; Oh & Hsu, 2001), past meeting participation behavior in this study was measured with quantifiable items: frequency of meeting participation.

Measuring Meeting Participation Intention: Association (CHRIE) members' intentions to attend the meeting, which refers to the likelihood that an association member will attend the meeting, were measured with three items: "I intend to attend the meeting," "I plan to attend the meeting," and "I will make an effort to attend the meeting." Each was rated on a 7-point scale ranging from *strongly disagree (1)* to *strongly agree (7)*.

Study Administration

The target subjects in this study are members of the International Council on Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Education (CHRIE). The announcement of annual CHRIE Conference and Exposition in July 27-31, 2005, in Las Vegas, NV, was delivered to the members, and an online survey assessed CHRIE members' intentions to attend the annual conference. An invitation email, which contained an introduction to the research and a link to the online survey, was sent to 1,020 CHRIE members through the Kansas State University Survey System. To ensure a high response rate (Dillman, 2000; Sheehan & McMillan, 1999), two reminder emails were also sent to the members. One hundred thirty seven emails of the 1,020 dispatched emails could not be delivered to members and were returned because of incorrect email addresses. Of the sample of 883 prospective respondents, a total of 245 respondents completed the surveys. The survey system counted complete responses only, not including any incomplete response. All of 245 responses were valid for the analysis, resulting in a usable response rate of 27.8 percent.

Analytical Method

The collected data were analyzed using the two-step approach suggested by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). In the first step, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using LISREL 8.54 with maximum likelihood estimation was performed to determine whether the measured variables reliably reflected the hypothesized latent variables. Through the CFA, construct reliability and validity of construct measurements were assessed as well as overall fit of measurement model. Once the adequacy of measurement model was assured, the overall model fit test of the proposed MPM was performed through the structural equation modeling (SEM). In the second stage of the data analysis, hypothesis test was conducted using path coefficients between a pair of constructs. Covariance matrices were used for the test of measurement and structural equation model.

FINDINGS

Descriptive Statistics

Sample Characteristics: Of the 245 respondents, slightly more than 60 % were male. The age grouping of 40 to 49 and 50 to 59 comprised approximately 65 % of the respondents. Not surprisingly, most respondents worked in academia (93%) and had completed either a masters degree (34%) or doctoral degree (59%). For the membership period, respondents were fairly well distributed within the seven membership period categories, with relative new members (less than 3 years) constituting the largest respondent group (26%). Respondents' past meeting experiences were also fairly well distributed within the six past experience categories, ranging from 13 to 21 %. Fifty-three respondents (21.6%) had no previous experience of participating in the annual

conference, while the rest had meeting participation experience(s) of one to five for the last five-years.

Measurement Items: Table 3 presents descriptive statistics for the measurement items of latent constructs. Included in the table are the mean value and standard deviation of each measurement item and reliability alpha for each construct. The mean values for the seven measures of attitude toward meeting participation ranged from 5.29 to 5.61 with a reliability alpha value of .95. The two measures of subjective norms were 4.62 and 5.26 respectively with an alpha value of .84. The three measures of perceived behavioral control showed a mean value range of 5.01 to 5.94 with an alpha value of .78. Three destination image measures had mean values ranging from 4.58 to 4.97 with an alpha value of .96. Lastly, three measures of meeting participation intentions resulted in mean values ranging from 4.60 to 4.78 with an alpha value of .97. Overall, the reliability alpha values for the constructs were acceptable, all surpassing the threshold point of .70 for basic research (Nunnally, 1978). It should be noted in the descriptive summary of measurement items that, of the five multi-item latent constructs, the reliability of the three measures of perceived behavioral control (.78) was relatively low compared to the other constructs. This can be attributed to the broad definition of perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991; Oh & Hsu, 2001). As proposed in the pure TRA and the TPB models, belief constructs were analyzed based on one summative measure. The descriptive summary for belief structures are presented and discussed in the Conclusion section because the summary provides more practical implications.

Insert Table 3 About Here

Measurement Model

To assess the adequacy of the measurement model, a confirmatory factor analysis using LISREL 8.54 was performed in the first step of data analysis. The measurement model was estimated from covariance matrix. Goodness of fit indices produced by LISREL output were used to assess the fit of the measurement model. Chi-square (χ^2) fit of the measurement model was significant ($\chi^2 = 260.43$, $df = 125$, $p < .01$). However, because χ^2 is sensitive to sample size (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988), more practical fit indices (i.e., χ^2 / df , root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), comparative fit index (CFI), non-normed fit index (NNFI), adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI), standardized root mean square residual (SRMR)) were performed. As shown at the bottom of Table 5, the goodness of fit indices demonstrated that the measurement model fits the data extremely well: $\chi^2 / df = 2.08$, RMSEA = .059, NNFI = .98, CFI = .98, AGFI = .91, and SRMR = .09.

Once the overall fit of measurement model was successfully estimated, construct reliability and validity was assessed. The factor variances were fixed at unity, and all constructs were allowed to correlate freely. Table 4 shows the factor loadings of the observed variables on the latent constructs and the composite reliability of latent constructs as estimated from the confirmatory factor analysis. Composite reliability of a construct was computed to assess the reliability of indicators representing each construct in the measurement model. The concept and interpretation of the composite reliability is similar to that of Cronbach's alpha, except that it also takes into account the actual factor loadings rather than assuming that each item is equally weighted in the composite load determination (Chau & Hu, 2001). As explained at the bottom of Table 4, composite reliability was calculated as follows: (square of summation of the factor loadings) / {(square of the summation of the factor loadings) + (summation of error variance)}. As

shown in Table 4, composite reliabilities of indicators were above or close to .70, an acceptable threshold suggested by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) and Hair et al. (1998).

Insert Table 4 About Here

Construct validity was evaluated by examining the factor loadings within the latent constructs as well as the correlation between the constructs (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). As shown in Table 4, the factor loadings on all latent constructs are significant at an alpha level of .01, and all factor loadings are largely satisfactory along the expected direction, ranging from .70 to .97. This provides evidence of satisfactory item convergence on the intended constructs (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). Average variance extracted (AVE), which reflects the overall amount of variance captured by the construct in relation to the amount of variance due to measurement error (Hair et al., 1998), was also calculated to check the convergent validity of constructs. Similar to the composite reliability, AVE was calculated as follows: $(\text{sum of squared factor loadings}) / \{(\text{sum of squared factor loading}) + (\text{sum of error variance})\}$. As presented in Table 4, the AVE of all latent constructs was higher than the suggested value of .50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 1998), indicating satisfactory convergent validity of constructs. Discriminant validity of constructs was assessed by comparing the AVE with the squared correlation between latent constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), discriminant validity exists when the proportion of variance extracted (AVE) in each construct exceeds the square of correlation between constructs. As shown in Table 5, the

squared correlations between pairs of constructs were less than the AVE, suggesting discriminant validity of constructs.

Insert Table 5 About Here

Structural Model and Hypotheses Test

Following the satisfactory results of measurement model evaluation, the proposed research model was assessed by structural equation modeling (SEM), using LISREL 8.54 with maximum likelihood estimation. Table 6 presents detailed results of model estimation with parameter estimates of the hypothesized paths, standard errors of the coefficients, t-values, and goodness-of-fit indices for the model. First, goodness of fit indices were used to assess the appropriateness of the model to the data. Then, path coefficients (β) were checked to examine the hypothesized causal paths among the latent constructs in the model.

Insert Table 6 About Here

As Table 6 shows, all goodness-of-fit indices exceeded their respective common acceptance level, suggesting that MPM exhibited a good fit with the data ($\chi^2 = 460.81$, $df = 211$, $\chi^2 / df = 2.18$, RMSEA = .07, NNFI = .96, CFI = .97, AGFI = .82, and SRMR = .07). The meeting participation model appeared able to explain association members' intentions to attend

the meeting. Standardized path coefficients were used for the hypotheses test. As shown in Table 6, t -values between constructs were all positively significant at $p < .01$, demonstrating that all hypothesized causal paths conceptualized in MPM were statistically supported. Specifically, hypothesized causal relationships between belief constructs and predictor constructs (H1 ~ H4) were supported: H1) behavioral beliefs and attitude ($\beta = .81, t = 11.53$), H2) normative beliefs and subjective norm ($\beta = .97, t = 12.87$), H3) control beliefs and perceived behavioral control ($\beta = .36, t = 3.67$), and H4) destination beliefs and destination image ($\beta = .53, t = 6.99$). As conceptualized in the pure TRA and the TPB models, the causal relationships between unidimensional belief structures and the predictor constructs showed strong positive correlation (r) ranging from .53 to .97. Analysis of standardized path coefficients also revealed that causal relationships between predictor constructs and the intention were positively significant, supporting hypotheses 5 through 9: H5) attitude and intention ($\beta = .20, t = 2.46$), H6) subjective norms and intention ($\beta = .23, t = 2.67$), H7) perceived behavioral control and intention ($\beta = .15, t = 2.25$), H8) destination image and intention ($\beta = .19, t = 3.40$), and H9) past experience and intention ($\beta = .39, t = 4.21$). These findings indicate that association members' intentions to attend the meeting were positively associated with association members' evaluation of consequences of meeting participation, perceived social pressure from important referents, perceived control over the participation barriers, and overall perception and evaluation of the specific meeting destination. Also, past meeting participation had a positive causal relationship with participation intention, indicating that the association members' intention to attend the meeting was stronger if they had participated in more prior meetings. Most correlations among the predictor constructs showed low to moderate magnitude, ranging from .06 to .46, indicating no substantial effects of multicollinearity on parameter estimates.

Another objective of this study was to examine the extent to which each determinant construct explains the behavioral intention. To this end, we compared the size of the standardized path coefficients (β) of the predictor variables. The absolute magnitude of the estimated standard path coefficient shown in Table 6 revealed that past experience has the strongest effect on intention to attend the meeting ($\beta = .39, p < .01$) followed by subjective norm ($\beta = .23, p < .01$), attitude ($\beta = .20, p < .01$), destination image ($\beta = .19, p < .01$), and perceived behavioral control ($\beta = .15, p < .01$). In combination, 46 % of variance of intention ($R^2(\text{BI}) = .46$) was explained by the five predictor constructs together.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide evidence supporting the proposed foundations of attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and destination image. According to TPB and the destination image process (Um & Crompton, 1992), in their respective aggregates, behavioral beliefs provide the basis for attitudes, normative beliefs for subjective norms, control beliefs for perceived behavioral control, and destination beliefs for destination image. In this study, the strong correlations between direct measures of these predictor constructs and their respective belief-based aggregates reaffirms that attitude is derived from beliefs about the behavior's consequences, that subjective norms are derived from beliefs about the normative expectations of others, that perceptions of control are derived from beliefs about the presence of factors that may facilitate or impede performance of the behavior, and that destination image is derived from beliefs about the performance of a particular meeting destination on specific attribute. However, the relationship between unidimensional control belief structure and perceived behavioral control deserves some discussion. Although the causal relationship between

control belief structure and perceived behavioral control was significant, its correlation ($r = .36$) was relatively weak compared with that of other pair constructs. Ajzen (1991) defined control beliefs as a set that deals with the presence or absence of needed resources and opportunities. Based on this operational definition, three control belief items (i.e., money, time, and travel distance) pertaining to association meeting participation were identified to measure overall control beliefs. However, the summative approach to measure control beliefs is often questioned because, unlike belief items in other belief constructs, each control item measures different aspects of the control beliefs (Oh & Hsu, 2001). For example, some association members may have financial resources but no time to attend the meeting, while others may have both. Also, association members' abilities to attend the meeting and their self-control may not be necessarily have a high correlation with financial affordability and available time for meeting participation (Oh & Hsu, 2001). As a remedial procedure, the control beliefs construct may need to be decomposed to find a better baseline model for assessing the relationship between control beliefs and perceived behavioral control.

One objective of this paper was to examine the relative contribution of each determinant construct to the overall variance in meeting participation intention. Although no specific hypotheses were formulated, the obtained results derived from path coefficients were interesting. Of five predictor variables, past meeting participation experience turned out to be the most important factor ($\beta = .39$). Perhaps, by including past experience in MPM, some irrational or non-evaluative attitudinal disposition could be absorbed into predicting association meeting participation. Thus, association members, as characterized in this study, make both conscious/thinking and routine/habitual decisions to attend the meeting. In other words, association members carefully plan for their participation in advance. On the other hand, they

often engage in meeting participation without giving much thought to the consequences of attending the meeting. Based on the significant influence of past experience, as well as perceived behavioral control of meeting participation intention, it can be speculated that association meeting participation is not fully volitional.

The subjective norm was also another important factor in association members' intentions to attend the meeting. This finding may highlight the crucial role of positive word-of-mouth by association members' important referents. Taylor and Todd (1995a) commented that the role of the subjective norm could vary significantly depending on the subjects. The subjects of this study, mostly hospitality and tourism educators, have a highly autonomous profession and, therefore, tend to be independent thinkers. However, their primary job (teaching and research) requires tremendous cooperation and partnership with others in the same area, which may contribute to a tendency to give relatively more weight to relevant others' opinions. Thus, the nature of the profession may, in part, explain the observed significant effect of the subjective norm on meeting participation intentions.

IMPLICATIONS

Theoretical Implications

The findings of this research provide both theoretical and practical implications. On a theoretical level, the proposed meeting participation model extends the current body of knowledge about human behavior by examining multiple factors that influence association meeting participation. Specifically, applying intention-based human behavior theories (TRA and TPB) to the context of association meeting participation is important for two reasons. First, although there have been some descriptive studies explaining association members' meeting

participation process, no theory-driven model has been researched. Therefore, incorporating existing theoretical frameworks establishes a sound framework that helps extend our understanding of association members' meeting participation behaviors (Zinni, 2003). Second, the meeting participation model (MPM) added constructs (past experience and destination image) to the original models. A simultaneous inclusion of additional constructs to the proposed model is in line with recent theoretical development in consumer behavior research (Oh and Hsu, 2001). Including destination image and past meeting participation experience furthered our understanding of the role these constructs play in determining association members' intentions to attend the meeting.

Another important finding of this study is that meeting participation intention was more strongly related to past meeting participation experience than other predictor variables. The relative importance among the predictor variables depends in part on the nature of behavior and in part on the characteristics of the sample (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). According to Ajzen (2002), the association between past behavior and future behavior becomes strong when the behavior in question is stable over the time. The reason for this stability may be that whatever factors determined the behavior in the past continue to exert their influence in the present behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). Also, as in the case of this study, when the causal relationship between attitudes and behavioral intention is relatively weak, the residual effect of prior behavior on later behavior becomes strong (Ajzen, 1991). Based on our results, therefore, we can assume that association meeting attendees tend to be repeat attendees, attending the meeting year in and year out, and, thus, we can assume that association meeting participation is somewhat habitual. To validate the role of past experience in predicting association members'

intentions to attend the meeting, replications of the study using different samples would be necessary.

