Fashion in Tourism: Is the importance of fashion events underestimated in its effect in the growth of tourism in New York, London, Milan, Paris and finally Athens?

SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS, BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION & LEGAL STUDIES

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January 2018
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I hereby declare that the work submitted is mine and that where I have made use of another's work; I have attributed the source(s) according to the Regulations set in the Student's Handbook.

January 2018

Thessaloniki - Greece
Abstract

This dissertation was written as part of the MSc in Hospitality and Tourism Management at the International Hellenic University.

This dissertation will attempt to show the importance of fashion events in the growth of tourism in New York, London, Milan, Paris and finally the case of Athens will be examined. As fashion in tourism is a niche tourism segment and has not been studied yet, the purpose of this dissertation is to present the basic theories of fashion events and fashion in tourism. Moreover the dissertation purpose aims to analyze the prime movers that have been leading the way to use fashion credentials in order to attract more visitors and boost their economy. Shopping as a tourism motivator will be analyzed at the literature review as nowadays more and more visitors choose fashion and shopping as a way to experience culture. The "Big 4" will be presented and key facts and figures will underline the importance and the value of fashion events as a tourism motivator. In order to collect data I selected a personalized approach to interviews that would bring the most effective and appropriate results in my research. In conclusion, the interpretation of findings of the two interviews will be analyzed and some recommendations will be given.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the people that assisted me during this marvelous trip of conducting my dissertation study. This project would not have been possible without the professional assistance and guidance of my supervisor, Dr. Eleni Mavragani.

A special thanks to my Mother, and all my friends who provided me with patience morale support, love and persistence throughout this project. I specially thank all the people that accepted to participate without any hesitation to my research. The dissertation presented, would not have been contacted with such success without the support and the help from all the people mentioned above especially my best friend Georgiadis Christina, who made it for me a journey through learning and research. Without them it would have been impossible.

In conclusion, this dissertation is extremely dedicated to my beloved mother Siaga Atalanti, my employer Papadopoulou Chrisanthi and all my colleagues who are attached to the fashion industry.
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Introduction

Is the importance of fashion events underestimated in its effect in the growth of tourism? Does shopping contribute a great percentage to gross domestic product by supporting the economic growth? Those questions are vital despite the vast research in the tourism industry and have intrigued my interest in trying to underline and prove, in the best way possible, whether tourists visit destinations during fashion shows and whether they spend in the economy directly and indirectly during fashion events.

One of the central problems at the heart of those questions concerns the nature of the definition of fashion in Tourism since it is a phenomenon that has not been examined yet. Therefore this dissertation aims to analyze and present fashion events and the phenomenon of fashion in tourism. In order to examine the thesis question I will present the literature review which contains the basic theory of fashion in tourism. The prime movers that follow fashion as a tourism motivator are presented as well as shopping as a tourism trend and a motivator of attracting visitors. Furthermore an extensive presentation of the “Big 4” fashion weeks and its key figures will be presented. The key figures, the economic findings, the visitors’ attendance to fashion shows and the investments in fashion businesses are some of the basic information and findings that will be presented in the thesis. It would be impossible to present the phenomenon of fashion tourism without having interviewed two owners and managers of fashion businesses in Greece who provided me with information in order to examine the best way possible my thesis question.

As an introduction I do believe that is vital to present the definition of shopping which is correlated with promoting tourism. Shopping is by definition a popular and contemporary tourist activity and a big part of travel expenditures. Nowadays consumers are being affected from environmental trends, from the evolution of
technology and from marketing strategies. Many of them seem to follow fashion by participating in Fashion shows and by shopping the latest trends. This can be proofed by annual Statistics that show over 60% of domestic and 85% of international tourists participating in shopping and fashion events. Moreover recent statistics have shown that a visitor to a city is willing to spend nearly one-third of their trip budge on shopping. Comparatively, taking into consideration international tourists, shopping plays a crucial role for nearly 50% of their total spending.

The evolution of technology has made it easier for visitors to search, find and get access to the products they want to purchase in order to fulfill their psychology and their needs and wants. In addition, recent research reveals that shopping during vacation is one of the most important activities of tourists. The most important information is that the word “shopping” is one of the top searched keywords for travel information seekers on destination web sites. Thus, it is not surprising the fact that shopping is a phenomenon that is correlated to the economy which affects the sociocultural and economic landscape appearing to create stable growth.

Promoting shopping is important for destinations because it can give the opportunity to visitors to prolong their visit to places but also it can extend the whole tourism season. Concluding, shopping can be considered as one the key players in economy and in the tourism sector as the environmental factors and the latest trends seem to support and hinder shopping as a tourist activity.

Research Aims & Objectives:

Fashion in tourism and fashion events are becoming nowadays one of the main sources of a competitive advantage of a city and they are essential for the development and growth of a destination. The environmental factors such as the fast technology development combined together with the customers’ needs, behavior and the customers demand to attend fashion shows and to follow the latest trends support and hinder fashion in Tourism to implement a successful strategy in order to boost tourism and shopping activities in several cities around the world.

This dissertation will attempt to show how fashion in tourism contributes a great percentage to gross domestic product by supporting the economic growth and by following the latest tourism trends, by including analysis of workings on the matter and interviews by people who are attached to the fashion industry. Customers and travellers’ needs and expectations have changed radically the last years. Nowadays consumers are being affected from environmental trends, from the evolution of technology, social media and the marketing strategies that influence their psychology and behavior.
Chapter 1: Literature Review

In the era of constant social change, economic unpredictability and global competition, cities need to explicitly define and preserve themselves if they want to remain distinctive and competitive. The best way to achieve that is by deploying their innate resources, their histories, spaces, creative energy and talents (Richards & Palmer, 2010; Richards & Palmer, 2010), through the creation of events.

