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**Andriotis, K., (2010). Brits Behaving Badly - Template Analysis of Newspaper Content. *International Journal of Tourism Anthropology*, 1(1): 15-34.**

#### **Abstract**

This study explores the ways in which public debates about the sexual, drinking and risk taking behaviour of young British travellers, who participate in trips organized to Greek summer resorts exclusively by Club 18-30, have been interpreted, and framed, within print media (British newspapers). Using a template analysis approach four themes emerged, namely binge drinking, sexual behaviour, risk taking and host reactions. These themes are discussed in relation to the methodology adopted, and the findings of previous research, and policies for risk-taking decrease, and solutions to reduce the problems posed by young tourists' antisocial behaviour in summer Greek resorts, are provided.

**Keywords:** youth travel, antisocial behaviour, binge drinking, casual sex, risk taking, template analysis.

#### **Introduction**

During the last two decades an increasing number of young tourists have travelled to international beach-oriented resorts to escape the boredom of routine life and to experience the nightlife. These young tourists often consider holidays as an opportunity to indulge in binge drinking, drug abuse, sexual promiscuity and other risk taking activities that depart from the established behaviours and routines of everyday life (Carr, 2002a; Ryan and Robertson, 1997). Given their gregarious social behaviour, young tourists are recognized as being a highly differentiated market segment (Ford and Eiser, 1996). This behaviour has led Shields (1990) to introduce the concept of liminality that refers to the temporary loss of social bearings of holidaymakers that often results in risks which contrast with the norms and values that shape behaviour in their home environment (Carr, 2002b; Ryan and Robertson, 1997; Ryan et al. 1996).

Following the increased mobility of young tourists, numerous studies have been conducted. Despite the increasing research on young tourists' behaviour in beach-oriented party resorts, there is a relative paucity of research centred on the following key areas (Table 1). First, the majority of research has been focused either on non-European youth, mainly from the USA, Australia and Canada, or young Britons visiting the Balearic Islands, and more specifically Ibiza. Second, despite the fact that young tourists are a diverse market segment, past research with limited exceptions (e.g. Bellis et al., 2003; Ford and Eiser, 1996), has been focused on the lower end of the age spectrum, mainly spring breakers (college-aged students) in the USA and Canada or the so-called schoolies (high school-aged students) in Australia. Thus, the age range of the sample of most previous study clusters between 16 and 23 and the young working adult has attracted limited research interest. Third, the wealth of past studies on young tourists has used very narrow methodological frameworks, fixed in traditional scientific paradigms. In particular, it is dominated by a repetition of quantitative methodologies in different places and times. Whilst these approaches provide excellent data on personal characteristics, past experiences and behavioural

characteristics of young tourists, they ignore the usefulness of print media as a data collection method.

**Table 1: Key characteristics of studies on young travel behaviour**

|                                       | <b>Studies</b>  | <b>N</b> |
|---------------------------------------|---|----------|
| <b>Nationality</b>                    |   |          |
| <b>Americans</b>                      | Apostolopoulos, Sonmez and Mattila (2000); Apostolopoulos, Sonmez and Yu (2002); Apostolopoulos et al. (1999); Butts et al. (1997); Cronin (1996); Hobson and Josiam (1993); (1996); Josiam et al. (1998); Mattila et al. (2007); Smeaton, Josiam and Dietrich (1998); Sonmez et al. (2006)   | 10       |
| <b>Australian</b>                     | Bogaards, Midford and Farringdon (2000); Maticka-Tyndale, Herold and Oppermann (2003); Mulhall et al. (1993); Peel and Steen (2007); Smith and Rosenthal (1997); Zinkiewicz, Davey and Curd (1999)  | 6        |
| <b>Canadian</b>                       | D'Anjou (2004); Herold, Maticka-Tyndale and Mewhinney (1998); Maticka-Tyndale and Herold (1997); (1999); Maticka-Tyndale, Herold and Mewhinney, (1998); Mewhinney, Herold and Maticka-Tyndale (1995)  | 6        |
| <b>British</b>                        | Bellis et al. (2000); (2003); Bellis et al. (2004); Bloor et al. (1998); Carr (2002b); Elliott et al. (1998)  | 6        |
| <b>New Zealand</b>                    | Bell (2002); Ryan and Robertson (1997); Ryan et al. (1996)  | 3        |
| <b>Other/Cross-cultural/Undefined</b> | Carr (2002a); Eiser and Ford (1995); Ford and Eiser (1996); Hesse et al. (2008); Ryan and Zhang (2008)  | 5        |
| <b>Capacity</b>                       |   |          |
| <b>Spring breakers</b>                | Apostolopoulos, Sonmez and Mattila (2000); Apostolopoulos, Sonmez and Yu (2002); Apostolopoulos et al. (1999); Butts et al. (1997); Cronin (1996); Hobson and Josiam (1993); (1996); Josiam et al. (1998); Maticka-Tyndale and Herold (1997); (1999); Maticka-Tyndale, Herold and Mewhinney (1998); Mattila et al. (2007); Mewhinney, Herold and Maticka-Tyndale (1995); Smeaton, Josiam and Dietrich (1998); Sonmez et al. (2006)  | 15       |
| <b>Schoolies</b>                      | Bogaards, Midford and Farringdon (2000); Maticka-Tyndale, Herold and Oppermann (2003); Smith and Rosenthal (1997); Zinkiewicz, Davey and Curd (1999)  | 4        |
| <b>Students Other</b>                 | Herold, Maticka-Tyndale and Mewhinney (1998); Ryan and Zhang (2008); Ryan and Robertson (1997); Ryan et al. (1996)  | 4        |
| <b>Other/Undefined</b>                | Bellis et al. (2000); (2003); (2004); Bloor et al. (1998); Carr (2002b); Eiser and Ford (1995); Ford and Eiser (1996)   | 7        |
| <b>Methodological approach</b>        |   |          |
| <b>Quantitative</b>                   | Apostolopoulos, Sonmez and Yu (2002); Butts et al. (1997); Bellis et al. (2000); (2003); (2004); Bloor et al. (1998); Cronin (1996); Eiser and Ford (1995); Herold, Maticka-Tyndale and Mewhinney (1998); Hesse et al. (2008); Josiam et al. (1998); Maticka-Tyndale and Herold (1999); Maticka-Tyndale, Herold and Mewhinney (1998); Maticka-Tyndale, Herold and Oppermann, (2003); Ryan and Robertson (1997); Ryan et al. (1996); Smeaton, Josaim and Dietrich (1998); Sonmez et al. (2006) | 18       |
| <b>Qualitative</b>                    | Bogaards, Midford and Farringdon (2000); Carr (2002b); Hobson and Josiam (1993); Ryan and Zhang (2008)  | 4        |
| <b>Both</b>                           | Elliott et al. (1998); Hobson and Josiam (1996); Mewhinney, Herold and Maticka-Tyndale (1995)   | 3        |