Practical Implications

TRA and TPB are usually tested by either direct measures of the postulated determinants of behavior in question or by indirect measures of salient beliefs relevant to each determinant. In this study, MPM adopted the method of a full-model test, including belief structures, in order to provide more detailed insight into the roots of association meeting participation behavior.

Among the four major predictor variables (attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavior, and destination image) in MPM, subjective norm had the most influence on association members' intentions (and thus behavior) to attend the meeting. Generally, the subjective norm is more important in behaviors requiring cooperation (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). Thus, we can assume that attending association meetings requires the cooperation of others. As the descriptive summary in Table 7 indicates, association members' boss/advisors and their colleagues' cooperation are particularly required for association meeting participation. In many situations, association members' meeting participation is associated with business, and participation is in part influenced by organizational business decisions and cooperation with colleagues in the same organization. This result can be used to guide the development of effective marketing strategies for associations and their meeting planners. Meeting planners and destination marketers need to target their marketing efforts to whatever significantly influences members in order to promote positive word-of-mouth. The descriptive summary of belief items in Table 7 shows that association members' boss/advisors and their colleagues provide more influence on association meeting participation than family members. Thus, public relations and advertising in

professional and trade magazines and newspapers probably have more influence in affecting important referents.

Insert Table 7 About Here

Attitude was another important factor in predicting association members' intentions to attend the meeting. As indicated in previous research, the descriptive results of behavioral belief items in Table 7 prove that education (*gaining knowledge/skills*) and networking (*building business/professional relationships*) are two important benefits that association members expect to get from the meeting. Thus, for associations and their meeting planners attempting to lure more attendees, it would be most productive to advertise that by attending the meeting, potential attendees will gain valuable knowledge/skills/information/trends/ideas in their area and have an opportunity to build professional/business relationships with other participants. Effective marketing strategies should attempt to reflect these positive consequences of attending the meeting by utilizing persuasive communication channels with potential attendees. This can be best done by creating attractive preliminary meeting programs and association newsletters that emphasize these benefits of attending the meeting.

Table 3 also shows that destination image is an equally important variable affecting association meeting participation. This has implications not only for associations, but also for destinations and destination marketers. The most important destination attribute for potential meeting attendees is accessibility, followed by destination safety/security and hotel facilities. These findings are in line with previous studies. Surprisingly, however, tourist attractions was

rated as the least important attribute, indicating again that association meeting participation is still more associated with business than with leisure. These results suggest that traditional first-tier destinations with easy accessibility, such as Chicago, Las Vegas, Orlando, Atlanta, and Dallas, have an edge over the less accessible second-tier destinations in competing for association meetings, particularly large conventions and expositions. Thus, for these top-tier destinations, building infrastructure, such as airport and road systems, hotels, and convention centers, all of which improve accessibility and capacity, is the key to the success in the competition among them. On the other hand, emerging second-tier destinations, such as Albuquerque, Myrtle Beach, Santa Fe, Corpus Christi, Palm Springs, Savannah, and Tempe, have the advantage over first-tier destinations in safety/security and desirable weather. Thus, they need to advertise these strengths, and target associations and meetings, relatively small association meetings, whose members are more concerned about the weather and the safety of destinations.

Although its importance is not as substantial as other predictor variables, perceived behavioral control over the meeting participation was also significant predictor in explaining association meeting participation. As shown in Table 7, of the three control belief items, financial resources are the most important inhibiting factor, followed by schedule conflicts (time concern) and travel distance. This finding suggests that in order to increase meeting attendance, associations and meeting planners need to provide potential attendees with financial incentives or discounts, such as early bird registration discounts, hotel room discounts, and group discount rates for flights. Also the timing of the meeting is very important. Associations, in order to maximize attendance, should choose dates and seasons that can meet most of members'

preferences. Designing meetings that are financially affordable and scheduled in preferable seasons is one key to well-attended meetings.

Lastly, results of this study show that the most important predictor variable of meeting participation intentions is association members' past meeting participation experiences, which are almost twice as importance as other predictor variables. This result implies that in order for associations to increase meeting attendance and, thus, obtain stable revenue stream for a long term, they need to provide more opportunities and resources for new members and for members who have never attended the meeting. Such an effort can ultimately lead them to become regular attendees and become actively involved in various association events.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Although the successful development of a robust meeting participation model provides valuable implications, these positive results did not come without limitations, which indicate future research issues.

One caveat is the sample of this study. The researcher chose one target association (CHRIE) and examined its members' intentions to attend the meeting. Although the practice of choosing one target association is common in association meeting participation research, this practice leaves open the possibility that participants provided biased inputs. As noted in the findings section, 93% of respondents worked in academia and had either masters or doctoral degrees, suggesting that the CHRIE annual meeting is a typical educational conference. The relative importance of attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control in predicting behavioral intention varies across behaviors and across populations (Ajzen & Driver, 1992). Therefore, in some situations, only attitudes may have a significant impact on intentions, but in

others, attitudes and perceived behavioral control will account for intentions, and in still others, all three predictors will make significant independent contributions. It would thus be important for future research to replicate the present study with different professional groups. This group-comparison approach will help reaffirm the meeting participation model's validity and effectiveness of each predictor variables in explaining association members' intentions to attend the meeting.

Second, a relatively large number of potential respondents (137) did not receive the survey-invitation email and, thus, could not participate in this study. This number represented a considerable proportion of the total sample (14%). It could be argued that these individuals differed in some way that would affect the predictive validity of the MPM. In order to rule out this possibility, future research using online survey needs to reduce delivery failures because of incorrect email addresses and other barriers. This requires researchers to work closely with participating associations.

In the original TRA/TPB frameworks, belief structures are typically combined into unidimensional constructs (i.e. $\sum bb_i be_i$, $\sum nb_i mc_i$, $\sum cb_i pp_i$, and $\sum db_i de_i$). This integration of beliefs has been subject to criticism. In order to better understand the relationships between belief structures and the predictor variables of intention, several researchers have examined approaches that decompose unidimensional belief structure into multi-dimensional constructs (Bagozzi, 1983; Shimp & Kavas, 1984; Taylor & Todd, 1995). Decomposing approaches provide several advantages over unidimensional belief structures. First, it is unlikely that monolithic belief structures representing various dimensions will be consistently related to the antecedents of intention (Bagozzi, 1981; Shimp & Kavas, 1984). Second, by decomposing unidimensional belief structures, relationships between beliefs and predictor variables become

clearer and more readily understood (Taylor & Todd, 1995a). Lastly, the decomposition can provide a stable set of beliefs that can be applied across a variety of settings, overcoming operational problems that have been noted in traditional intention models (Berger, 1993; Mathieson, 1991). Therefore, it would be reasonable for future research to attempt to decompose the unidimensional belief structure into multi-dimensions. This decomposing approach will not only enhance the body of knowledge of the meeting participation model, but also provide more detailed insights into association meeting participation.

CONCLUSION

This study examined association meeting participation behavior from its developmental perspective. The proposed meeting participation model was found to afford quite accurate prediction of association members' intentions to attend the meeting. In accordance with the theory of planned behavior, attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control were significant determinants of meeting participation intentions. In addition, new determinants (destination image and past experience) in MPM were also found to be significant and to substantially increase the total amount of variance in meeting participation intentions.

The proven meeting participation model is important on both a theoretical and practical level. Theoretically, this research extends the current body of knowledge of human behavior theories by applying intention-based human behavior theories to the domain of association meeting participation. Therefore, MPM could serve as a framework for researchers inquiring into the systematic approaches to meeting participation behaviors. Practically, it could help both associations and destinations better understand the sophisticated meeting participation process of

association members and, therefore, develop more effective marketing plans to attract more association members to meetings.

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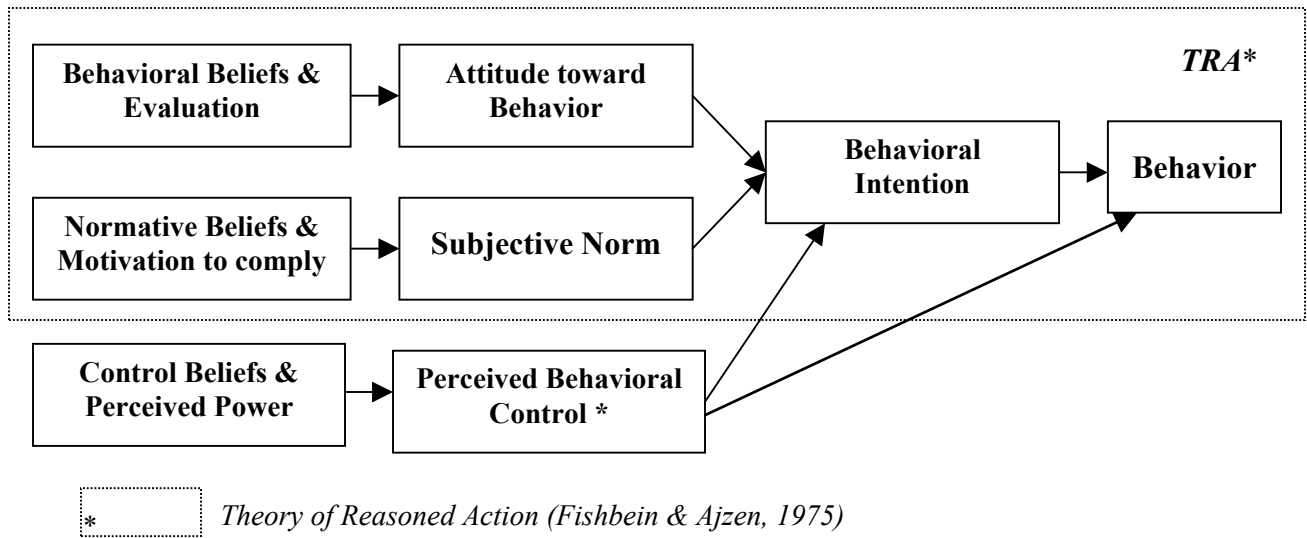


Figure 1. Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1985)

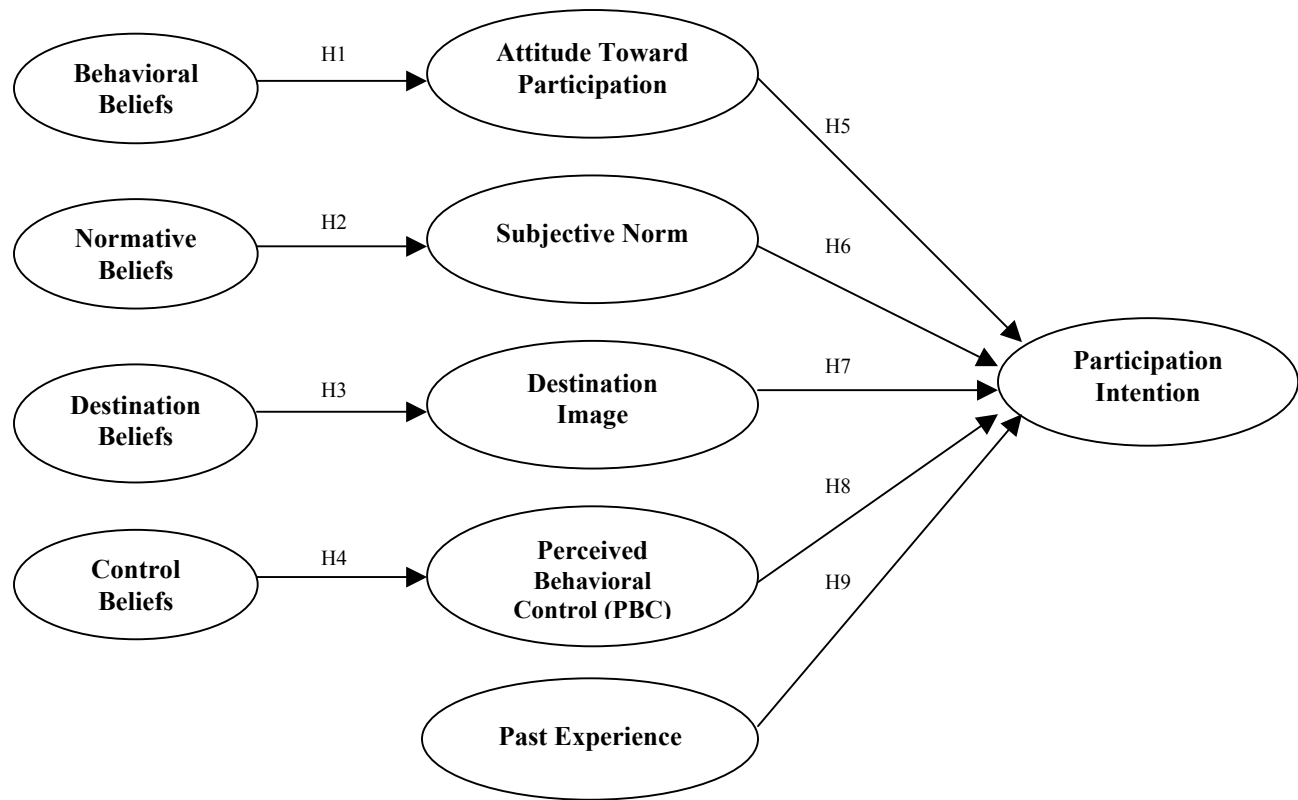


Figure 2. Meeting Participation Model (MPM)

Table 1. Meeting Participation Motivation Factors

Author(s)	Subjects	Motivation Factors/Attributes
Price (1993)	468 attendants of the American Association for the Advancement of Science annual meeting (1993)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Networking • Professional savvy • Leadership
Grant (1994)	135 attendees of the International Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institution Education (CHRIE) 1993 conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Leadership • Networking • Potpourri
Oppermann (1995), Oppermann & Chon (1995)	72 attendees of the Society of Travel & Tourism Educators (STTE) 1994 Annual Conference.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping up with changes in my profession • Hearing speakers • Seeing people I know in my field • Learning new skills • Developing new professional relationships • Establishing a reputation in my field • Traveling to a desirable location • Representing my organization • Developing new personal relationships • Participating in informal social activities
Grant & Weaver (1996)	135 attendees of the CHRIE 1993 conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Leadership • Networking • Destination
Oppermann (1998)	123 participants of the Association of American Geographers (AAG) 1995 Chicago Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeing people I know in my field • Hearing speakers in my field • Present paper to colleagues • Keeping up with changes in my field • Developing new business relationships • Establishing a reputation in my field • Participating in informal social activities • Traveling to a desirable destination

Table 1. Meeting Participation Motivation Factors (Cont'd)