Events management has become one of the fastest growing industries in the tourism industry. The use of events is considered to be one type of strategic marketing tool used by corporate entities by the means of promotional events, press conferences and sales symposia all having a prominent attribute in integrated marketing communications. According to Getz a special event is a onetime or infrequently occurring event outside the normal program or activities of the sponsoring or organizing body. To the customer, a special event is an opportunity for leisure, social or cultural experience outside the normal range of choices or beyond everyday experiences. (Getz.D, 1991)

Today events are central to peoples culture more than ever and with the increases disposable income and with greater amounts of leisure time being available to many in developed countries since the 1940s, there has been a surge in events from all spectrums of society. This includes governments which capitalize on the economic development opportunities, marketing through corporations and businesses which wish to promote image and awareness along with community groups and individuals that organize events for their shared interests, to charities using events on a local national and global basis to raise not just funds but also awareness for their causes.

Tourism principles and practice examines not only the birth of the events industry and the nature of events management in a historical point of view but also the growth of the tourism trends during the last years. A useful classification of types of events is presented, but also the growth of the role of social media in events.

1.1 Fashion in Tourism

The best way to analyze the phenomenon of Fashion in tourism would be firstly to analyze the definition and then categorize it into three sectors. Fashion in tourism is a niche market segment which can be defined as the phenomenon of people voyaging to and staying in destinations in order to enjoy, shop, experiment and finally consume fashion. Fashion tourism is a niche market segment categorized into three sectors which are Creative Tourism, Cultural Tourism and finally Shopping Tourism. Moreover, Fashion Tourism is correlated with the interaction between Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs), tourism suppliers and host communities, but also with people visiting a destination in order to enjoy, discover, study, experiment,
exchange information about history and cultures, communicate with people with different background and beliefs, share their experiences via social media and last but not least consume fashion.

It is a common knowledge that cities and Destination Marketing Organizations are trying to boost their economy and their image in order to attract more visitors annually using the cultural industries in order to develop tourism. The need and the importance of the adoption of Fashion tourism in several destinations has been underlined as fashion has been adopted and promoted in many cities. The case of London through its fashion week is the best example to describe how it became one of the biggest show and events globally.

1.2 The Prime Movers

In this stage and after having presented the definition of fashion in tourism it is relevant to present the prime movers of fashion in tourism who are London and New York. The Destination Marketing Organizations of both London and New York have been leading the way internationally to use their fashion credentials to attract visitors and boost the economy. Moreover, London and New York fashion week are considered to be one of the biggest events globally and one of the main sources that generate money. The economic impact and the contribution of fashion in tourism that London and New York generates internationally, locally, and nationally is a motivator for tourism development.

In order to underline how important is to create events the case study of Seoul is is worth mentioning as long as Seoul has persuaded to attract both locals and visitors to experience and consume fashion by supporting and organizing fashion events. Seoul the last years has created and supported two fashion weeks, and managed to attract more than two million visitors per year. Moreover, in terms of the growth of economy Seoul designed and created shopping malls due to the great number of visitors who are willing to spend their money on shopping. All in all Seoul managed to prolong its tourism season by the creation of fashion events and a great amount of local people got employed.

Moreover, the case study of Singapore is really interesting and underlines that the phenomenon of organizing events boosts the economy directly and indirectly. Singapore also supports each year a fashion week. The Singapore Tourism Board includes fashion as one of the high profile component for boosting the city’s attractiveness. This fact highlights the value of the events both in the economy and the contribution of tourism locally and internationally.
1.3 Shopping as a tourism trend and motivator

The case study of Seoul was the triggering event that made me analyze shopping as a tourism trend, a motivator and a major tourist activity. The latest environmental trends along with the fashion trends have made visitors to choose shopping as a way to consume fashion and experience the local culture. The connection with the locals and the fact that visitors are willing to buy local products and consume fashion are some of the reasons that many destinations provide special tourist shopping activities even in places which are not tourist spots in order to attract visitors. Therefore, the special tourist shopping activities, the festivals the bazaars and the shopping malls that were created in the need of shopping helped at the regeneration of destinations and gave job opportunities to locals.

The statistical data that will be presented below, underline the economic importance of fashion in tourism within shopping tourism as a niche market segment. Moreover the case study of the Bicester shopping village which is located outside London is characterized as the third largest shopping destination in the United Kingdom. Bicester shopping village includes not only shopping boutiques but also restaurants and bars and many events are taking place in order to attract visitors. Furthermore, fashion brands attract many visitors and play a crucial role in fashion tourism marketing. “VisitBritain, the UK’s tourism board, recently stated that the luxury clothing brand “Burberry” has almost played a lone hand in attracting lucrative high-spending Chinese tourists to the UK.” (Meikle, 2012)

“According to the tourism statistical data of the U.S. Office of Travel and Tourism Industries on tourism performance, shopping ranked as the top participation activity for Asians (90%) and Western Europeans (86%), and Eastern European tourists (85%). Detailed profiles for countries of origin show that shopping is on the top among all other tourist activities for the European countries of Ireland (93%), Spain (82%), and Italy (79%). Asian shopping participation percentages are particularly high in Taiwan (93%) and Japan (92%)”. (Wison, 2012)

1.4 Fashion Events

Events have always played a figurative role in societies’ history and evolution throughout the centuries. From the pre-industrial city, which was designed around event spaces, such as the Greek Agora or the Roman Forum, to the growth of the industrial city, which progressed and moved away from the pillar of religious events
and rural traditions, establishing its own culture in more formalized spaces (Richards & Palmer, 2010), festivals, rituals, performances and all sorts of events have always been an inextricable social component. The timeless function of events as means of social cohesion and their newly, especially after World War II, role of leisure facilitator, international communication founder, as well as economic and urban revitalization tool, has given a unique momentum to event planning and organizing nowadays.