Due to the power of print media to shape widely shared construction of reality and their capacity to reflect the social mainstream (Mautner, 2008), newspapers have attracted the interest of social scientists studying beliefs, attitudes and human relations (Woodrum, 1984). Thus, despite the highly temporary nature of newspapers (Reah, 1998), editorial comments, letters by the public, articles by experts and affiliated or unaffiliated journalists that may or may not reflect the editorial agenda, make newspapers an important source of printed discourse.

In the field of tourism, newspapers, as a source of sociological data, have been underutilised, and qualitative content analysis of newspaper content that heavily relies on the researcher's reading of the discourse, has been broadly neglected (Hall and Valentin, 2005, p.192). Exemption includes the growing proportion of studies on image assessment falling within the quantitative paradigm, as the 142 studies reviewed by Pike (2002). Among the few studies having utilized content analytical techniques to discern meaning from the wealth of textual material in topics other than image, Nickerson (1995) reviewed three newspapers and one journal between 1987 and 1991 to investigate representations of gambling in Deadwood, South Dakota (USA); Kousis (2000) studied local environmental activism related to tourism, published in newspapers and magazines of three Southern European societies (Greece, Portugal, and Spain) from the end of their dictatorial periods through 1994; Hall and Valentin (2005) reviewed articles containing the words 'travel, tourism and terrorism' published in the Otago Daily Times between 2001 and 2002 to examine the impacts of 11 September terrorist attacks in the USA; and Peel and Steen (2007) examined the way that Australian newspapers framed international backpackers from 1990 to 2005. Despite the valuable findings of these studies for revealing the ways that newspapers represent various themes of scientific interest, a close look of the methodological frameworks adopted by these studies, shows that the majority are restricted to a narrow time span (less than a five year period), and are based on manifest content which examines the surface structure and the readily measurable components in the text (Graneheim and Lundman, 2004).

The current study aims to overcome the omissions of past research by examining the behaviour of young Britons who participate on trips organized exclusively by one of the UK's largest youth tour operators, 'Club 18-30'. Only British media were selected as a source of information for the reason that Britain with an estimate 6.3 million 16-24 year old youth tourists having made an overseas visit in 2007 (Mintel, 2008), is the main European market for party and club tourism (Horner and Swarbrooke, 2004). The rationale for selecting Club 18-30 as case is centred on three main reasons. First, the limited research on the behaviour of Club 18-30 tourists (Clarke 1992; Pritchard and Morgan 1996), has been focused on the marketing and promotional strategies of the company. Second, in contrast to past studies on young tourists' behaviour, Club 18-30's clientele covers a broad age spectrum, mainly young adults between the ages of 18 to 30, although despite the company's name, bookings are accepted from people as young as 16 years old. Third, Club 18-30 destinations have been advertised for their perpetual party atmosphere complete with easy availability of alcohol and sex. Thus, Club 18-30 is synonymous with drinking competitions, all night parties and casual sex (Pritchard and Morgan, 1996, p.74), perceived by the population of receiving destinations as a threat to their lifestyles, and even to their own community.

As a first step toward filling the gaps in the current literature, it is the purpose of this study to explore the ways in which public debates about the sexual, drinking and risk taking behaviour of Club 18-30 tourists, have been interpreted and framed,

within print media (national, provincial and local British newspapers). Greece is an appropriate setting for research due to the extensive media coverage it has attracted over the last years and the fact that it has the most summer resorts among the ones included in the 2009 Club 18-30 brochure (5 out of 13). By understanding Club 18-30 travel behaviour through the review of print media, it is expected to propose policies for risk-taking decrease and solutions to the problems posed by young tourists' antisocial behaviour in summer resorts.

### **Liminality and the British youth culture**

Beach resorts are considered as harmonious environments, where vacationers can fulfil the hedonistic goal of obtaining pleasure by living free from the stress of urban life. In the case of beach resorts visited by young tourists, they often provide conducive settings for personal and social codes to be temporarily suspended and behavioural constraints to be removed (Clift and Carter, 2000; Sonmez et al., 2006, p.896). This temporary escape led Turner (1974) to introduce the concept of liminality as "any condition outside or on the peripheries of everyday life" (p.47). As a function of an 'escape valve effect' from the boredom or monotony of routine stresses and rigidities of the weekly workday world (Yarnal and Kerstetter, 2005), tourists visiting party resorts traverse the limen and enter into a liminoidal state by temporarily creating their own rules within which to operate" (Currie, 1997, p.894). Thus, beach resorts can be likened to liminal zones providing the opportunity to holidaymakers of acting differently from the norms and values that shape behaviour in their home environment (Carr, 2002b; Ryan et al., 1996). The liminal state of young holidaymakers results in liminal behaviours expressed in the form of dressing, eating, drinking, sleeping, entertaining and socializing, and in engaging in a variety of risk-taking activities. (Table 2 presents key themes on young tourists' behaviour identified in past research.)