Author(s)	Subjects	Motivation Factors/Attributes
Ngamsom & Beck (2000)	43 attendees of the Fifth Annual Conference of Asia Pacific Tourism Association in Hong Kong	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opportunity for travel to overseas destination• Outdoor recreation• Business activities• Change of pace• Networking• Education
Price & Murrmann (2000)	700 association members from five different associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Profession-based values (education)• Competency-based values (education)• People-based values (networking)• Association-based values (involvement)• Civic-based values (leadership)
Rittichainuwat, Beck, & Lalopa (2001)	231 attendees of the CHRIE 2000 conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education (conference programs)• Networking• Career enhancement• Traveling to desirable place• Leadership enhancement• Association related activities• Business activities• Self-esteem enhancement• Sightseeing

Table 2. Meeting Participation Inhibiting Factors

Author(s)	Subjects	Inhibiting Factors/Attributes
Oppermann (1995)	72 attendees of the Society of Travel & Tourism Educators (STTE) 1994 Annual Conference.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No travel funds from my organization • No time • Schedule conflict with other conference • Registration fee too high • Transportation cost too high • Hotel room too expensive • Travel access to the destination not convenient • Not a desirable destination • Conference topics not interesting • No leave from my organization
Oppermann (1998)	123 participants of the Association of American Geographers (AAG) 1995 Chicago Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No travel fund from my organization • No time • Did not submit any paper for presentation • Hotel room too expensive • Transportation cost too high • Registration fee too high • Too far away/travel time too long • Not a desirable destination • Conference topics not interesting • Schedule conflict other meetings
Ngamsom & Beck (2000)	43 attendees of the Fifth Annual Conference of Asia Pacific Tourism Association in Hong Kong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety/Security • Distance • Time • Money • Health problems
Rittichainuwat, Beck, & Lalopa (2001)	231 attendees of the CHRIE 2000 conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Money • Time • Distance • Difficult access to the destinations • Negative image of the destinations • Family obligations/responsibilities • Safety/security at destinations • I have been there before • Health problems

Table 3. Summary of Measurement Scales

Construct	Measure (Scale)	Mean	SD	Reliability
<i>Attitude Toward Meeting Participation</i>				.95
ATT1	- For me to attend the CHRIE conference is <i>Extremly bad (1)/Extremely good (7)</i> .	5.61	1.14	
ATT2	- For me to attend the CHRIE conference is <i>Extremely useless (1)/Extremely useful (7)</i> .	5.34	1.35	
ATT3	- For me to attend the CHRIE conference is <i>Extremely harmful (1)/Extremely beneficial (7)</i> .	5.61	1.00	
ATT4	- For me to attend the CHRIE conference is <i>Extremely unplesant (1)/Extremely pleasant (7)</i> .	5.44	1.07	
ATT5	- For me to attend the CHRIE conference is <i>Extremely foolish (1)/Extremely wise (7)</i> .	5.36	1.16	
ATT6	- For me to attend the CHRIE conference is <i>Extremely worthless (1)/Extremely valuable (7)</i> .	5.46	1.21	
ATT7	- For me to attend the CHRIE conference is <i>Extremely boring (1)/Extremely interesting (7)</i> .	5.29	1.29	
<i>Subjective Norms (SN)*</i>				.84
SN1	- Most people who are important to me think that I should attend the CHRIE Conference.	4.62	1.64	
SN2	- Most people whose opinions I value would approve of my attending the CHRIE Conference.	5.25	1.43	
<i>Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC)*</i>				.78
PBC1	- Whether or not I attend the CHRIE Conference is completely up to me.	5.92	1.48	
PBC2	- I am confident that If I want, I can attend the CHRIE Conference.	5.84	1.40	
PBC3	- I have resources, time, and ability to attend the CHRIE Conference.	5.01	1.74	
<i>Destination Image (DI)*</i>				.96
DI1	- For me this year's meeting destination, Las Vegas, is an ideal meeting place.	4.58	1.87	
DI2	- I am satisfied with this year's meeting destination, Las Vegas.	4.80	1.85	
DI3	- Overall, I have a favorable image of this year's meeting destination, Las Vegas.	4.97	1.78	
<i>Participation Intention (PI)*</i>				.97
PI1	- I intend to attend the CHRIE conference.	4.72	2.15	
PI2	- I plan to attend the CHRIE conference.	4.60	2.18	
PI3	- I will make an effort to attend the CHRIE conference.	4.78	2.12	

* Scale value ranges from *Strongly Disagree* (1) to *Strongly Agree* (7).

Table 4. Reliabilities and Variance Extracted

Construct	Standardized Factor Loadings	Composite Reliabilities*	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)**
Attitude		.75	.72
ATT1/ATT2/ATT3/ATT4/ ATT5/ATT6/ATT7	.82/.85/.85/.78/ .88/.91/.82		
Subjective Norm (SN)		.76	.73
SN1/SN2	.86/.85		
Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC)		.71	.63
PBC1/PBC2/PBC3	.74/.95/.70		
Destination Image (DI)		.90	.89
DI1/DI2/DI3	.95/.97/.92		
Behavioral Intention (BI)		.92	.91
BI1/BI2/BI3	.96/.97/.94		

Note: Composite reliability and variance extracted for constructs were computed based on the following formulas (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 1998). All factor loadings are significant at $p = .01$.

$$\text{*Composite Reliability} = \frac{(\sum \text{Standardized loadings})^2}{(\sum \text{Standardized loadings})^2 + (\sum \text{Indicator measurement error})}$$

$$\text{**Variance Extracted} = \frac{(\sum \text{Squared standardized loadings})}{(\sum \text{Squared standardized loadings}) + (\sum \text{Indicator measurement error})}$$

Table 5. Correlations, Squared Correlations, and AVE

Correlations among latent constructs (Squared)*							
Measure	AT	SN	PBC	DI	BI	PE	AVE
AT	1.00						.72
SN	.73 (.53)	1.00					.73
PBC	.18 (.03)	.28 (.08)	1.00				.63
DI	.36 (.13)	.32 (.10)	.21 (.04)	1.00			.89
BI	.45 (.20)	.50 (.25)	.44 (.19)	.33 (.11)	1.00		.91
PE	.07 (.01)	.11 (.01)	.28 (.08)	.13 (.02)	.47 (.22)	1.00	.78

*Correlation coefficients are all were significant at .05 level.

Note: AT = Attitude, SN = Subjective Norm, PBC = Perceived Behavioral Control, DI = Destination Image, BI = Behavioral Intention, and AVE = Average Variance Extracted.

Measurement model fit: $\chi^2 = 260.43$, $df = 125$, $\chi^2 / df = 2.08$, RMSEA = .059, AGFI = .88, NNFI = .98, CFI = .98, SRMR = .096.

Table 6. Parameter Estimates and Fit Indices

Hypothesized Path	Standardized Parameter Estimate (Standard Error)	t-value	Hypothesis
H1: BB to AT	.81 (.07)	11.53*	Supported
H2: NB to SN	.97 (.07)	12.87*	Supported
H3: CB to PBC	.36 (.09)	3.67*	Supported
H4: DB to DI	.53 (.07)	6.99*	Supported
H5: AT to BI	.20 (.08)	2.46*	Supported
H6: SN to BI	.23 (.08)	2.67*	Supported
H7: PBC to BI	.15 (.06)	2.25*	Supported
H8: DI to BI	.19 (.05)	3.40*	Supported
H9: PE to BI	.39 (.09)	4.21*	Supported

R^2 (BI) = .46

Goodness-of-fit Indices:

$\chi^2 = 460.81$, $df = 211$ ($p < .01$)

$\chi^2 / df = 2.18$

RMSEA = .07

NNFI = .96

CFI = .97

AGFI = .82

SRMR = .07

Note: BB = Behavioral Beliefs, AT = Attitude toward Meeting Participation, NB = Normative Beliefs, SN = Subjective Norm, CB = Control Beliefs, PBC = Perceived Behavioral Control, DB = Destination Beliefs, DI = Destination Image, BI = Behavioral (Meeting Participation) Intention, and PE = Past (Meeting participation) Experience.

**Significant at .01*

Table 7. Descriptive Summary of Belief Items

Belief Items	Strength (Mean)	Evaluation (Mean)	Overall Beliefs (Mean)
<i>Behavioral Beliefs</i>	bb_i	be_i	$bb_i be_i$
Gaining new knowledge & skills	5.27	5.69	29.99
Building business/professional relationships	5.76	5.96	34.33
Presenting papers	4.90	4.79	23.47
Getting away from the ordinary	4.32	3.80	16.42
Fulfilling the job requirements/expectations	4.47	4.44	19.85
			$\Sigma bb_i be_i = 124.06$
<i>Normative Beliefs</i>	nb_i	mc_i	$nb_i mc_i$
My advisor/boss	4.17	5.05	21.06
My colleagues	4.30	4.48	19.26
My family (spouses/parents/significant others)	3.20	4.84	15.49
			$\Sigma nb_i mc_i = 55.81$
<i>Control Beliefs</i>	cb_i	pp_i	$cb_i pp_i$
Money (financial resources)	5.46	6.06	33.09
Time (schedule conflicts)	5.26	5.90	31.03
Travel distance	4.55	4.25	19.34
			$\Sigma cb_i pp_i = 83.46$
<i>Destination Beliefs</i>	db_i	de_i	$db_i de_i$
Accessibility (ease of getting the site)	5.60	5.80	32.48
Hotel facilities available at the destination	5.44	6.17	33.56
Tourist attractions	4.35	5.74	24.97
Desirable weather	4.71	4.66	21.95
Good food	4.90	5.69	27.88
Safety/Security	5.50	5.36	29.48
			$\Sigma db_i de_i = 170.32$

Note: bb = Behavioral Beliefs, be = Behavioral Beliefs Evaluation, nb = Normative Beliefs, mc = Motivation to Comply, cb = Control Beliefs, pp = Perceived Power, db = Destination Beliefs, de = Destination Beliefs Examination.

CHAPTER V
A COMPARISON OF THREE MODELS TO EXPLAIN ASSOCIATION MEMBERS'
MEETING PARTICIPATION BEHAVIORS

Abstract

An ongoing requirement in today's competitive association meeting environment is that destination marketers and association meeting planners must understand the complicated process of association meeting participation. In that regard, existing human behavior models (the theory of reasoned action and the theory of planned behavior) were first applied to the domain of association meeting participation. Then, the meeting participation model was developed based on those models. This study is a comparison of the validity of three models as applied to the domain of association meeting participation. The results of structural equation modeling (SEM) revealed that all three models successfully provide theoretical bases for understanding association members' meeting participation behavior. Overall, the results of this study indicate that the meeting participation model provides a fuller understanding of meeting participation intention by adding two predictor variables (destination image and past meeting participation experience) that are likely to influence association members' intention to attend the annual meeting.

KEY WORDS: Theory of reasoned action (TRA), Theory of planned behavior (TPB), Meeting participation model (MPM), Model comparison, Structural equation modeling (SEM).

INTRODUCTION

For the last decade, a number of studies in the convention and meeting sector have identified the determinants of the association meeting participation. The objective of such research is to help associations and host destinations better design and manage their meetings, which ultimately leads to better attended meetings. Researchers use many different approaches to reach this goal. Some researchers have focused on identifying motivational factors influencing association members' decision-making (Grant, 1994; Grant & Weaver, 1996; Ngamsom & Beck, 2000; Oppermann, 1998; Price, 1993; Price & Murrmann, 2000). Other researchers have determined the extraneous constraints inhibiting association meeting participation (Ngamsom & Beck, 2000; Oppermann, 1995; Oppermann & Chon, 1995; Rittichainuwat et al., 2001). In addition, the role of meeting destination image (Alkjaer, 1976; Montgomery & Strick, 1995; Oppermann 1995, 1994; Usher, 1991; Var, Cesario, & Mauser, 1985; Zelinsky, 1994) and family influence (Edelstein & Benini, 1994; Oh, Roehl, & Shock, 1993) on association meeting participation have been frequent subjects for study. However, while such studies have provided the potential of understanding how to better design the meeting, they have been descriptive studies (Lee & Back, 2005; Oppermann & Chon, 1997). No research in the convention and meeting area has called for the development of sounder theoretical framework to address the basic questions of why people attend the association meetings. This lack of a theoretical framework incorporating various aspects of association meeting participation has motivated this research.

Predicting human behavior has been the major objective of psychological theories, and some of them have been extremely successful in explaining various human behaviors (Chang, 1998). Particularly, intention-based models, which use behavioral intention to predict actual

behavior and, in turn, focus on identifying determinants of intention, have been very useful in predicting a wide range of human behavior (Taylor & Todd, 1995b). This important line of research is grounded in models from social psychology, such as the theory of reasoned action (TRA) (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) and its extension, the theory of planned behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1985). Both TRA and TPB are well-developed theoretical orientations that aim not only to predict intentions and behaviors but also to contribute to the understanding of the psychological process underlying the intentions and behaviors in question (Celuch, Taylor, & Goodwin, 2004). Thus, the first objective of this study was to test the validity of TRA and TPB as they apply to association meeting participation. Then, we further extended the research focus to modify TPB to develop a meeting participation model (MPM) and test whether the inclusion of additional determinants variables in the MPM improved the predictive power of the theory. Finally, the ultimate objective was to compare the utility of three competing models (TRA, TPB, and MPM) and to determine which model best explained association members' intentions to attend the annual meeting.

This paper compares three competing models (TRA, TPB, and MPM) with a full specification of belief structures using data collected through an online survey of 245 International Council on Hotel, Restaurant Institutional Education (CHRIE) members. The three competing models were compared for overall model fit to the collected data, significance of hypothetical paths, and how well each model could explain association members' intentions to attend the meeting. This assessment of contribution to the understanding of association meeting participation was assessed with structural equation modeling (SEM) using the maximum likelihood estimation method.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The theory of reasoned action (TRA) and the theory of planned behavior (TPB), an extension of TRA, have received broad support in empirical studies of consumer behaviors (Sheppard, Hartwick, & Warshaw, 1988). The key assumption of both TRA and the TPB is that most behaviors of social science are volitional and, thus, predictable from intention (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980). According to both TRA and TPB, an individual's behavioral intention is the most immediate factor influencing his/her behavior. This behavioral intention is then a function of the individual's attitude toward behavior, subjective norm (TRA), and perceived behavioral control (TPB).

Model 1 - The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)

Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) assumed that human beings are rational and motivation-based, so individuals systematically use the information available to them to consider the implications of their behaviors before they decide to engage in a given behavior or not. Based on this assumption, they succeeded in developing a model, known as the theory of reasoned action (TRA) that includes attitude and subjective norm as important factors influencing behavioral intention. According to TRA (see Figure 1 in the Results section), a person's behavior is determined by his/her intention to perform the behavior, and this behavioral intention is, in turn, a function of his/her attitude toward the behavior and his/her subjective norm (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980). That is, TRA assumes that an individual's behavioral intention is highly determined both by his/her positive evaluations of behavior in question and by his/her perceptions that significant referents think he/she should perform those behaviors (Ajzen and

Fishbein, 1980). Two independent determinants of behavioral intention, attitude and subjective norm, are correspondingly related to behavioral and normative beliefs.