Furthermore as Richard and Palmer have pointed, events can also be perceived as means of enhancing the sense of place by strengthening the local identity through the use of public space. In social terms cultural events can be also used as a primary source for social regeneration (Richards & Palmer, 2010). Living in the era of the experience economy, “where experiences are staged instead of services being delivered” (Pine & Gilmore, 1998), events, requiring the co-creation of the producer and the user, constitute a vehicle for experience production.

The concept of fashion week as an event began in Paris where marketers hired models to wear haute couture clothes and show them in public places so as to inspire other women to shop the collections. The concept of fashion week is characterized as a fashion industry event which lasts approximately one week. During the event fashion designers and brands demonstrate their latest fashion collections in runway fashion shows to buyers, fashion bloggers, designers and to the media. These events are mainly held at historical building of highest important both for local people and for visitors. The aim of the fashion events is to influence customers and visitors buy trends for the current and upcoming seasons. The most outstanding fashion weeks and the ones that are going to be analyzed in the next chapter, that are held in the fashion capitals of the world. The “Big Four» fashion weeks are held in New York, London, Milan, and Paris.
1.4.1 The "Big Four"

The last years and as fashion events are taking more and more ground there are many notable fashion weeks that are taking place around the world, but the ones which are going to be analyzed are known as the "Big Four": Paris, Milan, London and New York. Paris was the first city that established fashion shows in 1945. Moreover, Paris Fashion Week was coordinated in 1973 by the French Fashion Federation, and later on, in 1984 London Fashion Week was founded by the British Fashion Council. Despite the fact these key organizations still organize the main fashion shows; there are many independent events and producers in all cities that are taking place. The “big 4” are the most eagerly awaited fashion events of the year and they attract visitors from all over the world. Visitors and fans of the fashion shows are increasingly choosing to attend fashion shows as a way to experience culture, fashion, shop and combine the shows with tourist activities.
Nowadays, there are mainly two kinds of shows presented: women’s wear and menswear. There are also shows particular to each location. For example, most haute couture shows are held in Paris, while most bridal shows are held in New York.

1.4.2 The New York Case

New York Fashion Week, as it was stated is one of the biggest fashion shows around the world. The show takes places in February and September of each year and generally lasts from seven to nine days. It consists of many events that take place around New York and the fashion collections are shown to buyers, to the media and press, to fashion bloggers, photographers, fashion directors, buyers and the to the general public.

The contemporary and current concept of a centralized New York Fashion Week was created in 1993 by the Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA) despite the fact London had already shaped its city’s name associated with the words “fashion week” in the 1980s. New York Fashion Week is based on a much older series of events called “Press Week,” founded in 1943.

Moving on the New Yorks economic impact is worth mentioning and moreover it will be analyzed. Nowadays, in 2017 the economic impact of New York Fashion Week is estimated at $887 million. The importance of the economic impact is underlined on the facts and the key figures for New York Fashion Week AW17 presented at the table below. The tourism attraction in New York during this period, the hotel occupancy and the accommodation income are some of key factors that influenced the economy both directly and indirectly.

As a member of Congress and the Ranking Member on the Joint Economic Committee, Congresswoman Maloney Carolyn held a press conference where she declared that “In New York City alone, fashion is a $98 billion industry. New York Fashion Week brings more than 200,000 attendees annually. Held annually each spring and fall, Fashion Week generates close to $900 million in total economic activity each year. Fashion trade shows, showrooms and fashion shows also attract more than half a million visitors annually to New York City.” (Dutton and Dutton, 2018)

Moreover, according to an analysis that was conducted by the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) visitors spend during the period of fashion shows more than $500 million directly in the economy. The huge economic impact is irrefutable and it goes further than just monetary terms, as there is a simultaneous impact on culture, commerce jobs and statute of New York City.
Table 1: Key Facts and Figures of New York Fashion Week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visitors during the Fashion Week</td>
<td>150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Income</td>
<td>540 million euros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Income</td>
<td>61.5 million euros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Income</td>
<td>497.7 million euros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venue Income</td>
<td>179.8 million euros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant Income</td>
<td>133.5 million euros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Income</td>
<td>107.8 million euros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation Income</td>
<td>119.6 million euros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Visitor Spend</td>
<td>2404 euros</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Hendriksz, 2017)

1.4.3 The London Case

London Fashion Week began in 1984. London as the global capital of creativity holds every year one of the Big 4 fashion weeks. The Fashion Week is held each year during autumn and is known as the most glamorous and prestigious event where the most captivating designers have the opportunity to present their collection and influence buyers and fashion bloggers. Along with the evolution of technology and the customer's behavior, needs and wants London's fashion event offers every year
more shopping opportunities, more live fascinating events; live streaming, fashion contests so the attendees have the ability to co create and co product. Furthermore, in 2012 London introduced the opportunity for designers to broadcast their catwalks and shows live on the internet in order to attract more people.