**Table 2: Key themes of past studies on young tourists' behaviour**

|                            | <b>Studies</b>  |
|----------------------------|---|
| <b>Sexual Behaviour</b>    | Apostolopoulos, Sonmez and Yu (2002); Apostolopoulos, Sonmez and Mattila (2000); Bellis et al. (2000); (2004); Bloor et al. (1998); Eiser and Ford (1995); Elliott et al. (1998); Ford and Eiser (1996); Herold, Maticka-Tyndale and Mewhinney (1998); Josiam et al. (1998); Maticka-Tyndale, Herold and Mewhinney, (1998); Maticka-Tyndale and Herold (1999); Maticka-Tyndale, Herold and Oppermann, (2003); Mewhinney, Herold and Maticka-Tyndale (1995); Mulhall et al. (1993); Smith and Rosenthal (1997); Sonmez et al. (2006) |
| <b>Drug use</b>            | Apostolopoulos, Sonmez and Mattila (2000); Bellis et al. (2000); (2003); Elliott et al. (1998); Josiam et al. (1998); Smith and Rosenthal (1997); Zinkiewicz, Davey and Curd (1999)   |
| <b>Alcohol consumption</b> | Bellis et al. (2003); Cronin (1996); Elliott et al. (1998); Hesse et al. (2008); Josiam et al. (1998); Smeaton, Josiam and Dietrich (1998); Smith and Rosenthal (1997); Sonmez et al. (2006); Zinkiewicz, Davey and Curd (1999)   |
| <b>Risk-taking</b>         | Apostolopoulos, Sonmez and Yu (2002); Bloor et al. (1998); Eiser and Ford (1995); Ford and Eiser (1996); Herold and Maticka-Tyndale (1995); Sonmez et al. (2006); Zinkiewicz, Davey and Curd (1999); Ryan and Robertson (1997); Ryan et al. (1996)  |

Alcohol consumption is a deep-rooted variable of social life for young people and essential element of party tourism. Many young people traveling to liminoid environments often present signs or symptoms of drunkenness. For instance, Smith and Rosenthal (1997), in their study of Australian schoolies, found that both men (75.2%) and women (59.9%) reported getting drunk most or every day or night of the schoolies' week vacation. Likewise, Hesse et al. (2008) found that young tourists to party resorts consume more drugs than other young people, and Josiam et al. (1998) that many American youngsters are offered the opportunity to use new drugs during spring break. However, drinking and drug abuse have been identified as key accelerators of lawlessness and violence, e.g. blackouts, accidents, rapes, personal injuries, and even sudden deaths (Bellis et al., 2000; Hesse et al., 2008). Young people when intoxicated tend to be more open to socio-sexual contact with new partners, placing themselves at a higher risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases (Josiam et al., 1998, p.504). For instance, Smith and Rosenthal (1997) found that two thirds of male and one third of female Australian schoolies expected to engage in sexual intercourse during their schoolies week vacation and of those who finally had sexual intercourse with casual partners, almost 40% did not use condoms.

In fact, 'party package agencies' encourage lewd behaviours and train their guides in creating a permissive atmosphere with a clear focus on sex and drunkenness (Hesse et al., 2008). In the case of young Danes visiting resorts known for their party atmosphere, Hesse et al. (2008) report that package travel agents "cooperate with local bars and discotheques in arranging party activities, and the venues earn considerable amounts of money on the oftentimes hundreds of big spending Danes that the party package agencies bring along" (p.354). However, activities of young tourists, such as physical displays of affection and even making love in public, binge drinking, drug abuse, stripping and causing fights with other tourists and locals, often result in direct conflict with resident amenity as well as resistance, enmity and aggression of local residents towards incoming tourists. Among the limited references of community reactions to party tourism, Josiam et al. (1998) assert that the relationship of spring breakers with communities visited has been strained and several popular American destinations have actively discouraged visitation of spring breakers.

The behaviour of young Britons in party resorts has many similarities with young travelers of other western cultures. For instance, the findings of Hesse et al. (2008) on Danish party tourists present many similarities with studies undertaken by Bellis et al. (2000); (2003); (2004); and Elliott et al. (1998) for British young tourists to Ibiza. Indeed, as McCallum (2009) argues modern western youth have a strong and unbending urge for excess and wildness. Nevertheless, pleasure-seeking young Britons do not consume high quantities of drinks and drugs only when on holidays, but also when they visit pubs and clubs in the UK as part of their ordinary leisure activities. In particular, Hammersley et al. (1999) report that the dance scene of UK has been associated with high levels of drug use. However, some authors, e.g. Bellis et al. (2000) and Elliott et al. (1998), found that the frequency of drug use can be significantly higher when young Britons visit party resorts. In addition, a more recent study by Bellis et al. (2008, p.1717) found that many Britons when on holiday are recruited into using substances they have not used at home.

Binge drinking and recreational drug consumption are often associated with an increased risk of unprotected sex, as found by Bellis et al. (2004) in the case of young Britons. However, Elliott et al. (1998, p.326-327) disagree and support that young British sexual risk behaviour does not increase when on Balearic islands. Other

studies undertaken in Ibiza, e.g. Bellis et al. (2004); (2008), found that although many young holidaymakers visit the island without a sexual partner, nearly half of them have sex, a quarter of which with more than one partner. In practice, the frequency of Britons having sexual intercourse abroad is not always higher than while at home. As Bloor et al. (1998) found those tourists who reported a new sexual relationship abroad were also likely to report large numbers of sexual partners at home. Finally, Elliot et al. (1998, p.326-337) found that although none of their respondents experienced a serious accident and only a small number reported having an accident which required medical attention while in European holiday resorts, accidents are a particular problem among young British tourists. The same applies with those pub goers in UK, since violent acts are a fact outside British pubs and clubs, and every year almost 5,000 people are being attacked with pint glasses (Deehan, 1999).