According to TRA, the strength of each behavioral belief (bb_i), which is an individual's subjective probability that a behavior will lead to a certain consequence, is multiplied by the evaluation of its consequence (be_i), and attitude is determined by summing the resulting products across all salient behavioral beliefs ($\sum bb_i be_i$). Likewise, subjective norm, which is a person's perception that most people who are important to him /her think he/she should or should not perform the behavior in question (Chang, 1998), is a function of a set of beliefs termed as normative beliefs. To obtain an estimate of a subjective norm in TRA, each normative belief (nb_i), which is the likelihood of important referents' approval or disapproval of certain behavior, is first multiplied by the motivation to comply with each referent (mc_i). Then, the cross products are summed for all salient referents to determine the subjective norm ($\sum nb_i mc_i$).

Although the psychological processes of TRA have been widely demonstrated to be applicable in understanding and predicting a variety of behaviors, it has been argued that the predictive power of TRA may be hampered because it is designed to predict only behaviors under volitional control (Park, 2003). Under certain circumstances, an individual's behavior can also be determined by non-volitional factors such as opportunities and resources. For example, even if an association member has a favorable attitude and subjective norm toward meeting participation, he/she cannot attend the meeting if he/she cannot afford the trip or if he/she faces schedule conflicts. In order to successfully predict behaviors in such circumstances, Ajzen (1985) proposed the theory of planned behavior (TPB), which accounts for non-volitional factors that can be determinants of behavioral intention or behavior (Park, 2003).

Model 2 - The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

The theory of planned behavior (TPB) is an extension of TRA (See Figure 2 in the Results section). The only difference between TRA and TPB is that TPB takes into account non-volitional control, named “perceived behavioral control” or “actual control,” over the behavior. According to Ajzen (1985), human behavior is guided by three kinds of considerations: beliefs about the likely outcomes of the behavior and the evaluations of these outcomes (behavioral beliefs); beliefs about the normative expectations of important others and motivation to comply with these expectations (normative beliefs); and beliefs about the presence of factors that may facilitate or impede performance of the behavior and the perceived power of these factors (control beliefs). As explained in TRA, in their respective aggregates, behavioral beliefs produce a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the behavior and normative beliefs result in perceived social pressure. In addition, in TPB, perceived behavioral control is determined by each control belief (cb_i) multiplied by the perceived power of the control factor to facilitate or inhibit performance of the behavior (pp_i). As shown in Figure 2, another distinct difference between TRA and TPB is the direct path from perceived behavioral control to actual behavior in TPB. Because many behaviors pose difficulties in execution that may limit volitional control, it is necessary to consider perceived behavioral control in addition to behavioral intention in predicting individual behavior. To the extent that perceived behavioral control is veridical, it can serve as a proxy for actual control and contribute to the prediction of the behavior in question (Ajzen, 1991).

Association Meeting Participation and the TPB/TRA

Understanding association meeting participation behavior in the framework of TRA and TPB is intuitively appealing because attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control are all specified as predictors. Existing literature on the association meeting participation process provides various factors that influence association members' decision-making. These factors can be classified into four categories: motivational factors, inhibiting factors, family influence, and destination image. TRA and TPB can be successfully applied to the context of association meeting participation because major meeting participation factors (motivational factors, inhibiting factors, and family influence) can serve as the criteria in the models' theoretical constructs. Specifically, meeting participation intentions can be predicted from attitude (motivational factors), subjective norms (family influence), and perceived behavioral control (inhibiting factors).

First, motivational factors, such as education, networking, and self-actualization can be explained by behavioral beliefs and attitude structure in both TRA and TPB (Grant, 1994; Grant & Weaver, 1996; Ngamsom & Beck, 2000; Oppermann, 1998; Oppermann & Chon, 1995; Price & Murrmann, 2000). For example, an association member who believes that attending a meeting or conference would bring positive consequences, such as educational or professional benefits, would hold a favorable attitude toward attending the meeting. This favorable attitude toward meeting participation, in turn, would lead to his/her intention to attend the meeting. However, understanding why many association members choose not to attend conventions is more important than identifying motivational factors in the meeting participation decision-making process. Therefore, many researchers have identified primary inhibiting factors affecting association members' meeting participation (Ngamsom & Beck, 2000; Oppermann, 1998;

Rittichainuwat et al., 2001). Inhibiting factors, such as time conflicts, financial limitations, health problems, and family obligations, can be successfully incorporated in the construct of perceived behavioral control in TPB. In the context of meeting participation behavior, association members' actual control over internal (skills, abilities, and emotion) and external (time, money, health, and family obligation) constraints affects not only his/her intention to attend the meeting, but also his/her actual meeting participation. Lastly, family influence factors can be explained through the normative beliefs and subjective norm structure in TRA and TPB. Family is the most important referent affecting association members' meeting participation behaviors (Edelstein & Benini, 1994; Oh, Roehl, & Shock, 1993). If an association member believes that most referents, e.g., parents and/or colleagues, think he/she should attend the meeting or conference, the perceived social pressure to attend the meeting will be increased with his/her motivation to comply. Conversely, if he/she believes that most referents are opposed to his/her meeting attendance, his/her perception of social pressure not to attend the meeting will be increased with his/her motivation to comply. This perceived social pressure, in turn, would ultimately affect his/her intention to attend the meeting.

Despite this general applicability to various human behaviors, however, TRA and TPB have not been exempted from modifications and alternative conceptualizations to explain various human behaviors (Oh & Hsu, 2001). Likewise in the context of association meeting participation, TPB needed modification to include two additional predictor variables: destination image and past meeting participation experience. As emphasized in the previous section, destination image can significantly affect association members' meeting participation decisions, and this proposition has been proven in many empirical studies (Alkjaer, 1976; Oppermann, 1994; Var, Cesario, & Mauser, 1985; Usher, 1991; Zelinsky, 1994). Also, many studies

investigating various human behaviors have proven that past experience is a reliable indicator of future behavior. The inclusion of these two variables in TPB ultimately led to the meeting participation model (MPM). Detailed theoretical relationships among the constructs in MPM are explained in subsequent sections.

Model 3 - The Meeting Participation Model (MPM)

By adding a destination factor, MPM completes the systematic integration of four major meeting participation factors (motivational factors, inhibiting factors, family influence, and destination image). In addition, it includes a past experience variable in the model to better explain the complicated process of association meeting participation (See Figure 3 in the Results section).

Travel destination choice models suggest that individuals integrate their subjective evaluations of each destination attribute in different ways, so they have distinctive preferences for the particular destinations. In other words, the destination attributes are input factors that produce image (Holbrook, 1981; Young & Kent, 1985). Um and Crompton (1992) stated that an individual's beliefs about a destination's attributes help to increase or reduce his/her motive to travel to the destination. They operationalized destination beliefs as consisting of two components: 1) the relative strength of beliefs about each destination attribute in evaluating each place as a possible destination; and 2) the extent to which prospective destinations were believed to possess certain destination attributes. Hence, the logic of the formation of destination image is equivalent to that of attitude in TRA and TPB. The sum of each destination attribute strength (db_i) multiplied by the evaluation of each attribute (de_i) determines the destination image.

Many empirical studies on meeting participation factors have indicated that the meeting

destination itself could affect association members' decisions to participate in a meeting (Alkjaer, 1976; Oppermann, 1994; Var, Cesario, & Mauser, 1985; Usher, 1991; Zelinsky, 1994). When association members feel that a particular meeting destination possesses a satisfactory level of performance on each destination attribute, such as accessibility, climate, tourist attractions, and safety/security, they will have a favorable or unfavorable image of that destination of the meeting. Thus, their favorable meeting destination image would ultimately affect their intention to attend the meeting.

The exploratory nature of MPM has resulted in adding the determinant variable, past meeting participation experience, to the pure TPB model. In order to increase the predictive power of TRA and TPB, many researchers in various disciplines have attempted to add past experience as a substantive predictor of behavioral intention and future behavior, equivalent to the other predictor variables (attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control) in TPB (Aarts, 1998; Ajzen, 2002; Oh & Hsu, 2001; Ouellette & Wood, 1998; Sonmez & Graefe, 1998; Taylor & Todd, 1995a; Yoo, 2004). Empirical findings proved that past experience could be used successfully as a predictor variable of behavioral intention and future behavior. Although Ajzen (1991) did not include a past experience variable in his TRA and TPB, even he recognized the role of past experience as a predictor variable of behavioral intention and future behavior. Ouellette and Wood (1998) conducted a meta-analysis of existing research data to test the direct effect of past experience on future response. Their study revealed that past experience was an important predictor of future behavior and intention. Because of the empirical evidence of past experience's contribution to future behavior, the proposed MPM includes past experience as an antecedent of intention. Although there is no empirical support for adding past experience to

MPM in convention and meeting research, testing the model with the past experience variable is necessary.

Model Comparison

Over the years, there have been many attempts to refine TRA and TPB to better predict specific human behaviors. For example, a series of studies have examined more complex versions of TRA/TPB: 1) allowing for crossover effects between the normative and attitudinal components of the model (Chang, 1998; Oliver & Bearden, 1985; Shimp & Kavas, 1984; Taylor & Todd, 1995a), 2) decomposing attitudinal and normative components (Chau & Hu, 2001; Oh, & Hsu, 2001; Park, 2003; Taylor & Todd, 1995a), and 3) adding new construct(s) to the original model (Mathieson, 1991; Talor & Todd, 1995b; Yoo, 2004). Once they developed alternative models, researchers face the problem of choosing among two or more competing models. Wishing to select one best model, researchers have compared competing models using structural equation modeling (SEM). Table 1 summarizes model comparison studies relevant to TRA /TPB and their alternative models.

Insert Table 1 About Here

The choice of comparison procedure depends on whether the competing models are nested within one another (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1998). To compare competing models that are not nested within one another (like the current study) the procedures usually consist of three steps. First, multiple model fit indices are assessed to check the appropriateness

of each competing model. Once competing models successfully fit the data, path coefficients and predictive power or variance explained (R^2) of models are then compared. Model fit indices and explanatory power being equivalent, the best model is the most parsimonious one (Bagozzi, 1992; Taylor & Todd, 1995). Based on such comparisons, the competing models in this study were evaluated for overall model fit, their contribution to understanding, and their parsimony.

METHODOLOGY

Measurement Development

Development of measurements for each construct in the models proceeded through a series of steps. Items to measure hypothetical constructs (behavioral intention, attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control, destination image, and past experience) were based on scales developed by Ajzen (1991, 2002). On the other hand, measurement items for belief constructs (behavioral, normative, control, and destination beliefs) were based on a review of literature and an elicitation study, which involved 29 professional association members. A pilot study was then conducted to assess the reliability of multiple measures and to check the content validity of the initial questionnaire. Thirty-three professional association members participated in the pilot study. The results of the pilot study demonstrated that all scales had reliabilities of .85 or more, indicating that the scales used in this study can successfully measure constructs of interest. Also, based on results of the pilot test, the questionnaire was slightly modified and shortened.

Questionnaire

The final questionnaire contained three sections. First, items assessing beliefs constructs (behavioral, normative, control, and destination beliefs) were grouped together. Similarly, in the

next section, items designed to assess determinant constructs (attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control, destination image, past experience, and behavioral intention) were also grouped together. Lastly, items assessing respondents' demographic characteristics were grouped together in the last section. For all of the items in sections one and two, the target behavior was attending the 2005 CHRIE annual conference and exposition July 27-31, 2005 in Las Vegas, NV.

Behavioral Beliefs: In order to assess respondents' beliefs about the benefits resulting from attending the meeting, a list of five potential outcomes was compiled through the literature review and the elicitation study. Among these outcomes were gaining knowledge and skills, building professional relationships, presenting papers, getting away from the ordinary, and fulfilling job requirements. Participants rated the likelihood that attending the meeting would produce each of the 5 outcomes on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). After completing the likelihood ratings, respondents indicated their evaluation of 5 outcomes by rating the desirability of each on a 7-point scale (*extremely unimportant-extremely important*).

Normative Beliefs: Three survey questions assessed normative beliefs of three specific referents: advisor/boss, colleagues, and family. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they thought their important referents encouraged them to attend the meeting, using a 7-point scale (*extremely unlikely-extremely likely*). Also, participants were asked to rate their motivation to comply with each referent on a 7-point scale (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *very much*).

Control Beliefs: Three items (money, time, and travel distance) were included to assess each control belief. Using a similar 7-point scale to assess behavioral and normative beliefs,

respondents rated how often each control item affected their decision to attend the meeting (*very rare - very frequently*) and their control power of each item (*strongly disagree – strongly agree*).

Destination Beliefs: Six meeting destination attributes (accessibility, hotel facility, tourist attractions, desirable weather, good food, and safety/security) important to potential attendees were identified through the review of literature and the elicitation study. Respondents rated the importance of each destination attribute on a 7-point scale (*very unimportant – very important*). After completing the importance ratings, they indicated the performance of the meeting destination (Las Vegas) on each attribute on a 7-point scale (*strongly disagree – strongly agree*).

Overall, as suggested by Ajzen (1991) in TPB, all belief items were first combined with the evaluative components using the expectancy-value approach, and then the products were summed to determine each belief construct (i.e. $\sum b_i e_i$, $\sum nb_i mc_i$, $\sum cb_i pp_i$, and $\sum db_i de_i$). Measurement items for all determinant constructs (attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control, and destination image), except past experience, were measured with 7-point Likert-type scales.

Attitude: Attitude toward the meeting participation was assessed directly by asking respondents to evaluate meeting participation on seven 7-point bipolar adjective scales with endpoints labeled *extremely bad (useless, harmful, unpleasant, foolish, worthless, and boring)* and *extremely good (useful, beneficial, pleasant, wise, valuable, interesting)*.

Subjective Norm: Two questions on a 7-point scale (*strongly disagree* and *strongly agree*) were used to measure subjective norms on meeting participation. Both questions required respondents to rate the level of agreement with the statements: 1) most people important to them think that they should attend the meeting, and 2) most people whose opinion they value would approve of their participation in the meeting.

Perceived Behavioral Control: Three 7-point scaled questions (*strongly disagree* and *strongly agree*) were used to measure perceived behavioral control by asking respondents to rate their overall abilities to control extraneous constraints.

Destination Image: Respondents' overall destination image was measured with three direct questions using 7-point *disagreement-agreement* scale. Respondents rated the level of agreement of each statement regarding their perception, preference, and satisfaction with the choice of meeting destination.

Past Experience: As commonly used in previous research, respondents' past meeting participation experiences were measured with a single quantifiable item: frequency of meeting participation.