As London is the fifth largest metropolitan economy in the world it is vital to analyze the economic impact of London’s Fashion week. It’s estimated that approximately 105,000 visitors visit the city of London each year to attend the fashion show and the total income that is generated by London fashion week is 306, 7 million euros. Moreover, it is estimated that in 2010, 72,000 people were employed in event management so as to organize the fashion show and the events that took place around London. Therefore, there are many job opportunities for local people which include events coordinators.

As it will be presented in the table below another key aspect for London fashion week is the use and importance of social media. Social media have fundamentally changed the way people share their personal lives their professional lives and the way the experience things. A research conducted showed that there were uploaded more than 75,000 images during the fashion week at the Instagram social media platform. People tagged at their posts the London fashion week so as everyone around the world could have access at the photos and finally share them.

Table 2 : Key Facts & Figures for London Fashion Week SS17

| • Over 105,000 visitors attend London Fashion Week ( LFW) |
| • 15,000 people travel internationally to and from London on Etihad Airways |
| • Total income generated by LFW: 306,7 million Euros |
| • £28 billion direct contribution to the UK economy (GDP) from the UK fashion industry, up from £26 billion in 2013 (Oxford Economics, 2014) |
| • £27 billion worth of womens wear (RTW) sales in the UK in 2015. This figure is predicted to grow 23 percent by 2020 to £32 billion (Mintel, 2016) |
| • £1 million worth of pro-bono support provided to BFC designers by BFC partners and mentors with over 10,000 hours of support provided in 2015 |
| • £12.4 billion spent on fashion online in the UK in 2015, up 16 percent |
from £10.7 billion in 2014 (Mintel, 2015)

- 880,000 jobs supported by the UK fashion industry, up from 797,000 in 2013 (Oxford Economics, 2014)
- 128,162 mentions of #LFW on Twitter during LFW in February
- 75,000 images tagged #LFW on Instagram during LFW in February
- 2,000 miles driven between shows by chauffeurs in fuel efficient Mercedes-Benz cars
- 16,000 patches available at Brewer Street Car Park featuring designs by NEWGEN designers

(Staff and Staff, 2017)

1.4.5 The Milan Case

Picture 2: Milan Fashion Week

Milan Fashion week established in 1958 is also a part of the global “Big Four Fashion weeks”. The event is moderately organized by Camera Nazionale Della Moda Italiana which stands for the National Chamber for Italian Fashion. Italian Fashion and the
whole event of Milan Fashions week is coordinated and promoted by a non-profit association which was set up in 1958.

Investigators and owners who played and still occupy a crucial role in the creation and promotion of the fashion events were present at the Memorandum of Association. Those were Albert Fagianni, Roberto Capucci, Emilio Schuberth, Princess Caracciolo Ginetti, Giovanni Cesare Guidi, Maria Antonelli and last but not least the lawyer Pietro Parisio. Nowadays Milan’s fashion week which includes more than 40 shows during each season is characterized by transforming the city into an eventful city and a tourism hotspot by creating different and amazing venues for the shows by selecting the most stylish and influential places to become the stage for design. A remarkable example of an elegant location is the location of Palazzo Reale which was the seat of government in Milan.

Moving on to the financial impact Milan has on the city, the annual fashion showcase is said to generate approximately 12.3 million euros which in total brings in 50.5 million euros per season. Therefore, the success of the value generated can be attributed to the difference in unique visitors. Moreover it is argued, that the visitors who attended the Milan Fashion Week spend more on average than those who visit Sao Paulo Fashion and Berlin Fashion Week.

In addition, a research conducted and published by the marketing and financial department of the Camera di Commercio di Milano Monza Brianza and Lodi based on data from RES STR Global indicates that hotels profit at least 17 million euros during the Fashion week. Accordingly the average hotel occupancy has reached the 88% meaning that nine out of time hotel rooms have been sold out during the event.

Table 3: Key Number for Milan Fashion Week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unique visitors</td>
<td>22,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total income</td>
<td>50.5 million euros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Income</td>
<td>12.3 million euros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Income</td>
<td>37.7 million euros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venue Income</td>
<td>7 million euros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant Income</td>
<td>16.5 million euros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Income</td>
<td>16 million euros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation Income</td>
<td>11 million euros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average visitor spend</td>
<td>1,941 euros</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.4.6 The Paris Case

Picture 3 :Paris Fashion Week

Last but not least, The Paris fashion week held each year in Paris is a series of shows and presentations which take place at special venues through the city. It is known that the first fashion week took place in New York but the origins of the event itself derives from “salon shows” which literally means Fashion parades in Paris couture salons. The first Paris Fashion Week was established in 1945 where the Chambre Syndicale entrenched some updated rules in order to determine and regulate Haute Couture Houses. The biannual events of Haute Couture houses in accordance with the new guidelines set by the Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture have been seen as the first pair of fashion weeks in Paris.

Paris Fashion Week Nowadays, is part of the global “Big and brings in more revenue than France's automotive and aeronautic industries combined. Paris' fashion weeks, which include bi-annual women's and men's ready-to-wear and haute couture, generate 102 billion euros in revenue from visitors who stay in the city’s hotels, use its restaurants, taxis and other services and spend in its stores.

Furthermore, every year there are held over 300 catwalk shows, of which 50% are foreign brands. In terms of numbers, in direct sales French fashion is worth 150 billion, of which 33 billion euros are exported around the world. Moreover, the industry is a considerable economic hub to France, and contributes to 2.7% of the country's total GDP. As a consequence and in a wider context, fashion businesses of
French companies but also and French-owned foreign companies generate a 70 billion euros turnover from the fashion week.