### **Club 18-30**

Club 18-30, owned today by Thomas Cook, was set up in 1970 by the Horizon Group to offer package holidays to beach-oriented resorts targeted at young singles and couples. Resorts included in the Club 18-30 brochures are settings where 'anything goes', and have become known as places tolerant of party tourism and large number of sexual encounters, alcohol and drug abuse as well as risky behaviour (Pritchard and Morgan, 1996). This culture of drinking has been blatantly encouraged by Club 18-30's notorious advertising campaigns which have provoked larger number of complaints and have been accused by the media of being 'obscene', 'offensive', 'controversial', 'salacious', and 'irresponsible in encouraging promiscuity'. Examples of Club 18-30 advertising include: a poster showing a close-up of a young man wearing underpants with the slogan 'Girls, can we interest you in a package holiday?'; a brochure showing a woman groping three naked men on the beach, and a Club 18-30 website opening with a picture of three naked men and one woman on a beach with pop-up advertisements for Vodka Kicks. The socially disruptive behaviour of young Britons abroad have also been featured in controversial 'soft porn-style' TV series, such as 'Greece Uncovered' and 'Club Reps', which according to an article in 'The Independent on Sunday' have encouraged "thousands of pale-faced young hopefuls (to flock to Club 18-30 resorts) with the sole intention of living out the vomit, Viagra and tequila squeezer storylines they saw on television" (Godson, 2003, p.21). Past advertising initiatives by the company and the way that print media have represented Club 18-30 members and resorts have influenced the growth of the Club and the antisocial activity of its members.

### **Study methods**

The first stage of the current research was to identify print media (newspapers) covering themes related to Club 18-30 members' behaviour and impact. In doing so, online news archival systems from Britain were used to scan UK newspapers published between January 1995 and September 2008, a period of strong growth in Club 18-30 numbers. In more detail, the Nexis UK database which contains full text articles from 344 British newspapers was searched. An initial search using the words 'Club 18-30' resulted in 2,508 articles. However, the study aimed at recovering and assessing only those articles which had 'Club 18-30' as a central theme. In order to eliminate irrelevant articles where references to 'Club 18-30' were merely cursory, and to reach a manageable sample size, only those articles where the words 'Club 18-30' appeared at least three times were chosen for inclusion. This search criterion resulted in a total of 315 articles in 42 newspapers. Following this, the author

screened further the articles for duplicates, reprinted articles and advertising. This process yielded a working dataset with 186 valid articles.

The second stage of the study was to identify the Club 18-30 destinations that had received extensive press coverage. From the 186 articles the majority (116 or 69%), were about Greek resorts, among which 61 or 52.6% about the holiday resort of Faliraki, Rhodes, 26 or 14% about Kavos, Corfu, and 14 or 8.3% about Malia, Crete. From those articles not referring to a Greek resort, 25 or 13.1% had as central theme the island of Ibiza. Following the finding that Greek summer resorts have received the most media coverage in conjunction with the wealth of past research on sexual behaviour and substance use behaviour amongst young tourists to Ibiza, the decision was taken to use Greek Club 18-30 settings as sample units. The final stage was to analyse the data. Content analysis was used to classify textual material and to reduce it to more manageable bits of data (Weber, 1990). In doing so, quantitative approaches were found to be inadequate, mainly because the emphasis of this study was not to obtain data that can be counted and analysed statistically, but to fulfil the goals of the quest for meaning. Thus, a qualitative method of analysis and more specifically the convention of template analysis, (see King 1998; 2009 for a detailed explanation), was used to understand the way that print media represented Club 18-30.

The process followed in analysing the data is presented below. First, to accelerate the initial coding phase of analysis 'a priori themes' were defined based on the key issues deduced from the literature review (see Table 2). One external adviser specialized on the research topic and experienced in qualitative research was asked to judge the priori themes in the light of the stated aims of the research project. Second, in order to add reliability to the coding process and to minimise the risk of researcher bias, a sub-set of ten articles was selected which was independently coded by two coders, the author and the external advisor. Comparisons were made to find themes captured by both coders and to reach a consensus on data coding. Following this an initial template was developed. By employing this process, some of the priori themes stayed intact, while others were modified or rejected. In more detail, a new theme, labelled 'community reaction', which was subdivided into several subthemes, was added; 'adulterated alcohol' was added as a subcategory to the theme 'binge drinking'; and, unexpectedly, the theme 'drug use' was removed for the reason that through reading of articles it was found that issues related to drugs were only cursory reported in a limited number of cases. To verify that the final description was consistent with and expressed the original text the author read and reread all newspaper articles and the final template was developed. This final template served as the basis for interpretation of the results and comparisons of the findings with the literature. To validate the themes, reference and reflections to the original articles were made to find quotations of which the most illustrative and eloquent that speak directly to the phenomenon under study are provided in the text.

Despite the usefulness of print media as sociological data collection method, it faces serious drawbacks. The disapproving and moralising tone having been frequently used by the print media under review can give the impression that print media tend to emphasise Club 18-30 members' behaviour as antisocial and risky. Newspapers do not only report journalists' views that may interpolate opinions and interpretations, but also frequently include facts by third parties, in this case readers, holidaymakers, reps and community members of the resorts visited by Club 18-30 holidaymakers. However, Bell (1991) and Reah (2002) believe that newspapers present facts in a way to arouse the interest and curiosity of readers, and media

reporting can be biased due to factors such as misquotation (direct quotes may intentionally or unintentionally wrongly attributed); misattribution (lack of boundaries between who said what, and what is the journalist's own opinion); misediting (editors' unwarranted interference in a story); and over-assertion (intensifying phrases or sentences to make a story sound better than in reality). Thus, the question that arises in this research is whether newspapers have managed to reflect reality. Although newspapers in times might incline to exaggerate, it is evident that newspaper articles and literature present many similarities about the ways that young tourists behave when on party resorts. As a result, this study supports that in the case of Club 18-30, print media can act as 'a mirror' of the wider youth British culture.