Meeting Participation Intention: Finally, three questions on a 7-point scale were used to measure respondents' intentions to attend the meeting with anchors on *strongly disagree* (1) and *strongly agree* (7).

Table 2 lists the final questionnaire items used to measure latent constructs (attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control, destination image, and behavioral intention), together with mean and measurement reliability.

Insert Table 2 About Here

Data Collection

With satisfactory content validity and measurement reliability established by the pilot study, the main survey was conducted with the members of Council on Hotel, Restaurant, and

Institutional Education (CHRIE) over a 10-day period in March 2005. This study used an online survey through the Kansas State University Survey System. An invitation email, which contained an introduction to the research and a link to the actual online survey, was sent to 1,020 CHRIE members. Two reminder emails were sent to increase response rates. One hundred thirty seven emails of the 1,020 dispatched emails could not be delivered to members because of incorrect email addresses. Of the sample of 883 prospective respondents, 245 respondents completed the surveys. All 245 responses were valid for the analysis; they were all complete, representing a final overall response rate of 27.8 %. As anticipated, two reminder emails contributed to the relatively high response rate, from the response rate of 17 % (144 responses) after the invitation email to the final response rate of 27.8 % (245 responses) after two reminder emails.

Data Analysis

Three competing models were independently tested and compared through the structural equation modeling (SEM), using LISREL 8.54 with maximum likelihood estimation. Covariance matrices were used in this analysis. For each model, overall fit, significance of paths, and predictive power were considered. The data were analyzed using the two-step approach suggested by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). In the first step, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to determine whether the measured variables reliably reflected the hypothesized latent variables. In the second step, structural equation models were tested to determine overall model fit, significance of path coefficients, and explanatory power of the three competing models.

RESULTS

Descriptive Profile of the Sample

Of the 245 respondents, slightly more than 60 % were male. The age groups of 40 to 49 and 50 to 59 constituted approximately 65 % of the respondents. Not surprisingly, the majority of respondents work in academia (93%) and had completed either a masters degree (34%) or doctoral degree (59%). For the membership possession period, respondents were fairly distributed within the seven membership period categories, with relatively new members (less than 3 years) as the highest number of respondent (26%). Respondents' previous meeting participation experiences were also explored as shown in Table 3. Respondents' past meeting experiences were also fairly distributed within the six past experience categories, ranging from 13 to 21 %. Fifty-three respondents (21.6%) had no previous experience of participating in the annual conference, while the rest of them had meeting participation experience(s) of one to five for the last five years.

Insert Table 3 About Here

Measurement Model

The measurement model was first assessed by a confirmatory factor analysis using the LISREL 8.54 and the covariance matrix. Because MPM is an inclusive model, including all constructs from TRA and TPB, only MPM's measurement model was assessed. As suggested by Chau and Hu (2001), six common model-fit statistics were performed to assess the model: chi-square/degree of freedom, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), comparative fit

index (CFI), non-normed fit index (NNFI), adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI), and standardized root mean square residual (SRMR). As shown at the bottom of Table 4, all the model-fit indices exceeded their respective common acceptance levels, demonstrating that the measurement model exhibited a good fit to the data.

Insert Table 4 About Here

The measurement model was further assessed for construct reliability and validity. As shown in Table 4, composite reliability for all constructs in the measurement model was over .70, an acceptable threshold suggested by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994). Construct validity was evaluated by examining the factor loadings within the constructs, average variance extracted (AVE), and the correlation between constructs (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). As shown in Table 4, factor loadings on all latent constructs were satisfactory, ranging from .70 to .97. This provided evidence of satisfactory item convergence on the intended constructs (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). Average variance extracted (AVE) was also calculated to check the convergent validity of constructs. The AVE of all latent constructs was over the suggested value of .50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 1981), indicating satisfactory convergent validity of constructs. Discriminant validity of constructs was assessed by comparing the AVE with the squared correlation between latent constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The squared correlations between pairs of constructs were less than the AVE, providing empirical support for the discriminant validity of the measures. Overall, the confirmatory factor model adequately

reflected a good fit to the data. Once the measurement model was found satisfactory, three competing models were independently assessed using the structural equation modeling (SEM).

Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)

The fit statistics indicate that TRA model provided a good fit to the data ($\chi^2 = 163.04$, $df = 72$, $\chi^2/df = 2.26$, RMSEA = .072, CFI = .98, NNFI = .98, AGFI = .87, SRMR = .04). Figure 1 shows the standardized path coefficients for TRA. Results indicate that attitudinal ($\beta = .88$, $p < .01$) and normative ($\beta = .99$, $p < .01$) belief structures were significant determinants of attitude and subjective norm, respectively. Attitude ($\beta = .23$, $p < .01$) and subjective norm ($\beta = .31$, $p < .01$) were, in turn, significant antecedents of meeting participation intention. In terms of predictive power or variance explained (R^2), attitude and subjective norm jointly explained 26 % of variance in meeting participation intention in the TRA.

Insert Figure 1 About Here

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

Structural equation modeling to examine the second model revealed that TPB model also fit the data reasonably well ($\chi^2 = 313.68$, $df = 126$, $\chi^2/df = 2.47$, RMSEA = .078, CFI = .97, NNFI = .97, AGFI = .83, SRMR = .07). As summarized in Figure 2, all hypothesized paths except that between control beliefs and perceived behavioral control were positively significant, indicating causal relationships between (1) behavioral beliefs and attitude ($\beta = .84$, $p < .01$), (2)

normative beliefs and subjective norm ($\beta = .99, p < .01$), (3) attitude and intention ($\beta = .24, p < .01$), (4) subjective norm and intention ($\beta = .28, p < .01$), and (5) perceived behavioral control and intention ($\beta = .31, p < .01$). Jointly, three predictor variables (attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control) explained 33% of variance in meeting participation intention in TPB.

Insert Figure 2 About Here

Meeting Participation Model (MPM)

Fit statistics of MPM demonstrated that all goodness-of-fit indices exceeded their respective common acceptance level, suggesting that MPM exhibited a good fit to the data ($\chi^2 = 460.81, df = 211, \chi^2/df = 2.18, RMSEA = .070, CFI = .97, NNFI = .96, AGFI = .82, SRMR = .07$). As shown in Figure 3, hypothetical paths between belief constructs and relevant determinant constructs were all positively significant, supporting causal relationships between (1) behavioral beliefs and attitude ($\beta = .81, p < .01$), (2) normative beliefs and subjective norm ($\beta = .97, p < .01$), (3) control beliefs and perceived behavioral control ($\beta = .36, p < .01$), and destination beliefs and destination image ($\beta = .53, p < .01$). Also causal relationships between predictor variables and the dependent variable, meeting participation intention, were also positively significant: attitude and intention ($\beta = .20, p < .01$), subjective norm and intention ($\beta = .23, p < .01$), perceived behavioral control and intention ($\beta = .15, p < .01$), destination image

and intention ($\beta=.19$, $p<.01$), and past experience and intention ($\beta=.39$, $p<.01$). Jointly five determinant variables explained 46 % variance in meeting participation intention in MPM.

Insert Figure 3 About Here

Model Comparison

Following the satisfactory results of the model evaluations, the three competing models (TRA, TPB, and MPM) were compared for model fit, path coefficients, and explanatory power. In order to examine the independent contribution of two additional predictor variables, MPM was tested with the hierarchical approach: TPB plus destination image (MPM1) and the MPM1 plus past experience (full MPM model). Table 5 summarizes the degree to which each model fits the data and the explanatory power of each competing model. Various fit indices in Table 5 indicate that all three competing models provide a good fit to the data. This suggests that all three competing models were successfully applied to the domain of association meeting participation behavior. Under such circumstances, explanatory power (R^2) in predicting association members' intention to attend the meeting was used to determine which model was superior. Because R-square tends to over estimate the variance accounted for compared to an estimate that would be obtained from the population, the adjusted R-square, which measures the proportion of the variation in the dependent variable accounted for by the predictor variables and thus adjusts for a bias in R-square, was used for model comparison in this study.

Insert Table 5 About Here

In comparing TRA with TPB, findings indicate that TRA was substantially improved by adding perceived behavioral control. Thus, TPB provided a substantially better explanatory power than did the TRA (*Adjusted R*² (BI) = .24 and .36 for TRA and TPB, respectively). These results are consistent with previous model comparison studies in different settings (Ajzen & Dadden, 1986; Chang, 1998; Madden et al., 1992; Park, 2003), indicating that non-volitional factors or situational constraint factors (e.g., time, health problem, and financial resources) substantially affect association members' intentions to attend the meeting. Thus, including perceived behavioral control played an important role in predicting association members' intentions to attend the meeting and provided a more solid theoretical basis for studies of association meeting participation process.

As shown in Table 5, the newly developed research model (MPM) appeared to be superior to TPB. The results revealed that MPM accounted for more variance in explaining intention to attend the meeting than did TPB (*R*² (BI) = .33 and .46 for TPB and MPM respectively). In comparing TPB and MPM1, results showed that the adding of domain specific predictor variable (destination image) to TPB slightly improved the variance accounting for meeting participation intention (*Adjusted R*² (BI) = .26 and .27 for TPB and MPM1, respectively). Based on the assumption that frequent performance of a behavior leads to the formation of a habit and that habit can influence future behavior (Ajzen, 2001), this study examined whether frequency of past meeting participation contributed to explaining meeting

participation intention. As expected, adding past meeting participation experience to MPM1 increased the explanatory power (*Adjusted R*² (BI)) substantially from .27 to .40. for MPM.

In sum, it was proved that MPM appears to be superior to TRA and TPB in explaining association members' intentions to attend the annual meeting: that is, *Adjusted R*² (BI) = .40, .26, and .24 for MPM, TPB, and TRA, respectively. Adding destination image and past meeting participation experience to TPB substantially increased the variance accounting for meeting participation intention. Specifically, given that MPM was substantially improved when the past experience was added to TPB, and that the effect of past experience on intention ($\beta = .39$) is much higher than the effect of destination image ($\beta = .19$), it is postulated that past experience contributed more than destination image to explaining association meeting participation intention.

DISCUSSION

Two observations are worth discussion. First, the path coefficient between control beliefs and perceived behavioral control was insignificant in TPB. Although that causal relationship was found to be significant in MPM, the effect size was the weakest among the causal relationships of other pairs. The concepts relating to control belief structure and perceived behavioral control are the least understood part of TPB (Taylor & Todd, 1995b). It is worthwhile to test the argument that perceived behavioral control is a unitary latent variable (Ajzen, 1991, 2002). Several investigators have questioned the unitary conception of perceived behavioral control and, thus, have deconstructed it largely into two factors: 1) beliefs about self-efficacy (ease or difficulty of performing behavior) and 2) beliefs about controllability (beliefs about the extent to which performing the behavior is up to the individual) (Armitage & Conner, 1999; Manstead &

Eekelen, 1998; Sparks, Guthrie, & Shepherd, 1997; Taylor and Todd, 1995; Terry & O'Leary, 1995). The meta analysis of perceived behavioral control (Cheung & Chan, 2000) revealed that perceived self-efficacy and controllability were independently found to account for significant portions of variance in intention. In this study, the belief-based measure of perceived behavioral control aggregates across all accessible control belief items, whether self-efficacy or controllability. This aggregate unidimensional control structure might have led to the insignificant or relatively weak correlation between control beliefs and perceived behavioral control in the proposed models of this study.

Second, it should be noted that a path found to be significant in one model remained so in the other models. In particular, the two original paths in the TRA, attitude and subjective norm toward intention, were significant across models with approximately the same effect size. Also, it appeared that the effect size of destination image did not change much when past experience was added to the model. However, the effect size between perceived behavioral control and intention in TPB decreased substantially when past experience was added to TPB, from $\beta = .31$ for TPB to $\beta = .15$ for MPM, while other paths remained constant. This suggests that the relationship between perceived behavioral control and past experience in relation to behavioral intention merits further investigation. A simultaneous inclusion of past behavior and perceived behavioral control in the same model is in line with recent theoretical developments in this area (Ajzen, 1991; Oh & Hsu, 2001). According to Quellette and Wood (1998), the frequency of past behavior has direct and/or indirect influence on future behavior regardless of the effect of perceived behavioral control. On the other hand, Ajzen (1991) argued that including past behavior in the causal models of human behavior serves no useful purpose because the automatic process does not reflect causality in human behavior (Oh & Hsu, 2001). Instead, Ajzen (1991)

insisted that perceived behavioral control reflects past behavior as well as anticipated obstacles. Unfortunately, research on the role of past behavior in the intention-based models has not reached the point of completely explaining the link between past behavior and perceived behavioral control in relation to future behavior (Ajzen, 2001). In a study on predicting study intentions among college students, Leone and his colleagues (1999) found that the contribution of perceived behavioral control declined when past behavior was included in the prediction equation. This study supports, in part, both sides. Adding past experience substantially increased the overall predictive power of association members' intentions to attend the meeting, supporting the independent influence of past behavior on future behavior. On the other hand, including past experience in MPM substantially decreased the effect of perceived behavioral control on meeting participation intention, partly supporting Ajzen's (1991) argument about the overlapping roles of perceived behavioral control and past behavior. Based on these findings, we can at least assume that past behavior in MPM may partly capture and reflect perceived behavioral control as well as habituation.

IMPLICATIONS

MPM added domain-specific variable (destination image) and popular non-volitional variable (past behavior) to the existing frameworks. A simultaneous analysis of these predictor variables was necessary, not only to avoid potential model mis-specification (Oh & Hsu, 2001), but also to enhance our understanding on complicated process of association meeting participation. Results of this study contain many practical implications for the convention and meeting industry, specifically for associations and their meeting planners. Because association members make meeting participation decisions consciously, their plan to attend the meeting can

be affected or altered through changes in attitude and perceived social norms that contribute to the formation of meeting participation intention. In preliminary meeting programs or association newsletters, promotional messages targeting potential attendees should highlight statements about the consequences of attending the meeting. Because the opinions of important others, particularly association members' boss/advisors and colleagues in the organization, seriously affect association meeting participation, marketing efforts should also focus on advertising the benefits the organizations or members within organizations could get by dispatching their employees or colleagues to the meeting. On the other hand, results of this study indicate that association meeting participation is influenced by non-volitional factors. The substantial contribution of past experience to meeting participation intention indicates that meeting attendees tend to be repeat attendees, routinely and habitually attending the meeting annually. One way to increase these frequent attendees is to provide incentives for frequent participation, which could help boost more routine and casual pattern of meeting participation. Also, marketing strategy should focus on encouraging first-time members, providing them with more opportunities and resources to experience meeting participation. Once they attend the meeting and realize the benefits, they tend to return to the next meeting. Another desirable way to promote the meeting is to get rid of possible obstacles to meeting participation, such as lack of financial resources and time limitations, by providing various options to reduce attendees' overall cost and choosing a time that meets potential attendees' time preferences.

LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Although it achieved its objectives, this study has some built-in limitations. Most obvious is its reliance on members of one target association. These findings and their implications were

obtained from a single study that examined a specific professional group, The International Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education (CHRIE) members. In a review of literature on the meeting participation process, Oppermann (1988) revealed that although most studies targeted only one professional association, the findings of those studies are very similar, and thus he asserted that meeting-participation decisions by association members are affected by similar motivational and inhibiting factors across associations. Despite his findings, it is very difficult to assert that the CHRIE is representative of all professional associations, and therefore, caution should be taken when generalizing our findings and discussion to other professional groups. Future studies using different professional groups should test the validity of the findings of this study and should expand our understanding of association members' meeting participation behaviors.

Second, although the high correlation between behavioral intention and the actual behavior has been generally accepted and, thus, behavioral intention should therefore predict actual behavior, a high correlation between behavioral intention and actual behavior is not always obtained. It is possible that behavioral intentions may change after they have been measured but before the overt behavior has been observed (Young & Kent, 1985). Therefore, future study should measure association members' actual meeting participation behaviors.

CONCLUSION

The intent of this study was to compare three models (TRA, TPB, and MPM), providing a complete test of the relationships between belief structures and the determinants of behavioral intention in the setting of association meeting participation. Three competing models were first independently assessed and then compared in terms of goodness-of-fit indices, standardized path

coefficients, and the variance in explaining behavioral intention. Results of fit statistics suggest that all three competing models were successfully applied to the domain of association meeting participation, demonstrating the predictive validity of all three models. Analysis of standardized path coefficients proved that all relationships among constructs, except the causal path between control belief structure and perceived behavioral control, in all three models appeared to exist as conceptualized by the theories. Lastly, examination of explanatory power of each model indicated that the basic model, TRA, could be substantially improved by including non-volitional variables (perceived behavioral control and past behavior) and domain-specific variable (destination image).

Unlike previous model comparison studies in other areas (See Table 1), the *Adjusted R²* (BI) difference between MPM and TRA/TPB in this study was strong, i.e., .40, and .24/.26 for the MPM and TRA/TPB, respectively. This makes it easy to determine which model best explains association members' intentions to attend the meeting. The results of the present study show that MPM can advance our understanding of the factors that determine association members' intentions to attend the meeting, and, thus, can be best utilized to explain the process of association meeting participation.

The findings of this study represent an initial step to test the validity of three intention-based human behavior models (TRA, TPB, and MPM) as applied to the association meeting participation context. The current study should represent a strong step toward providing practical as well as theoretical information for future research, expanding the understanding of association meeting participation process as well as leisure travel decision-making.

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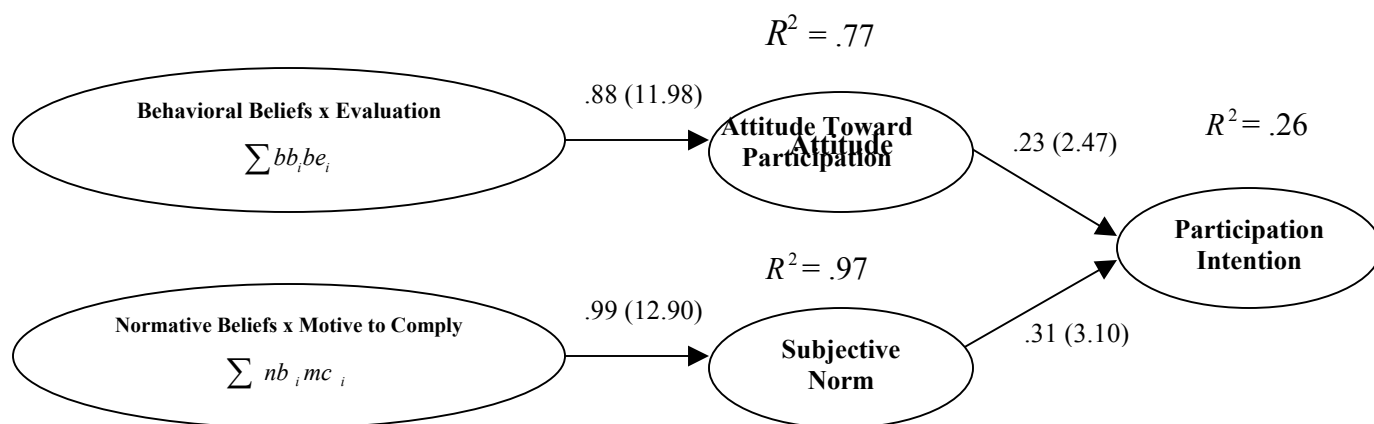
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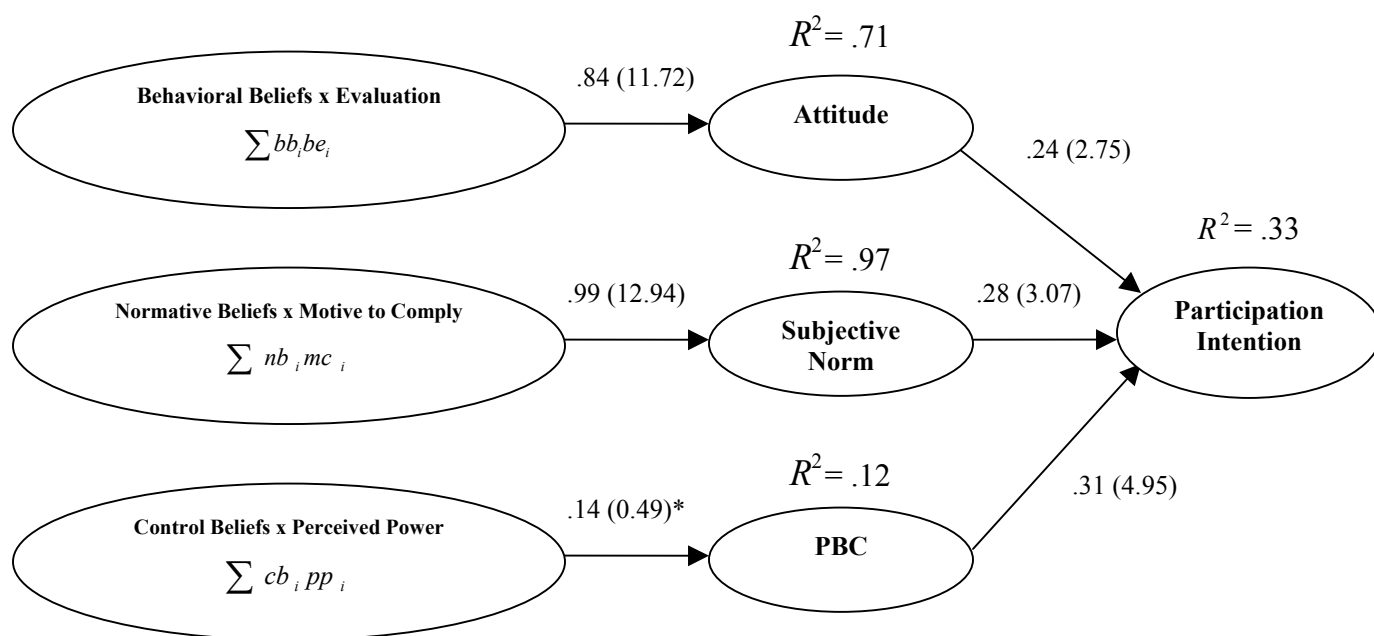
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$\chi^2 = 163.04$, $df = 72$, $\chi^2 / df = 2.26$, $RMSEA = .072$, $NNFI = .98$, $CFI = .98$, $AGFI = .87$, $SRMR = .04$

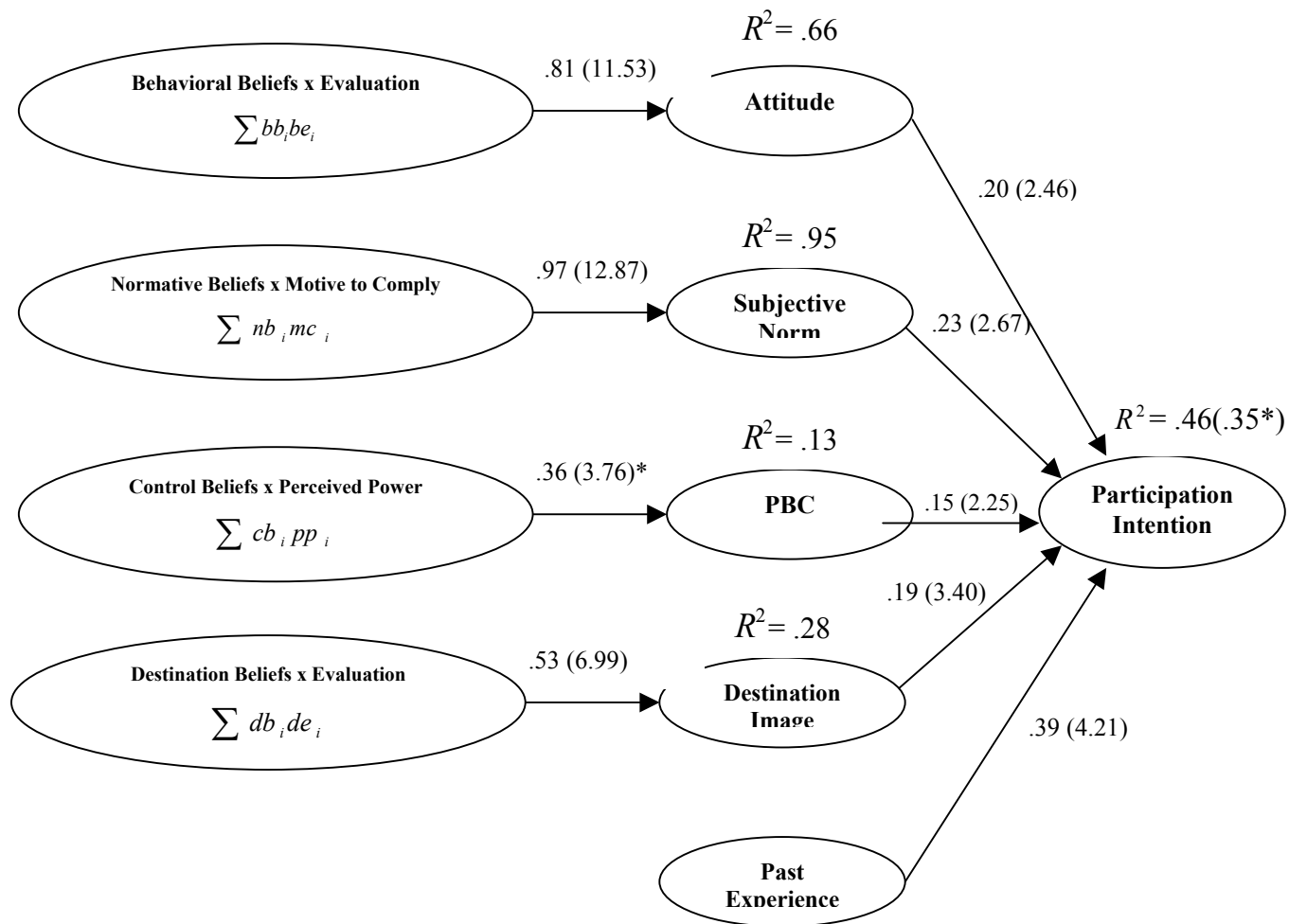
Figure 1. Theory of Reasoned Action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975)



* Not significant ($P < .05$).

$\chi^2 = 313.68$, $df = 126$, $\chi^2 / df = 2.47$, $RMSEA = .078$, $NNFI = .97$, $CFI = .97$, $AGFI = .83$, $SRMR = .07$

Figure 2. Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1985)



*MPM1: TPB plus Destination Image

$\chi^2 = 460.81$, $df = 211$, $\chi^2 / df = 2.18$, $RMSEA = .070$, $NNFI = .96$, $CFI = .97$, $AGFI = .82$, $SRMR = .07$

Figure 3. Meeting Participation Model (MPM)

Table 1. Model Comparison Using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

Authors	Target Behavior	Competing Models	Comparing Criteria	Results (Best model)
Taylor & Todd (1995a)	Adoption of consumer product (VCR-Plus)	TRA, TPB, DTPB, & CTPB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Model fit index (Chi-square (χ^2), RNI, & RMSEA) Predictive power (R^2) 	Model fit: TRA Predictive power: DTPB
Taylor & Todd (1995b)	College students' usage of information technology	TAM, TPB, DTPB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Model fit index (χ^2, RNI, AGFI & RMSEA) Predictive power (R^2) 	Model fit: Even Predictive power: DTPB
Chang (1998)	Moral behavior (Illegal copying of software)	TRA, TPB, MTPB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Model fit index (χ^2, NFI, & CFI) Chi-square (χ^2) difference test 	Model fit: MTPB χ^2 difference test: MTPB
Leone, Perugini, & Ercolani (1999)	College students' studying behavior	TRA, TPB, & TSR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Model fit index (χ^2, & CFI) Predictive power (R^2) 	Model fit: TSR Predictive power: TSR
Chau & Hu (2001)	Healthcare professionals' acceptance of information technology	TAM, TPB, & DTPB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Model fit index (χ^2, GFI, AGFI, NNFI, CFI, & SRMSR) Predictive power (R^2) 	Model fit: TPB Predictive power: DTPB
Gentry & Roger (2002)	Shop-bot use on the Internet	TRA, TPB, TAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Model fit index (CFI & RMSEA) Predictive power (R^2) 	Model fit: TAM Predictive power: TAM
Park (2003)	Consumers' online shopping behavior	TRA, TPB, TAM, & DTPB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Model fit index (χ^2, GFI, AGFI, NFI, CFI, & SRMSR) Predictive power (R^2) 	Model fit: TAM Predictive power: DTPB
Celuch, Taylor, & Goodwin (2004)	Insurance salesperson's Internet information management behavior	TRA, TPB, & DTPB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Model fit index (RMSEA, CFI, & SRMR) Predictive power (R^2) 	Model fit: Even Predictive power: TPB

Note: TRA = Theory of Reasoned Action, TPB = Theory of Planned Behavior, DTPB = Decomposed Theory of Planned Behavior, CTPB = Crossover Theory of Planned Behavior, MTPB = Modified Theory of Planned Behavior, TSR = Theory of Self-Regulation, and TAM = Technology Acceptance Model.