1.4.7 The Athens case

The official international fashion week in Greece is labeled as Athens Xclusive Designers Week (AXDW) and takes place twice a year in the capital of Greece, Athens. For Greece is a newer concept, compared to the “big four” mentioned above as the fashion shows are taking place the last years. Athens exclusive show is estimated to attract more than 25,000.00, visitors per year, along with Greek and international Press and media, buyers, fashion professionals, bloggers, fashion followers and exclusive guests as models, actors and singers who take place at the events that are held.

AXDW celebrates fashion in its most innovative way. One of the main aims is to present a creative and an extensive program for fashion culture and shopping, giving the opportunity to its visitors not only to live the experience of the shows but also to co-create with creative interaction. Moreover the Designers week which takes place in Athens aims at sharing moments of the show but also to share the whole experience to friends and family and via social media in order to raise the tourism demand in Greece.

The great importance of fashion globally made Greece to invest in fashion and make important collaboration both between international organizations and between local authorities. Global fashion trends and the events that are taking place all over the world were some of the reasons that AXDW is celebrating fashion. Some of the positive outcomes of the collaborations that Greece managed to make have supported the local economy but also have boosted tourism. AXDW has a much greater responsibility to the Greek economy, than other fashion weeks do to their respective economies, due to the economic hardships of the Greek economy. However, a comparative advantage is the fact that Greece has always been a top tourist destination, giving it the opportunity to associate tourist to fashion.

A main reason for international tourists to visit Greece is its monumental buildings that can definitely benefit the desired connection between fashion and tourism. The sight of abandoned buildings in the center of Athens constitute a bad image for the tourists that can instantly change by subsidized projects where new designers will house their offices at those buildings, assisting in preserving them to their initial state and beauty. Tourists will then have the opportunity of visiting those buildings, while also getting accounted with the New Greek talent and its creations. Housing fashion in historical buildings was a recent trend for the “Big Four” adapted by designers like Gucci who in 2016 showed their fall/winter collection in Westminster Abbey.

Contradicting this view, the Greek culture ministry rejected a request by the same fashion house, Gucci, to hold their SS18 fashion show at the ancient Acropolis this past summer. Gucci is known to such choices, since Alessandro Michele became creative director in 2015. The notion behind this revolutionary idea is to stay connected to our history and roots, by bringing fashion to a nation’s most sacred historical places. This event would have attracted thousands of tourists and since
Alessandro proposed to film the show and promote it worldwide, millions of people would have seen the beauty of the Parthenon worldwide. According to media reports, the company was offering one million euros for the 15’ fashion show, another 55 million euros in promotional activities and permission to film and broadcast the show internationally. Archeologists argued that «The monument is emblematic and global and requires no promotion by any fashion designer to increase the number of the visitors," (stage, 2017) others, though favored the idea saying “the fashion show would promote the Acropolis worldwide” and that the country was in need of money anyway.” (stage, 2017)

1.4.8 The Gucci Plan

The purpose of presenting the Gucci plan is to underline how important was to my opinion to invest both financially but also culturally to Gucci's Proposal. Gucci’s plan, presented to Greece was to set up a catwalk in the north of the Parthenon, with the Caryatids and Erechtheion on the background. Furthermore A tent would have been created for models, make-up artists, hairstylists and assistants, near the old museum. Moreover, the plan included 300 seats for fashion editors from around the world, Hollywood stars and Greek artists, journalists and press and as for the duration of the show was estimated around 15 minutes. Furthermore as for the economic impact, a 2-million euro donation would be given for the restoration of the Acropolis. Gucci was able to spend also 30 million euros for advertisements, media and press and another 50 million euros especially for television broadcast. The Directorate for Antiquities that oversees the archaeological site of Acropolis was reluctant to the idea. Archeologists but also Greek fashion designers reacted negatively from the very first moment thus; the Greek culture ministry rejected the request.
Chapter 2: Methodology research methods

2.1 Outline

Chapter 4 is dedicated to the research methods used in this thesis, starting with the reasons why I have chosen to conduct a qualitative research, as the principal technique of examination of the thesis question. Specifically, the following three sections of this chapter include an explanation of my epistemological point of view, the methodology used and the data methods chosen (collection, procedure, and analysis). As a result, the research methods selected, aim at a more open-ended and applicable approach of the research topic.

2.1.2 Qualitative Research & Quantitative Research

The two approaches of conducting a research are known as the qualitative approach and the quantitative approach. The diving line between these two approaches exists in the level of methods used at each case, where although there might be cases of identical epistemologies and methodologies in the two approaches, the chosen techniques will diversify them. However, the use of both approaches can take place, in cases of mixed techniques, which is increasingly common. (Crotty, 1998).

In this thesis, qualitative research is chosen in order to conduct the appropriate research and examining whether two Chief executive officers and founders of two small businesses in Greece have witnessed lack of fashion events and innovation in fashion in Tourism in Greece. Moreover the research examines and underlines how important is to create and support fashion events in order to raise tourism demand and increase the level of awareness of the factors affecting tourism demand correlated to fashion and shopping.
The main reason why quantitative approach is ignored is because of the limited information obtainable, on the subject. Fashion in tourism is a rather debatable topic that, in my opinion, demands a considerable level of flexibility, when trying to acquire appropriate and far-reaching data for analysis. For that reason, I came to the conclusion that the use of questionnaires, which are often correlated with quantitative research, would not contribute in the appropriate set of data for this thesis. Following all of the above reasons, qualitative research is selected, as it brings flexibility and depth, for the purposes of this thesis.