### **Newspapers' coverage**

The total number of articles reporting Club 18-30 activity fluctuated over the thirteen years under study increasing dramatically from just five articles between 1995 and 2000 (4.3% of the total) to 64 (55.2% of the total) in 2003, followed by a decline in the following years. By examining in more detail these fluctuations it was found that coverage was expanded in 2003 by the occurrence of certain incidents, as happened in Kavos, where five Club 18-30 representatives took part in 'live sex acts' on a public beach. This incident was the main topic for 19 newspaper articles (16.4% of the total). A template analysis of newspapers' coverage has manifested the following four main themes:

### ***Binge Drinking***

Alcohol consumption is associated with the escape from daily pressures and facilitates social and physical pleasure as well as entry into a liminoid state of mind (Szmigin et al., 2007). However, young drinkers are often badly behaved and do not conform to the norms of civilised societies. Thus, alcohol related disorder has been cited in the newspapers as a contributory factor of moral controversy that often results in the outrageous behaviour of young tourists.

In the case of Club 18-30 drinking is encouraged by holiday reps. The starting salary for a rep is normally around £450 to £500 per month and their board and lodgings are paid for by the tour operators. When guests arrive at their hotels, reps give a welcome speech which encourages them to book excursions and car hire, for which they are paid commission. Reps are also paid by the bars to bring tourists in. As an owner of a bar in Faliraki said to the Daily Telegraph some reps are taking 'big profits' from the bar crawls (Westwood, 2003a, p.3). So it is in their interests to persuade clients to keep buying drinks. As a former Club 18-30 rep reported to 'The Daily Telegraph' about his commitments on the Greek island of Corfu:

*We encouraged excessive drinking because it was the easiest way to make money and keep people happy. As soon as holidaymakers arrived at resorts, they were taken to a welcome meeting where we gave them the hard sell on 'trips'. These were little more than pub and nightclub crawls (Skidmore, 2003, p.3).*

Young British energized by the loud music and the party atmosphere of Greek party resorts and relished the opportunity to drink cheaply, participate in pub crawls organized by Club 18-30 reps. In addition to organized bar crawls, when tourists walk the entertainment strip of Greek Club 18-30 resorts, known as 'Bar Street' and 'Club Street', pubs and clubs try aggressively to draw them in.

Drinks are considerably cheaper in Greek Club 18-30 resorts compared to UK, and there are numerous promotions offering free shots of spirits. As a female holidaymaker stated: "It's awesome. When we go into a club we're given four free shots and then we can get two cocktails for €8, also with free shots" (Montague and Gadhler, 2008, p.13). Enormous cocktails known as 'fishbowls', containing different shots of alcohol which several people drink together through straws, is a modern phenomenon of clubbing and cheap alcohol in Greek Club 18-30 resorts. Frequently locals suggest that tourists' reckless pursuit of oblivion is not only accelerated by great quantities of alcohol, but they blame the adulterated alcohol as the main cause. Adulterated alcohol, or 'bombes', as called by Greeks, because they act as 'small bombs that go off in the brain', is widely offered by certain summer resorts in the attempt by some unscrupulous bar-owners to attract customers with cheap drinks. As explained by an owner of a private clinic in Laganas:

*People are getting drunk not just because of the quantity of alcohol, but because of the quality. They come to see me because they are still dizzy the next morning, they have stomach complaints and headaches. Some say they have drunk 20 or more shots, but often their symptoms are so severe it appears the drinks have been fortified. It is a very dangerous thing (Montague and Gadhler, 2008, p.12).*

In the case of Club 18-30 holidays drinking can be harmful, mainly because holidaymakers get so drunk that they do not know what they are doing. Drinking large quantities of alcohol in a short space of time results in amnesic periods or memory blanks (Hawker, 1978). Although many Club 18-30 members prefer to go on bar crawls organized by reps, because they believe they are safer, an orthopaedic surgeon in the resort of Malia believes that tourists drink so much that at the end of the night they often cannot remember where their hotel is, and end up sleeping in the street (Evans, 2008). His argument is backed up by Laja, who in 2007 after finishing a tough year at university, visited Malia and stated in the Guardian (2008):

*Reps don't stick around (holidaymakers) to escort them home. They abandon these youngsters – some of whom can barely stand, let alone walk. I found a 17-year-old girl who was extremely drunk, distressed and couldn't remember where her hotel was. We spent two hours helping her find her friends, and not a rep in sight (p.11).*

### **Sexual Behaviour**

Despite the Greek Government's warnings that 'nudity is an offence punishable by law', and Club 18-30's advice to its clients to be sensitive to the religious and moral beliefs of Greek residents (Pisa, 2003), young Britons fuelled by endless supplies of alcohol, strip naked, expose their buttocks while walking and frequently indulge in street sex. Such activities, sometimes in the form of provocative sex games are encouraged by reps. One example of the antics of the British reps in the resort of Kavos, that made tabloid headlines and was shown on the TV news around the world, was when five reps and one holidaymaker were caught performing a sex orgy in front of a baying crowd of holidaymakers. A second story that broke in newspapers was a lesbian show followed by a sex scandal where one male rep stripped naked and played a simulated sex game with a young man sitting in a chair and another rep pulling down his pants and exposing himself (Parker, 2003, p.11).