Table 2. Summary of Measurement Scales

Construct	Measure (Scale)	Mean	SD	Reliability
<i>Attitude Toward Meeting Participation</i>				.95
ATT1	- For me to attend the CHRIE conference is <i>Extremly bad (1)/Extremely good (7)</i> .	5.61	1.14	
ATT2	- For me to attend the CHRIE conference is <i>Extremely useless (1)/Extremely useful (7)</i> .	5.34	1.35	
ATT3	- For me to attend the CHRIE conference is <i>Extremely harmful (1)/Extremely beneficial (7)</i> .	5.61	1.00	
ATT4	- For me to attend the CHRIE conference is <i>Extremely unplesant (1)/Extremely pleasant (7)</i> .	5.44	1.07	
ATT5	- For me to attend the CHRIE conference is <i>Extremely foolish (1)/Extremely wise (7)</i> .	5.36	1.16	
ATT6	- For me to attend the CHRIE conference is <i>Extremely worthless (1)/Extremely valuable (7)</i> .	5.46	1.21	
ATT7	- For me to attend the CHRIE conference is <i>Extremely boring (1)/Extremely interesting (7)</i> .	5.29	1.29	
<i>Subjective Norms (SN)*</i>				.84
SN1	- Most people who are important to me think that I should attend the CHRIE Conference.	4.62	1.64	
SN2	- Most people whose opinions I value would approve of my attending the CHRIE Conference.	5.25	1.43	
<i>Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC)*</i>				.78
PBC1	- Whether or not I attend the CHRIE Conference is completely up to me.	5.92	1.48	
PBC2	- I am confident that If I want, I can attend the CHRIE Conference.	5.84	1.40	
PBC3	- I have resources, time, and ability to attend the CHRIE Conference.	5.01	1.74	
<i>Destination Image (DI)*</i>				.96
DI1	- For me this year's meeting destination, Las Vegas, is an ideal meeting place.	4.58	1.87	
DI2	- I am satisfied with this year's meeting destination, Las Vegas.	4.80	1.85	
DI3	- Overall, I have a favorable image of this year's meeting destination, Las Vegas.	4.97	1.78	
<i>Participation Intention (PI)*</i>				.97
PI1	- I intend to attend the CHRIE conference.	4.72	2.15	
PI2	- I plan to attend the CHRIE conference.	4.60	2.18	
PI3	- I will make an effort to attend the CHRIE conference.	4.78	2.12	

* Scale value ranges from *Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (7)*.

Table 3. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	Categories	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	154	62.9
	Female	91	37.1
	Total:	245	100
Age	Below 30	10	4.9
	30 ~ 39	38	18.9
	40 ~ 49	55	27.4
	50 ~ 59	76	37.8
	60 or over	22	10.9
	Total:	201	100
Work Environment	Industry (Non-Academic)	12	5.3
	Academic	211	93.0
	Other	4	1.8
	Total:	228	100
Education	High school or less	2	.9
	Associate degree/technical certificate	3	1.3
	Bachelor's	11	4.9
	Master's	77	34.1
	Doctoral	133	58.8
	Total:	226	100
Membership Period	Below 3 Years	58	26.0
	4 ~ 6 Years	45	20.2
	7 ~ 9 Years	17	7.6
	10 ~ 12 Years	22	9.9
	13 ~ 15 Years	33	14.8
	16 ~ 18 Years	13	5.8
	Over 18 Years	35	15.7
	Total:	223	100
Meeting Participation Experience for the last five years	None	53	21.6
	1	53	21.6
	2	36	14.7
	3	33	13.5
	4	31	12.7
	5	39	15.9
	Total:	245	100
Intention to participate in the post-conference survey	Yes	136	55.7
	No	109	44.3
	Total:	245	100

Note: Some of demographic questions in this survey were optional. Thus, missing values lead to the variance in respondent numbers of each demographic group.

Table 4. Reliabilities and Variance Extracted

Construct	Standardized Factor Loadings	Composite Reliabilities*	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)**
Attitude		.75	.72
ATT1/ATT2/ATT3/ATT4/ ATT5/ATT6/ATT7	.82/.85/.85/.78/ .88/.91/.82		
Subjective Norm (SN)		.76	.73
SN1/SN2	.86/.85		
Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC)		.71	.63
PBC1/PBC2/PBC3	.74/.95/.70		
Destination Image (DI)		.90	.89
DI1/DI2/DI3	.95/.97/.92		
Behavioral Intention (BI)		.92	.91
BI1/BI2/BI3	.96/.97/.94		
Goodness-of-fit Indices (Recommended Value):			
$\chi^2 = 260.43, df = 125 (p < .01)$			
$\chi^2 / df = 2.08$			
RMSEA = .059			
NNFI = .98			
CFI = .98			
AGFI = .91			
SRMR = .09			

Note: Composite reliability and variance extracted for constructs were computed based on the following formulas (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 1998). All factor loadings are significant at $p = .01$.

$$\text{*Composite Reliability} = \frac{(\sum \text{Standardized loadings})^2}{(\sum \text{Standardized loadings})^2 + (\sum \text{Indicator measurement error})}$$

$$\text{**Variance Extracted} = \frac{(\sum \text{Squared standardized loadings})}{(\sum \text{Squared standardized loadings}) + (\sum \text{Indicator measurement error})}$$

Table 5. Overall Fit Indices and Explanatory Power of Models

	TRA	TPB	MPM1 ^a	MPM ^b
Fit Indices (Recommended Value):				
χ^2/df (≤ 3.0)	2.26	2.47	2.33	2.18
RMSEA ($\leq .08$)	.072	.078	.074	.070
CFI ($\geq .90$)	.98	.97	.97	.97
NNFI ($\geq .90$)	.98	.97	.96	.96
AGFI ($\geq .80$)	.87	.83	.82	.82
SRMR ($\leq .10$)	.04	.07	.08	.07
Path Coefficients (t-value):				
BB – AT	.88 (11.98)	.84 (11.72)	.82 (11.44)	.81 (11.53)
NB – SN	.99 (12.90)	.99 (12.94)	.97 (12.80)	.97 (12.87)
CB – PBC		.14 (0.49)*	.13 (0.60)*	.36 (3.76)
DB – DI			.51 (6.80)	.53 (6.99)
AT – BI	.23 (2.47)	.24 (2.75)	.21 (2.48)	.20 (2.46)
SN – BI	.31 (3.10)	.28 (3.07)	.27 (3.01)	.23 (2.76)
PBC – BI		.31 (4.95)	.30 (4.85)	.15 (2.25)
DI – BI			.15 (2.62)	.19 (3.40)
PE – BI				.39 (4.21)
Explanatory Power: R^2 (Adjusted)				
R^2 (BI)	.26 (.24)	.33 (.26)	.35 (.27)	.46 (.40)
R^2 (AT)	.77 (.77)	.71 (.71)	.67 (.67)	.66 (.66)
R^2 (SN)	.97 (.97)	.97 (.97)	.94 (.94)	.95 (.95)
R^2 (PBC)		.12 (.12)	.13 (.13)	.13 (.13)
R^2 (DI)			.27 (.27)	.28 (.28)

Note: BB = Behavioral Beliefs, AT = Attitude toward Meeting Participation, NB = Normative Beliefs, SN = Subjective Norm, CB = Control Beliefs, PBC = Perceived Behavioral Control, DB = Destination Beliefs, DI = Destination Image, BI = Behavioral (Meeting Participation) Intention, and PE = Past (Meeting participation) Experience

* Not significant at .05. ^a Meeting participation model without past experience. ^b Meeting participation model (full model).

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In this final chapter, the major findings reported in Chapters 4 and 5 are summarized in the context of the research objectives stated at the outset. In addition, several theoretical and practical implications for practitioners and researchers are discussed, as are the limitations and future research issues. The primary purpose of this study was to determine whether the proposed meeting participation model (MPM) would be useful in predicting association meeting participation. In order to achieve this goal, various meeting participation factors were derived from a review of relevant literature and an elicitation study. Previous research indicated that association meeting participation is a multidimensional construct and, therefore, is influenced by different factors to varying degrees. Second, MPM was developed based on intention-based human behavior theories to conceptually link the dependent variable (meeting participation intention) and multiple independent variables (meeting participation factors). Third, the proposed MPM, which adds two additional predictor variables (destination image and past experience) to the theory of planned behavior (TPB), was tested using structural equation modeling (SEM). Finally, in order to validate the superiority of MPM to the theory of reasoned action (TRA) and TPB, model comparison was conducted using overall model fit, path coefficient, and explanatory power in meeting participation intention.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Model Development

In light of how little is known conclusively about the antecedents of association meeting participation behavior, this study called for a sounder theoretical foundation for convention and

meeting management research. Therefore, the researcher developed MPM based on TRA and TPB to improve our understanding of association meeting participation and our ability to predict such behavior.

The results of the path coefficients in MPM support that unidimensional belief structures (behavioral, normative, control, and destination beliefs) were highly correlated with predictor variables (attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and destination image), and that predictor variables, including past experience, in turn, independently contributed to predicting meeting participation intention as the research model postulated. New predictor variables in MPM, destination image and past meeting participation experience, were significantly related to meeting participation intention, indicating that these new predictor variables along with other predictor variables in the pure TPB model affect association members' intention to attend the meeting. Overall, the results of the model test indicated that association members are more likely to attend the meeting as they evaluate meeting participation positively, willingly accept social pressures, evaluate the meeting destination positively, positively perceive that they are able to attend the meeting despite many barriers, and as they have more meeting participation experiences. When the relative importance of predictor variables in explaining meeting participation intentions was examined using the size of path coefficient, the results showed that the order of importance was past experience, subjective norm, attitude, destination image, and perceived behavioral control (See Table 4 in Chapter 4). Interestingly, of all predictor variables, past experience was the most important predictor in association members' intentions to attend the meeting. This finding indicates that association meeting participation is not only volitional, but also habitual. Judged by its effect size on meeting participation intention, subjective norm was also another important factor influencing association members' intention to

attend the meeting. This finding may highlight the crucial role of positive word-of-mouth by association members' important referents.

Model Comparison

The main objective of the second part of this research was to determine if the proposed MPM accounted for more variance in meeting participation intention than did TRA and TPB. In comparing the three competing models (TRA, TPB, and MPM), results showed that MPM added a substantial amount of variance accounted for over TPB by adding two additional predictor variables: destination image and past meeting participation experience.

TPB, which adds perceived behavioral control to TRA, provided better explanatory power than did TRA (*Adjusted R*² (BI) = .24 and .26 for TRA and TPB, respectively). These findings indicated that association meeting participation was not totally under the association members' volitional control. In other words, resources and opportunities to attend the meeting are required for association meeting participation. In the next stage, we examined the impact of including a domain-specific variable on meeting participation intention by comparing TPB and MPM1, which added destination image to TPB. Results showed that destination image is positively associated with association members' intentions to attend the meeting, and, overall, including destination image structure to TPB slightly improved its explanatory power for predicting association members' intentions to attend the meeting (*Adjusted R*² (BI) = .26 and .27 for the TPB and the MPM1, respectively). Lastly, MPM, which adds another popular non-volitional variable (past behavior) to MPM1, improved the explanatory power substantially from .27 for MPM1 to .40 for MPM. This result supports that frequency of past behavior significantly affects individuals' intention to engage in future behavior (Ajzen & Madden, 1986; Chang, 1998;

Oh & Hsu, 2001; Quellette & Wood, 1998). Jointly, new predictor variables (destination image and past meeting participation) in MPM significantly improved the explanatory power for association members' intentions to attend the meeting (*Adjusted R*² (BI) = .26 and .40 for TPB and MPM, respectively).

IMPLICATIONS

Theoretical Implications

Although there were some contradictions in the role of past behavior on predicting future behavior, the results of this study indicated that meeting participation intention was more strongly related to past meeting participation experience than the other predictor variables. Underlying reasons for the significant influence of past behavior on future behavioral intention need to be examined. The relative importance among the predictor variables of behavioral intention depends in part on the nature of behavior and in part on the characteristics of the sample (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). According to Ajzen (2002), the association between past behavior and future behavior and intention becomes strong when the behavior in question is stable over the time. The reason for this stability may be that whatever factors determined the behavior in the past continue to exert their influence in present behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). Also, as in the case of this study, when the causal relationship between attitudes and behavioral intention is relatively weak, the residual effect of prior behavior on later behavior becomes strong (Ajzen, 1991). Based on these findings, therefore, we can assume that meeting attendees tend to be repeat attendees, indicating that association meeting participation is somewhat habitual practice in nature. To validate the role of past experience in predicting

association members' intentions to attend the meeting, replications of the study using different samples would be also necessary.

One interesting finding in the model comparison was that the effect of perceived behavioral control decreased substantially when past experience was entered into the regression equation. This finding, in part, supports Ajzen's (2002) argument that perceived behavioral control is assumed to reflect past experience as well as anticipated obstacles. However, the effect of perceived behavior, although it was substantially decreased, remained significant when past experience was added to the equation, providing an independent contribution to meeting participation intention. Based on these findings, we may assume that if an association member has meeting participation experiences, he/she becomes familiar with possible situational constraints that may occur during the participation decision-making process and, therefore, has a greater confidence about handling those obstacles.

As conceptualized in the pure TRA and TPB models, belief constructs of MPM are unidimensional, which may lead to invalid prediction. Although belief constructs (behavioral, normative, control, and destination beliefs) were positively significant on predictor constructs (attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and destinations image) in the unidimensional approach, some of belief items may not be important attributes when the unidimensional belief constructs are decomposed into several specific groups. Thus, many studies have tried to decompose the unidimensional belief constructs into several specific belief constructs (Taylor & Todd, 1995a). However the complexity of the decomposed models is a concern (Park, 2003). While decomposed models deliver much more detailed information to the understanding human intentions and behaviors than do unidimensional models, the decomposed approach has the disadvantage of being too complex. Thus, these two approaches

(unidimensional and decomposing) trade off between information delivered by models and model parsimony. While the parsimony of decomposed models is a concern for some researchers, providing specific and directive information is the driving concern for others. Therefore, the choice of which model to apply depends on research interest. In this study, we tested MPM with unidimensional belief constructs. At the same time, this study provided practical interpretation of the role of each belief item in forming the overall belief constructs based on the descriptive statistics. Although this approach sticks to the original conceptualization of TRA and TPB and provides important managerial implications, future research needs to decompose the unidimensional belief constructs and identify the relative importance of each belief item on the formation of determinants of behavioral intentions. In doing so, the decomposed MPM model can be more useful in providing more detailed and statistically supported information about the influence of each belief item on association meeting participation.

Of much theoretical significance of the results of this study, the development of measurements pertaining to association meeting participation was the biggest accomplishment. The measurement developed for this study can be used for future TRA/TPB-based studies in the context of association meeting participation behavior. Although all TRA/TPB-based research shares the same theoretical construct and follow the guidelines on how to construct measurements (Ajzen, 1991; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980), the measurements of each construct vary depending on the behavior under investigation. In addition, this study identified salient belief items for each predictor construct as applied to the association meeting participation context and developed measurements for newly added constructs to TPB: destination beliefs and destination image constructs. Furthermore, the measurements for each construct were developed through an

extensive relevant literature review and an elicitation study, and then the measurements were refined through a pilot study. These procedures for developing measurements for the domain of association meeting participation were reliable and can be thus replicated in future studies, which can establish the validity and reliability of the measures.