2.1.3 Data Collection Methods - Unstructured Interviews

As it has been noted before, a qualitative research was selected in this thesis, right because a mixed method approach would potentially limit the research in an unproductive way. In an imaginary scenario, where a quantitative type of survey, like a questionnaire, was given to the participants, it might have biased their answers during the interviews. Biased answers could have hampered my research and thus, to avoid this unfortunate turn, I only used qualitative methods (unstructured interviews).

I think that a personalized approach to interviews would bring the most effective and appropriate results in my research. While (1994, p. 329) lists four benefits of this type of interviews, said by some of his scholars: Austin (1981) talks about the advantage of prevailing over the poor response rates of questionnaires, Richardson et al (1965) talk about how convenient it is when it comes to the study of attitudes, values, beliefs and motives and Bailey (1987) says that it fosters comparability, since it is guaranteed that all questions are answered by each and every participant and that it makes sure that the participants will neither be assisted nor influenced by others, when conveying their responses. These four benefits present just another explanation of my choice to use a qualitative based epistemology and methodology, as the most effective framework for my research question. Furthermore, they prove why the use of questionnaires would be insignificant in this thesis, while emphasizing on the fact that interviews will bring flexibility and depth in the research process. Austin (1981) and Bailey (1987) make it clear that the participants will answer all questions in an unbiased way and using only their own opinions on the matter and that the small size of participants will avoid any response limitations. Richardson et al (1965) and Bailey (1987) throw light on interviews’ potential to have a great depth and understanding of the participants’ interpretations.

Qualitative research and, specifically, unstructured interviews focus on the interviewee’s approach on the subject. Unstructured interviews give the interviewees who are the owners and managers of online shops in Greece the opportunity to talk about how the corporation that they work deal with fashion in tourism and fashion
events. The first interview was with Papadopoulou Chrisanthis founder and owner of Forebelle company which is a Greek online fashion and beauty store, primarily aimed at young adults. The company was founded in 2013 offering womenswear, footwear, accessories and beauty products around Greece and Cyprus. Forebelle’s Headquarters are in Thessaloniki which is the second major economic, commercial, industrial center. The city is considered to be Greece’s cultural capital where events, festivals are taking place. The owner of the company did not hesitate to share information about the corporation as a whole, the way it sees itself and what has actually been successful for the company. The manager was able to promote the organization’s values and talk about the difficulties the company is exposed to, about the lack of fashion events in Greece and last but not least the importance of fashion not only for the cultural growth and development of Greece but also the tourism economic impact, in others word how could fashion and visitors exports contribute direct to the Gross Domestic Product in Greece. Based on the owner’s answers to the first questions, I decided to lead the interview on to the final and currently most controversial question about the specific corporation’s future.

The second interview was purposely taken from Kaloutsikou Yiota, the Sales Manager & Creative Director of the Artepedi Company, a purely Greek women’s shoes company based in Thessaloniki. Arte Piedi P.C has been active in the manufacturing, wholesale and retailing of women's shoes for over 70 years. The company launched its own e-shop in 2013 in order to grow the company’s revenues by following the latest trends allowing consumers to directly buy their favorite shoes via internet around Greece and Cyprus. The products with the Arte Piedi signature appeal to the modern woman who does not follow fashion trends but creates them! The interview questions were designed such that they would provide the maximum data possible. I wanted to give the interviewees the impression of having a conversation, so that they would give me longer answers, than following a structured interview guide.

2.1.4 Data Analysis

The ultimate objective of using grounded theory in this thesis has been to develop a substantive theory. This can only been done by constantly analyzing data, so that the outcome is as efficient as possible. The process that I chose to follow, in terms of data analysis, was to actually execute the analysis, while the data was being collected, during the interviews. In this way, I thought that theoretical sampling and data saturation will be achieved.

Additionally, it contributed into having a more clear and coherent focus on designing the most appropriate questioning that would, eventually, lead into the theory that would answer the research question. 17 Charmaz (2000) suggests that, in order to be in accordance with grounded theory principles, there needs to be a constant comparison of the data, throughout data collection. This is the proposed way to
process the data, code it and categorize it, while reaching the development of a theory. I attempted to do this by comparing the answers I was given, comparing the different participants and their views, comparing the data with categories and then, comparing this categories with each other. One of the initial and most significant steps of the actual data analysis took place when I transcribed the two interviews, because it was a great opportunity to get an even closer and more detailed insight of the data I had collected, while, at the same time, it was a stepping stone for the interpretation of this data. The transliteration of these interviews proved to be a very useful process in coding the data later on and finally, evolve into the substantive theory. Secondary data resources were reviewed right before the interviews, so that I would gain a clear image of the importance of fashion events as a tourism motivator. This was another significant step towards coding the data in an efficient way for the developing of the substantive theory.

Chapter 3: Finding Data Analysis

3.1 Interview with the founder and owner of “Forebelle” Company

“What is your opinion about fashion events all over the world as an owner of an online fashion destination e-shop “?

When it comes to fashion world the first thing that comes to my mind is fashion shows and runaways. Fashion shows are the epitome of creativity, inspiration, style and culture aspects which are obligatory for the development and growth of cities. All those mixed styles and the philosophy and history that are presented in the fashion events underline how important is to meet, consume and share different cultures, ideas and innovations which are experienced through the events. Fashion events, should take place all over the world not only to inform people about the latest fashion trends but also to bring different people and cultures together in the limits of a cultural celebration.