Reps also commit themselves to “sordid acts more suited to a brothel than a hotel resort” (Dobson, 2003, p.6). A confession of a female Club 18-30 holiday rep makes it clear: “Being a rep was the wildest time of my life ... I was drunk all night, every night. A lot of the time I’d wake up on a floor somewhere, usually another rep’s room, with no idea of what I’d done the night before” (Donnelly, 2002a, p.18). But this case was just one example of reps’ outrageous behaviour. In another case that hit newspaper headlines, a male Rep confessed to ‘The Sun’ that just in one summer season he bedded on the island of Rhodes forty women (around five girls a week). He also highlighted that “drunken trippers begged him for sex almost every night ... (and even he had) sex on a sunbed on the beach at about 4 a.m.” (Whitty, 2002, p.6).

The unrestrained behaviour of reps is also evident from the feedback that provoked the revelations in ‘The People’ (2003) newspaper about reps’ encouraging of clients to remove any kind of inhibitions. However, the worst excess of reps towards feckless youths is shown below:

*One night, when a 19-year-old girl refused to down ‘The Cocktail of Death’ - a lethal mixture of whatever alcoholic drinks were behind the bar at the time - the senior rep ordered one of the rookies to ‘mushroom’ her. Giggling nervously, the girl sat on a chair in front of 100 other guests, blissfully unaware of what was about to happen. But her face dropped when the first-year male rep unzipped his jeans - and began to hit her around the head with his penis. Despite her protest, the rep continued while everyone laughed at her humiliation until she left the bar in tears (Venning, 2004, p.18).*

There are cases where even reps can be shocked by the outrageous behaviour of holidaymakers. As has often been reported in the media, and can be seen from the quotation below taken from one rep’s narrative, Club 18-30 offers holidaymakers the opportunity of multiple sexual encounters with new partners: “I saw a girl walk right up to a stranger and chat to him. He bought her a drink and a few minutes later she was giving him oral sex” (Donnelly, 2002a, p.19). The fact that British youth culture is overtly sexual has been well cited in newspapers. According to Carr (2002b) British youngsters lose their inhibitions when on Club 18-30 holidays and behave differently compared to when they are at home. In practice, young people are influenced by the phenomena of situational disinhibition and are more likely to indulge in sexual activity with new partners in a holiday setting (Josiam et al., 1998, p.503). There are cases where Club 18-30 holidaymakers who have a partner at home, when on a Club 18-30 resort without their partner end up having casual sex with fellow holidaymakers. Sexual intercourse upon first meeting with no intention of a relationship or subsequent encounters beyond the duration of the holiday is within the intentions of most Club 18-30 tourists. The easiness of indulging in no commitment casual sex with numerous concurrent partners has been explained by one holidaymaker as follows: “At home, you have to buy them a drink and talk to them all night, then nine times out of 10 they’ll say: ‘See you later’ ... (But while on Club 18-30 holidays) there are many chances for one-night stands” (Donnelly, 2002b, p.13).

### ***Risk Taking***

According to Ryan and Robertson (1997): “holidays are socially sanctioned escape routes into periods of irresponsibility” (p.135). In such periods of irresponsibility, alcohol consumption, sexual intercourse, driving, criminal activities and so forth can

result in risk taking (Yates, 1992). In the case of Club 18-30 risk is usually associated with heavy drinking. Club 18-30 reps and holidaymakers can end up seriously ill from binge drinking. As a former female rep confessed about the daily activities in Club 18-30 resorts:

*A typical night would start off with vodka and Red Bull then 10 to 15 cocktails, 15 shots and more drink at a nightclub. By the end of my season I was really ill and on antibiotics, but I kept drinking anyway. I ended up on a drip in hospital because I was so dehydrated (Donnelly, 2002a, p.19).*

However, not only reps but also holidaymakers even in cases where they end up in hospital as a result of high alcohol consumption, they carry on partying as though nothing had happened. This was the case of one man from Lancashire, who went to the hospital with a potentially life-threatening blood clot but after signing out he carried on partying (Ralston, 2002).

A series of tragedies in popular Greek resorts have frequently hit the headlines of many British newspapers. The impaired judgement as a result of heavy drinking is likely to lead to high risk, as happened in the case of a 30-year-old Englishman who died when after a bet he tried to roll under a moving refuse truck in Faliraki. Nevertheless, the murder that shocked the mainstream media was the fatal stabbing in the throat with a broken bottle of a teenage Irishman during a drunken brawl in Faliraki. In connection with this death, nine Britons were arrested and accused of pinning the victim down after a fight that started over a girl who had been flirting with the men. This death was seen as the tip of the iceberg by the local authorities that imposed a ban, although temporary, on bar crawls. Additional incidents of health disorder reported in the media include an 18-year-old who died of a heart attack following a drug overdose; young men falling off hotel balconies or roofs; alcohol poisoning; moped accidents and so on.

Given the number of young men drinking heavily in Club 18-30 resorts, alleged rapes and sexual assaults are inevitable. According to the Foreign Office, a third of British women raped overseas are attacked in Greece, with most of the attacks having taken place in one of the three Club 18-30 resorts of Kavos, Faliraki and Malia (Dowdney, 2008). In practice, often when the amorous advances of males are rejected by female tourists, physical assaults take place. Just to name one example the refusal of a 20 year old girl to engage in sexual intercourse with two Scots, aged 19 and 20, made them to exact their revenge by breaking into her room and cutting off her hair while she was sleeping. However, a more serious breach of law involved the case of four Northern Irishmen, in Kavos, who were charged with gang-raping an English girl, an act they allegedly filmed on their phones (Smith, 2008, p.3). The chief of police in Faliraki believes that for such incidents: "Male and female drunkenness is mainly to blame, followed by the aggression of certain British and other men, and finally the carelessness of the women themselves" (Gray, 2002, p.11). However, much of the blame for the sexual assaults on British women in Greek resorts as reported by most victims is placed on the UK tourists themselves (Smith, 2008).