Practical Implications

Belief-based measures of this study provide practical implications for practitioners, particularly for meeting planners and destination marketers. Within the TRA and TPB frameworks, attitudes have long been established as the most important predictor of intention in various settings (Armitage & Conner, 2001; Zinni, 2002). However, forming positive attitudes toward meeting participation is not the only way to encourage member participation. What the results of this study suggest is that subjective norms lead to increased intention to attend the meeting than attitudes, indicating that relevant referents, such as boss/advisors and colleagues in the same organization, can greatly influence on a member to attend the meeting. Generally, the subjective norm is more important in behaviors requiring cooperation from relevant referents (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). In many situations, association meeting participation is still associated with business, and meeting attendees represent their affiliations at the meeting. Therefore, financial and other types of supports from the affiliated organization are often granted for meeting participation. These findings can be used to guide the development of effective marketing strategies for associations and their meeting planners. Associations need to target their marketing efforts at the significant referents in order promote positive word-of-mouth to potential attendees and to build organizational atmosphere in which cooperation among

colleagues exists. Public relations and advertising in professional and trade magazines and newspapers can play an effective role in reaching important referent groups.

Of the five predictor variables, the most important variable of meeting participation intentions is association members' past meeting participation experiences. This result indicates that meeting attendees tend to be repeat participants. Thus, in order for associations to increase meeting attendance and obtain a stable revenue stream over the long term, they need to increase first-time meeting attendees by encouraging potential new members to experience the meeting. Such an effort to let potential members experience association events and meetings can ultimately lead them to become regular attendees in the future and become actively involved in various association events. To influence more first-time attendees, associations have to be more creative at providing financial incentives and discounts and be more flexible in choosing the meeting time for members, so that barriers to meeting participation are eliminated, and perceived behavioral control over the meeting participation can be accomplished. At the same time, an effort should be made to retain frequent attendees. It may be an effective strategy to offer small incentives through recognition programs, highlighting association members' loyal participation in association meetings.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Limitations

Although the present study attempted to validate the proposed meeting participation model (MPM), several limitations remain. This section discusses limitations of this study and provides several suggestions for future research.

First, this study did not capture association members' actual meeting participation behaviors. Since a strong and significant causal link between behavioral intention and actual behavior has been consistently demonstrated in many TRA and TPB studies (Ajzen, 2002; Armitage & Conner, 2001; Sheppard, Hartwick, & Warshaw, 1988; Vankatesh & Morris, 2000), the use of behavioral intention as a dependent variable to examine association meeting participation is theoretically justifiable. Also, in a survey-based research design, intentions are more appropriate than actual behavior because they can be measured contemporaneously with beliefs (Agarwal & Prasad, 1999). Thus, the choice of intention over actual behavior as a dependent variable does not seem to pose a serious problem for interpreting findings of this study. However, a high correlation between behavioral intention and actual behavior is not always obtained. Behavioral intentions may change after they have been measured but before the overt behavior has been observed (Young & Kent, 1985). Therefore, it is always preferable to measure actual behavior. Future research using MPM should measure actual participation behavior and thus resolve this concern.

The second limitation is with the subjects of this study. The data of this study were obtained from a specific professional group. In a review of literature on meeting participation process, however, Oppermann (1988) revealed that although most studies targeted only one professional association, the findings of those studies are very similar, and thus he asserted that meeting-participation decisions by association members are affected by similar motivational and inhibiting factors across associations. Despite his findings, it is very difficult to assert that one target association is representative of all professional associations. Thus, generalization of our findings to other professional groups should be done cautiously. Future study using different professional groups would test the validation of the findings in this study and expand our

understanding of association members' meeting participation behaviors. In addition, multi-group analysis may reveal that different groups of association members have significantly different path parameters across all links between constructs in MPM.

Lastly, the use of an online survey must be considered. Although online surveys have demonstrated superiority over postal surveys in terms of response speed, convenient data handling, and cost efficiency, it is important not to overlook one important element: unsuccessful delivery of email. A relatively large number of potential respondents (137) could not participate in the online survey because of failure of email delivery. This number represented a considerable proportion of the total sample (17%). It could be argued that these individuals differed in some way that would affect the predictive validity of MPM, resulting in a biased estimate of characteristics of the population (Bean and Roszkowski, 1995). In order to rule out this possibility, future research using online survey needs to work closely with participating association(s) to reduce incorrect email addresses and eliminate other barriers to target subjects.

Overall, the limitations described above do not severely restrict either the validity or the generalizability of the study results. However, based on the limitations discussed, future research could be conducted. Replication of the study with different samples is needed because the research model (MPM) has been tested here for the first time. Further investigations to address the limitations will lead to an increased amount of variance accounted for in the models and extend our understanding of association members' intentions to attend meetings.

Future Research

Decomposing Unidimensional Belief Structure. Decomposing unidimensional belief structures can provide more detailed understanding of factors affecting association meeting

participation. Specifically, it provides three major advantages over unidimensional belief structures. First, it is unlikely that monolithic belief structures representing various dimensions will be consistently related to the antecedents of intention (Bagozzi, 1981; Shimp & Kavas, 1994). Second, by decomposing unidimensional belief structures, relationships between beliefs and predictor variables become clearer and more readily understood (Taylor & Todd, 1995a). Lastly, the decomposition can provide a stable set of beliefs that can be applied across a variety of settings, overcoming operationalization problems that have been noted in traditional intention models (Berger, 1993; Mathieson, 1991).

According to Ajzen and Driver (1992), attitude can be separated into two sub-dimensions of attitude: instrumental and affective attitude. These two types of attitude can be quite independent of each other (Abelson, Kinder, Peters, & Fiske, 1982; Ajzen & Timko, 1986; Ajzen & Driver, 1992). Separating attitude into two sub-dimensions of attitude in TRA and TPB has not often been done (Armitage & Conner, 2001). In a study of leisure travel choices using TPB, Ajzen and Driver (1992) revealed that together, the two factors accounted for approximately 60% of the variance in attitude. Based on Ajzen and Driver's (1992) study, the attitude in this MPM study was measured with seven 7-point semantic differential scales. The scale contained 7 adjective pairs that generally tend to load on the evaluative factor of the instrument (Ajzen & Driver, 1992). Four of these 7 adjective pairs had an instrumental tone (*useless-useful, harmful-beneficial, foolish-wise, and worthless-valuable*), and three were more affective tone (*bad-good, unpleasant-pleasant, and boring-interesting*).

Separating instrumental benefits of meeting participation (e.g., knowledge, skills, and new business) from the affective benefits of meeting participation (e.g., self-actualization, getting away from the ordinary) can provide a more detailed understanding of association

members' attitudes toward meeting participation. For example, an association member may believe that attending a meeting has important benefits in terms of fulfilling job requirements or learning new industry trends and ideas; at the same time, he/she may fear the thought of presenting paper(s) in front of a large audience. Conversely, it is possible to associate meeting participation with negatively valued outcomes, such as loss of money and time and fatigue, yet experience positive emotions while attending the meeting. We can thus expect that attitudes toward meeting participation have affective and instrumental components. In that regard, although all seven attitude scales served as an overall measure of attitude toward meeting participation in the current study, decomposing the attitude construct should be conducted in the future research.

Several investigators have demonstrated that decomposing unidimensional control belief structure into two factors (beliefs about self-efficacy and beliefs about controllability) better explain the relationship between the control belief structure and the perceived behavioral control (Armitage & Conner, 1999; Manstead & Eekelen, 1998; Sparks, Guthrie, & Shepherd, 1997; Taylor and Todd, 1995; Terry & O'Leary, 1995).

While decomposing efforts have been more prevalent with attitudinal and control belief structures than normative belief structure, some studies have found reasonable support for decomposing normative belief structures according to significant referents (Burnkrant & Page, 1988; Grube, Morgan & MaGree, 1986). However, if the expected influence of relevant referents is expected to be highly correlated, the decomposition of normative belief structure does not provide meaningful insights (Shimp & Kavas, 1984). This study indicated that the expected influence of two groups of referents (boss/advisor and colleagues within the organization and

family members) is substantially different, supporting the possible usefulness of decomposing the normative belief structure.

Moderating Effects of External Variables: According to TRA and TPB, demographic variables modify behavioral intentions through their influence on the major attitudinal, social, and situational constraint components (Ajzen, 1991). Based on this assumption, researchers have tested the role of demographic variables as a moderating factor in the model (Kelly, 1980; Yoo, 2004; Young, 1983; Young & Kent, 1985; Zinni, 2002). Of many demographic variables, age and gender could provide associations and their meeting planners with important information. Particularly, the gender difference in an observed behavior may be due to differences in attitudes, social pressure, and perceived control over the situational constraints between female and male. Obviously, the influence of demographic or external variables, particularly gender, on the target behaviors can be better understood through the use of MPM.

Crossover Effect. While TRA/TPB models and MPM posit direct relationships between belief structure (attitudinal, normative, and control beliefs) and predictor variables (attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control), there is evidence for crossover effects whereby attitudinal beliefs may influence subjective norm (Oliver & Bearden, 1985; Ryan, 1982; Taylor & Todd, 1995a) or normative beliefs may influence attitude (Oliver & Bearden, 1985, Shimp & Kavas, 1984). Also, several TRA and TPB studies found a significant direct effect of subjective norms on attitude (Chang, 1998; Davis, Bagozzi & Warshaw, 1989; Malhotra & Galleta, 1999; Park, 2003). These results would provide important theoretical and practical implications about the effect of social influences on attitude and the belief that most people are similar and, therefore, probably share common beliefs (Taylor & Todd, 1995a). Thus, future research investigating crossover effects of MPM, particularly crossover between normative

belief structure and attitude, will provide insights into whether or not social influence affects association members' attitudes about association meeting participation. Also, examining the crossover effect between subjective norms and attitude in the context of association meeting participation can be meaningful approach because it will help understand whether information secured from referents is also used to form an association member's attitude toward meeting participation. Overall, comparing the original MPM with decomposed MPM and MPM with crossover effects can provide many implications for both researchers and practitioners.

CONCLUSION

Although more and more studies indicate that there are various factors affecting association meeting participation, no study has theoretically integrated various aspects of association meeting participation to better explain association members' decision to attend the meeting. Therefore, this study is the first research effort to investigate what makes association members attend, or not attend, a meeting based on a theoretical model. TRA and TPB provided the necessary theoretical ground to develop the meeting participation model (MPM). By combining original latent constructs conceptualized in pure TRA/TPB models and the domain-specific variable, MPM emerged as a theoretically strong and parsimonious framework for understanding association meeting participation. Moreover, investigating the full-model, including belief structures in the model, provided more breadth to this study, thus increasing the practical implications for practitioners. It is hoped that the current study presents a strong step toward providing practical as well as theoretical implications for future research that should replicate this study using different professional groups to reaffirm the validity of MPM.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A **Elicitation Study**

Elicitation Study Questionnaire

My name is Myong Jae Lee, a doctoral student in the department of Hotel, Restaurant, Institution Management & Dietetics at Kansas State University. Currently, I am working on my dissertation, tentatively titled "Association Members' Meeting Participation Behaviors: A Model Comparison." In order to develop measurement items for the constructs of proposed models in my research, I would like to conduct an elicitation study with you. Please take a moment to think about your participation in the conference listed below, and answer the following questions as specifically as possible. Thank you for your cooperation!

2005 I-CHRIE Annual
Conference & Exposition
July 27-31, 2005

(Salient Outcomes)

1. What do you believe will be the benefits of your participation in the above conference?

2. Is there anything else that you would associate with your participation in the conference?

(Salient Referents)

3. Are there any **groups or people** who would approve or disapprove of your participation in the conference? In other words, are there any groups or people who might influence your decision to attend the conference? Please list them.

4. Are there any other groups or people who come to mind when you think about attending the conference? Please list them.

(Control Beliefs)

5. What do you believe are **factors that facilitate your participation** in the conference?

6. What do you believe are **factors that prevent your participation** in the conference?

(Destination Attributes)

7. Do you think that the meeting destination affects your decision to participate in the conference? Circle one:

Yes () / No ()

Regardless of your answer for the question above, please answer the following questions as specific as you can.

8. What **meeting destination attributes** are most important to you when you make conference participation-decisions?

9. Are there any other meeting destination attributes that you wish the potential meeting destination to possess?

THANK YOU!!!

Appendix B
Introductory Email

Dear I-CHRIE member:

I am a doctoral student in the Department of Hotel, Restaurant, Institution Management and Dietetics at Kansas State University. Dr. Ki-Joon Back, assistant professor in HRIMD at Kansas State University, and I need your participation in a research explaining professional association members' meeting participation behaviors.

Understanding an individual's meeting participation process is very important to associations and their meeting planners who want to maximize attendance. The results of this study will help associations and their meeting planners design meetings that meet association members' needs and expectations.

Please take a few minutes to participate in this study. It will take approximately 10-12 minutes to complete the on-line survey. You may not be able to complete the survey on the first try for various reasons. In that case, you can return to a place where you left off in the survey and continue the survey. Your participation is strictly voluntary and all responses will be kept confidential and anonymous. No individual responses will be shared. The results of this study will be reported in summary form only. Completion of the questionnaire indicates your willingness to participate in this study.

If you have any question regarding the study or your rights as a participant, please feel free to contact any of the following:

- Dr. Rick Scheidt, Chair of the Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, (785) 532-3224, comply@ksu.edu
- Myong J. Lee, Dept. of HRIMD, (785) 532-5513, mlee@humec.ksu.edu
- Dr. Ki-Joon Back, Dept. of HRIMD, (785) 532-2209, back@humec.ksu.edu

Thank you for your participation. Your input is essential to the success of this study.

Sincerely,

Myong J. Lee, MHM
Ph.D. Candidate
HRIMD
Kansas State University

Ki-Joon Back, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, Major Professor
HRIMD
Kansas State University

Appendix C
Reminder Email

Dear I-CHRIE Member:

We would like to remind you of the online survey, “Effects of Attitude and Destination Image on Association Members’ Meeting Participation behaviors: Development of Meeting Participation Model.” We will be closing our survey as of midnight, March 16, 2005. You still have a chance to fill out the online survey by visiting the URL link located at the end of this email.

Please take a few minutes to complete the online survey. It will take approximately 10-12 minutes of your time. Your input will really help us to understand association members’ meeting participation behaviors. **PLEASE IGNORE THIS MESSAGE IF YOU HAVE ALREADY FILLED OUT THE SURVEY.**

Thank you for your participation!

Sincerely,

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