“Could you please underline an aspect of fashion events which has an educational attainment“?

Fashion events are not only about style and the latest trends but they have to do also with educational attainment and knowledge. Moreover, self-expression is a basic aspect of fashion shows and allows designers to be vocal about several issues. Whether it is Political, social or religious it allows consumers to be connected not only with the clothes but also with the designers themselves and by people who experience the event. Concluding, people who experience fashion events shows come from different cultures have different political and social beliefs but they have a common target which is to experience the fashion world.
“Since tourism is the main growing and healthy industry in Greece, would you agree that there should be a direct support in creating more fashion events in order to boost fashion in Tourism”? 

As an owner of an online fashion destination I would definitely support the idea of creating and supporting fashion events and fashion shows in Greece. The growth of events is known, and the use of fashion events is considered to be one type of strategic marketing tool used to boost tourism in several cities. Especially my country, Greece, provides all the infrastructures so that fashion events could be conducted. I do believe that Greece could host and deal with great levels of tourism demand.

3.2 Interview with the Sales Manager & Creative Director of “Artepiedi” Company

“Do you agree with the idea that the importance of fashion events is underestimated in its effect in the growth of tourism”? 

It lays beyond the shadow of the doubt that fashion events are not yet directly correlated with the growth of tourism and the economic growth of a city. On the contrary the majority of people believe that fashion shows and events are associated with the latest trends in women’s wear. Nevertheless, I totally believe that fashion shows and events are a motivator for visitors to experience destinations, to consume, to visit attractions during the period of the shows and indirectly influence tourists that will visit each city in the future in light of the fashion events.

“Recently fashion shows are held in historical places, would you visit those places just because a designer had their runway show there, and are you attracted by fashion cities and fashion events when deciding the location of your next trip”? 

It is true that as a Creative Director I am fond of travelling into historical places where there is a touch of romance, elegance and purity. I love being a part of fashion shows and I keep up with all the fashion trends so I would definitely visit a place where a runway took place the year before. As for when deciding the location of my next trip I take into consideration both the season and the location matching with fashion events. In my opinion and because of my profession I love to keep up with the creative part of events so as I can imitate parts of the fashion trends towards my business.

“How do you see the future of fashion in tourism in benefiting your business”? 

As a sales manager I can predict a rapid growth in the fashion in tourism and in the future of events. The rapid growth of technology as well as the growth of the role and
use of social media in events is one of the key reasons why fashion events will grow and spread all over the world. As a marketing tool companies and organizations have staged spontaneous events in public places but also in several historic buildings that are worth of visit. The promotion of events and the share of pictures, information and real-time information results in the growth of businesses and also boosts each city’s reputation by bringing more visitors to experience the events. Furthermore the volume of people employed to conduct the events will grow, visitors will spend money directly in accommodation, restaurants and of course shopping, thus my business company will be benefited. In conclusion people who follow fashion for their entertainment will have the opportunity to experience more shows and fashion events and the one who did not follow any fashion trends will have the opportunity to meet and experience fashion.

Chapter 4: Interpretation of findings Discussion

The main question of the thesis to examine whether the importance of fashion events is underestimated in its effect in the growth of tourism in New York, London, Milan, Paris and finally in Greece. The answer to this question will be established from the development of a substantive theory. The thorough analysis of the data supplied from the process of interviewing two owners and managers of small fashion businesses in Greece and secondary data resources, together with my own narrative at play, resulted in the establishment of the substantive theory required. The coding of the data was the initial step towards my understanding and interpretation of the way the two participants view and deal with the lack of events in Greece but also the importance of the role of fashion events in the growth of culture, economy and tourism. On top of that, this process revealed to me how the two managers see the future of fashion in tourism in their corporation. The outcome of this process lead to the critical analysis of the answers to the interview questions was the key to the answer of the thesis question.

The secondary data resources I used (Tourism Principles and Practice) outlined and described Fashion in Tourism as one of the main sources of a competitive advantage and it is essential for the development of a city that wants to follow the latest marketing and environmental trends and implement a successful innovation in order to boost tourism. The technological and sociocultural landscape appears to create a stable growth of fashion in tourism nowadays in order to be introduced in every city around the world and attract more visitors and followers. Furthermore, customers’ needs and expectations have changed radically during the last years. Customers / visitors are being affected from environmental trends and they follow the latest trends.
The two managers that took part in the interviews proved that Fashion in Tourism and the use of events as a marketing tool to attract visitors has become one of the key players in the tourism industry. The similarities of the two managers’ perspectives about the fashion events as a tourism motivator were evident in the answers they gave. The owner and founder of Forebelle Company talked about the educational attainment of fashion events that is vital in order to experience the fashion world. People from different cultures and with different perspectives can share those experiences. Moreover the interviews showed that both managers agree that fashion events are and must be correlated with the growth of economy and tourism. The manager of Artepiedi Company underlines that cities are using fashion events and runaways to enhance their image, to attract new visitors to create a long lasting relationship with them and to promote urban development. Moreover, both managers when they were asked about their opinion that fashion events can lengthen tourist season they confirmed that the fashion events can take place not only the hot seasons that people travel (summer, Easter and Christmas) but also in months like February and May in order to lengthen the tourist season and boost the economy of each city.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

Having conducted a research on the fashion in Tourism topic, and how the cities are impacted positively from the fashion events that are taking place, having analyzed theories and literature reviews, having conducted interviews which were analyzed and also findings have surfaced from the analysis, it is imperative and very important that recommendations should be given. The recommendations will focus on how the positive impacts of events and fashion tourism can be increased and will also underline the importance of tourism as an economic sector all over the world.