Sexual holiday behaviour also contains implications for personal health. Female holidaymakers arrive with packs of condoms but they still go to the medical centre to get the morning-after pill as a reaction to their irresponsible sex behaviour. The manager of the medical centre of Malia estimates that "each day, around 100 girls visit the medical centre to get the morning-after pill, many (of which) have slept with three or four boys in a night without using a condom" (Evans, 2008, p.13). The

following excerpt from 'The Mirror' illustrates the detrimental effects of dreadful drunkenness to one young woman:

*Extremely embarrassed and suffering from a crippling hangover, the young woman mumbles she needs a morning-after pill. After a night of drinking heavily in the Greek holiday hotspot of Malia, she had woken in a bed beside four men. Like her, they were all British. Ripped and worn condoms were strewn on the floor, but the 24-year-old can't remember if she'd had sex ... or even used the protection (Evans, 2008, p.13).*

Accounts like this suggest that those women who are involved in sexual intercourse without protection are putting themselves and their partners at particular risk. Although according to Ford and Eiser (1996, p.157) the potential transmission of AIDS/HIV is among the most emotive problems confronting holidaymakers' health, the incidence of unsafe sexual activity is widespread among Club 18-30 holidaymakers.

### ***Host Community***

Behaviour of young Britons often degrades them in the eyes of the locals providing offenders with a further justification for their deeds (Cohen, 1982, p.220). Former quiet villages have developed a reputation of hard drinking, immorality and violence, making many Greek citizens residing in them to reach their limit. As a result, they complain about the promiscuous behaviour of foreign tourists and the image of their communities as hellholes of corruption, and believe that the type of Club 18-30 tourists visiting their communities offend their traditional cultural values and set a bad example to their children. The following quote from 'The Guardian' offers a succinct impression of locals towards the misbehaviour of British youngsters:

*Lots of the tourists do not respect that we live here. It's like a carnival. They dress up like clowns and go around like jerks and spoil the picture of this place for the whole of Greece and Europe (Jones, 2008, p.17).*

The dangerous discrepancy that has emerged between the young tourists and locals has often resulted in explosive situations which erupt in acts of vindictiveness, vandalism and violent conflicts over apparently insignificant matters. For instance, the owner of a supermarket in Malia was beaten by six British lads because he dared to ask them to drive less recklessly on their quad bikes. This incident was nothing next to the damage caused to the nose of a bartender in the same resort by a 23-year-old Yorkshire holidaymaker who savaged him after being asked to leave a bar at closing time. As a consequence of such behaviour, residents are not as warm and welcoming towards foreigners as they were once. Their reaction to British tourists' lewd and rowdy behaviour is to avoid contact with them, losing as a result their ability to use their community resources, as the example of the chemist of Malia indicates:

*I have stopped going out at night ... I take my wife and sons to eat outside Malia. In the summertime, none of my sons uses their bikes because of the danger of quadbikes (Jones, 2008, p.4).*

Local authorities and entrepreneurs feel that party tourists' misbehaviour deters families and older tourists from visiting their communities. This is evident from the quote below from the Managing Director of Sunvil Holidays, Noel Josephides:

*Upmarket operators have condemned the spread of the party animal mentality. When Club 18-30 moves in, we move out. All these young people do is buy ludicrously cheap tickets, drink ludicrously cheap booze and get ludicrously drunk (Chesshyre, 2003, p.4).*

Along the same lines, the mayor of Laganas stated in 'The Daily Telegraph': "We don't want the young people to walk out naked, to cause problems and damage ... We don't want them to annoy the rest of the guests and tourists and, of course, put their own lives in danger" (Montague and Gadher, 2008, p.12).

Club 18-30 tourists' behaviour is generally viewed by Greeks as extreme and outside the community system as a whole. As a result, an anti-tourist movement has been initiated in some resorts with local protesters demanding authorities to maintain order in their community (Evans, 2008). In the past, local authorities in their effort to enforce the law have jailed and fined tourists with stiff penalties under a law of 'indecent exposure and public vulgarity of a particularly heinous nature'. According to the Faliraki Police Chief these arrests were "considered necessary not only for the sake of the image of Greece's tourism, but for the overwhelming majority of British holidaymakers who want to enjoy their vacations in peace" (Kaniuk, 2003, p.4). Despite the string of arrests of Britons during the summer season in an attempt of the local authorities to enforce the law relative to public drunkenness and nudity, local authorities have undoubtedly been unable to halt the transformation of some communities into 24-hour party resorts. Even in the case of a couple having sex in a busy bar, for which if in UK, the 'participants' would have been arrested, in the Greek resort of Faliraki they are set free (Ralston, 2002). Despite the fact that from time to time the authorities have adopted a 'zero tolerance policy', it is not their intention to fill jails with British youngsters. As the police chief of Zakynthos told to 'The Sunday Times' for the arrests taking place:

*We do not think they have done anything too serious. We will take them to the police station and make sure they can provide their passport and papers, but then they can go. We want to protect our English guests. We believe they are good people and, of course, it helps our economy (Montague and Gadher, 2008, p.13).*

In practice, although Britons' behaviour has resulted in moral and safety problems, a proportion of the locals accept it mainly because it provides considerable income. Most of the times authorities chose to turn a blind eye towards their behaviour, realising that if they enforce the law tourists will move somewhere else.

## **Conclusion**

In light of projected increase in the number of young tourists (Mintel, 2008), and the problems emanating from young tourists' misbehaviour identified in the literature and print media, this paper has tried to contribute to the knowledge of young tourists and their behavioural characteristics, taking as a case young tourists who participate on trips organized to Greece exclusively by Club 18-30. Among the main findings of this study are that in order to reach a better understanding of the complexity of young

tourists travel behaviour, methods other than those fixed in traditional scientific paradigms, such as qualitative analysis of press content, are required. In doing so, template analysis was used due to its flexibility to be modified for the needs of any study and that “the discipline of producing the template forces the researcher to take a well-structured approach to handling the data, which can be a great help in producing a clear, organized, final account of a study” (King, 1998, p.133).