In order to increase fashion in tourism there should be given more opportunities for events, festivals and shows conducted by companies and investors in order to bring more visitors, to raise the awareness of fashion and to include fashion into everyone’s daily routine. Moreover, there should be greater invest in fashion businesses and also the city council should invest in the development of the tourism
sector. Therefore, by hosting bigger events, more tourists both locals and international will be attracted to the cities and the positive impacts will be great in all ramifications.

Concluding, within the growth of the tourism industry, which currently represents the fourth largest industry in the world in terms of export, events have managed to attract visitors by creating destination profiles and providing competitive advantages for destinations. The advantages of the fashion events that take place all over the world are not constrained within the time-limits of the occurrence of the events, but are still visible in the long run.

The creation of fashion events and fashion in tourism repositions the destinations and establishes the cities as a place where the boundaries of cultural creativity are being continually pushed. The cities that have created and support fashion weeks have repositioned themselves in a national and international level and they have managed to attract more visitors than ever, as the destinations became a better place to live and visit. Community enthusiasm, creativity and active participation are multiplied. The levels of visitors were doubled in the cities that were mentioned in the dissertation and have created a potential of long term growth, prosperity and sustainability. In this stage, I do believe that my research question was analyzed in the most efficient and effective way, fashion events play a figurative role to the economy, have managed to become one of the latest tourism trends, they are correlated with high levels of culture and they are a great motivator to travel and experience culture and economy.

Research Limitations

Although the research has reached its aims, there were some unavoidable limitations that are going to be presented. The most important point is the lack of previous studies in fashion in tourism area. Fashion in tourism is a new field of study thus I chose to make a presentation of fashion in tourism as a niche market, to present the definition of fashion events and present and analyze the big four fashion weeks. Secondly, because of the time limit the research and the interview were conducted only on two owners and managers of small fashion businesses in Greece. Therefore to generalize the results for larger groups the study should have involved more participants at different levels.

Initially while conducting the research I faced challenges in terms of ensuring the progress of the process according to the set timetable. These challenges mainly arose at literature review stage of the research. Namely, initially I had underestimated the duration of time required for literature review and was constantly behind the schedule in terms of the number of literature reviewed. This problem has been dealt with through re-adjusting the time-plan for the study, as well as, increasing the level of personal discipline when it comes to following set plan.

Furthermore, one of the major concerns for the successful completion of this study is my performance and ability to execute the research of my dissertation topic due to employment commitments. I have now completed my second year as an employee in
an online shopping company, thus my work hours and responsibilities have increased radically (working even at the weekends) making it impossible for me to devote the adequate time to the writing of my dissertation.

Concluding, the dissertation process helped me to improve my secondary and primary data research skills but also helped me improve other everyday skills such as time management. It is beyond any doubts that I do believe that in the future the whole process of the dissertation will bring out the best of me as an individual, as a researcher and as a business manager. Last but not least, in a highly competitive labor market it is extremely difficult to survive without efficient, strong and effective leadership skills. By all means, it can be said that being devoted in the study made me think about new ideas and learn more about fashion and tourism.
Appendices

Appendix 1: Learning Statement

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<th>Approach to the research:</th>
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<td>The interviews were recorder with specific recorders and all the participants had previously agreed to the process via e-mail. Additionally the Harvard method of referencing was used when necessary in order to quote properly and avoid plagiarism. The questions of both the survey and interview were reviewed by the supervisor allocated in order to ensure their ethicality. Finally after having the ethical</td>
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approval from the research ethics coordinator my confidence was boosted that the approach I am following is on an ethical path.

Views and feelings towards the Dissertation :

Beyond any doubt it is a personal and empirical process that fills you with emotions and knowledge through its various stages. There were definitely moments through the research that you feel you can keep up with the amount of data collected, especially if you have not gone through a dissertation before, as me. It is not a simple assignment that you just have to prepare, it needs devotion and definitely it requires that you like your chosen topic since you spend many of your dates and nights analyzing and deeply learning about it. Though after the completion of each chapter the emotions change direction and you feel proud of yourself and your research. Continuously by the end of it you feel like you hold a strong asset in your hands that will help you not only professionally but personally as well.

Appendix 2: Survey (Interviews)

Title: Is the importance of fashion events underestimated in its effect in the growth of tourism in New York, London, Milan, Paris and finally Athens?

Total Participants: 2

Papadopoulou Chrisanthi, Kaloutsikou Yiota

The interview questions were the same for the two participants but I decided to divide and present the questions into half so as to focus more into the most important questions.

Interview Questions:

-What is your opinion about fashion events all over the world as an owner of an online fashion destination e-shop?
- Do you agree with the idea that the importance of fashion events is underestimated in its effect in the growth of tourism?

- Could you please underline an aspect of fashion events which has an educational attainment?

- Would you go after the trends shown at the fashion weeks? (ex. Gucci bags)

- Are you attracted by fashion cities and fashion events when deciding the location of their next trip?

- Recently fashion shows are help in historical places, would you visit those places just because a designer had their runway show there?

- How do you see the future of fashion in tourism in benefiting your business?

- Since tourism is the main growing and healthy industry in Greece, would you agree that there should be a direct support in creating more fashion events in order to boost fashion in Tourism?
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