Nevertheless, the absence of socio-demographic characteristics of informants in the newspaper articles did not allow any analysis based on the educational background of Club 18-30 tourists. According to Barrett (1998) “club-goers in resorts such as Faliraki tend to be ordinary, well brought-up youngsters” (p.3). For instance, a 20 years old British student who stayed for one night under police custody and was fined in Faliraki £400 pounds for baring his bottom to fellow tourists sent a letter to ‘The Daily Telegraph’ stating: “I am not a lout but a public school-educated university student” (Laville, 2002, p.1). Indeed, a large proportion of Club 18-30 tourists are well-educated, with at least one quarter of those going on Club 18-30 holidays studying in colleges and universities and a large number being university graduates (Woodman, 2005). However, although past studies, e.g. Carr (2002a), found considerable variation in young tourists’ holiday motivation and behaviour in relation to sociodemographic characteristics, this could not be tested in the current study. Further research is required to address this issue.

From the findings of this study it was evident that many young Britons, when travelling seek liminal spaces that welcome the party lifestyle and are tolerant to binge drinking and outrageous lifestyle. As a result, young Britons, when in Club 18-30 resorts, engage in liminal activities and have developed their own travel culture that contrasts with the norms that guide everyday life. As described in ‘The Daily Telegraph’:

*(They) sleep with more partners during their holiday than many of their parents have had in their entire lives and drinking more alcohol in one night than doctors consider wise in a week (Westwood, 2003b, p.1).*

Such behaviour should not be addressed as a ‘disease’, but as a social phenomenon that needs further investigation and development of appropriate theoretical frameworks. Club 18-30 destinations are a microcosm of Britain and have become virtual British colonies, but with cheaper beverages, better weather and a series of activities or behaviours unconstrained by home environment social norms. They accept every summer thousands of British youth, and, with the large number of British nightclubs and their expatriate staff to serve the tourists, have almost become an extension of the club scene of many British cities. Thus, young Britons behaviour abroad can be seen in the context of the normality of alcohol consumption and sexual behaviour at home and as a reflection of native British youth culture. Although past studies, e.g. Carr, (2002b); Ryan and Robertson (1997) indicate that tourists behave differently while on vacation by consuming large quantities of alcohol and engaging in risky behaviour, this might be the result of the availability of free time to spend on partying while on vacation. Young Britons, when at home, have to work five days a week and they entertain themselves only during the weekends, although when on holidays they devote most of their time partying. Taking this under consideration it is suggested that future policies to prevent and address alcohol and sexual permissiveness as well as risk taking, amongst young Britons abroad might need to be addressed not only as a problem encountered in summer party landscapes, but as a

problem faced at home. As a result, responsibility for the behaviour of these young people must lie with their home country. Bellis et al. (2008, p.46-47) criticize UK health policy for paying little attention to British citizens' behaviour when abroad and they call for an international perspective in harm minimization by involving primary care trusts to invest in protecting the sexual health of their residents. Hence, joint interventions are required, between travel agencies, local entrepreneurs and British and Greek authorities, such as the introduction of an education campaign to increase knowledge on travel health, ensure safer behavioural practices and encourage such practices in the next generations. As Bellis et al. (2000) assert "although holiday companies attract a sexually active cohort, safe sex messages are either absent or ineffective" (p.235), and suggest the need for travel agents when issuing tickets for Club packages, and reps during their first meeting with their clients, to distribute leaflets aiming to limit some of the negative effects of outrageous lifestyle to tourists' health and host communities amenity. In addition, dissemination of safety information can be done by using the internet, specifically the Club 18-30 webpage, and any other sites popular with the major clubbing age groups.

However, education can be only one component of a strategy to address risky behaviour. Stronger enforcement of substance abuse related laws and restrictions on antisocial behaviour should be an additional measure. It may be advisable for the Greek authorities to attempt to alter the behaviour of young people by seeking advice from their counterparts in UK. Rather than letting the problems escalate, and leaving local residents to suffer from youngsters' misbehaviour, they can draw on the experience of the British police in dealing with British youngsters' outrageous lifestyle. For instance, it would be helpful to increase visible community policing in Club 18-30 destinations through the introduction of Closed Circuit TV (CCTV) systems, as has been already done in many British cities. Local entrepreneurs are also guilty for their eager for quick and easy profit, and have to take some responsibility. Although the local community publicly criticise drunken youths for disorder, vomiting and urinating in the streets, the majority have taken little action for fear of damaging this lucrative trade (Skidmore, 2003, p.4). Instead it tolerates their loutish behaviour because tourists are a main economic resource to many local businesses and generate jobs for the local population.

To conclude, the specific travel behaviour of young Britons identified in this study should be seen in the context of specific holiday lifestyles, not only within Greek summer resorts but also at international level. While the current research was set within summer resorts of one particular country, the conclusions highlight the wider implications of the study to other summer party resorts. However, while holidays possess special contexts and opportunities (Ryan and Robertson, 1997, p.136), young people's behaviour among different cultures may vary. In order to understand the implications of young people holiday behaviour in international level, a systematic cross-national study in various summer resorts may bring to the surface whether the form of tourism reviewed in this study has the same behaviour and impacts in other parts of the world. Finally, extensive coverage in the tabloid press about the outrageous behaviour of young Britons are not only included in the British newspapers, but are rarely out of the headlines of the Greek press. To identify differences on the ways that Greek and British newspapers have represented young British behaviour in Greek party resorts a comparative research is required.

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